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Tobacco Control in Europe

Excerpt from the
Tobacco Atlas Germany 2025



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Published by

German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum)
and German Cancer Aid (Deutsche Krebshilfe)

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Funded by

Federal Ministry of Health (Bundesministerium für Gesundheit)
and German Cancer Aid (Deutsche Krebshilfe)

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Photo: © nikkytok – stock.adobe.com

Suggested Citation

German Cancer Research Center (ed.) (2026) Tobacco Control in Europe.
Excerpt from the Tobacco Atlas Germany 2025. Heidelberg, Germany

This publication is an English translation of chapter 8 of the “Tobacco Atlas Germany 2025” (Tabakatlas Deutschland 2025. Pabst Science Publishers, Lengerich, Germany, ISBN: 978-3-95853-994-5).

To download the full publication (only available in German) go to <https://www.dkfz.de/en/research/translational-centers/ncpc/office-for-cancer-prevention/downloads>.

Contents

1	The European Tobacco Control Scale	2
2	Trends in Smoking Prevalence and Tobacco Control Policies	4
3	Current Smoking Prevalence	6
4	Youth Smoking Prevalence	8
5	Cigarette Prices	10
6	Taxation of Tobacco Products	12
7	Smokefree Environments	14
8	Health Warnings and Plain Packaging for Tobacco Products	16
9	Tobacco and E-Cigarette Marketing	18
10	Smoking Cessation	20
11	Prevalence of E-Cigarette Use	22
12	Regulation of E-Cigarettes	24
13	Prevalence of Heated Tobacco Product Use	26
14	Regulation of Heated Tobacco Products	28
	References	30

The European Tobacco Control Scale

Since 2004, tobacco control activities in European countries are being compared using the Tobacco Control Scale (TCS). The scale was developed by tobacco control experts. In the scale a certain number of points is allocated to each tobacco control policy. Highly effective policies, such as high cigarette prices, get a higher score than less effective ones. The higher the extent of

implementation the higher is the total score; the maximum is 100 points.

There is enormous variation among the European countries assessed in the Tobacco Control Scale. In 2021, Ireland and the United Kingdom ranked first, while Germany, Serbia, Switzerland, and Bosnia and Herzegovina ranked last.

Maximum points that can be scored on the Tobacco Control Scale 2021



Cigarette price (30)

maximum points for 18 international dollars/ pack in 2020

Smoke-free environment (22)

- workplaces (10)
- bars and restaurants (8)
- public transport and private cars (4)

Spending on public information campaigns (10)

maximum points for 2 €/capita in 2020

Advertising bans (13)

- TV and radio (2)
- outdoor advertising (2)
- print media (1,5)
- indirect advertising (1)
- display ban (2)
- point of sale (2)
- cinema (1)
- sponsoring (1)
- internet (0,5)

Health warnings (10)

- plain packaging (4)
- size (3)
- pictorial health warning (3)

Smoking cessation support (10)

- medical smoking status recording (1)
- brief advice in primary care (1)
- quitline (2)
- network of support (4)
- medication reimbursement (2)

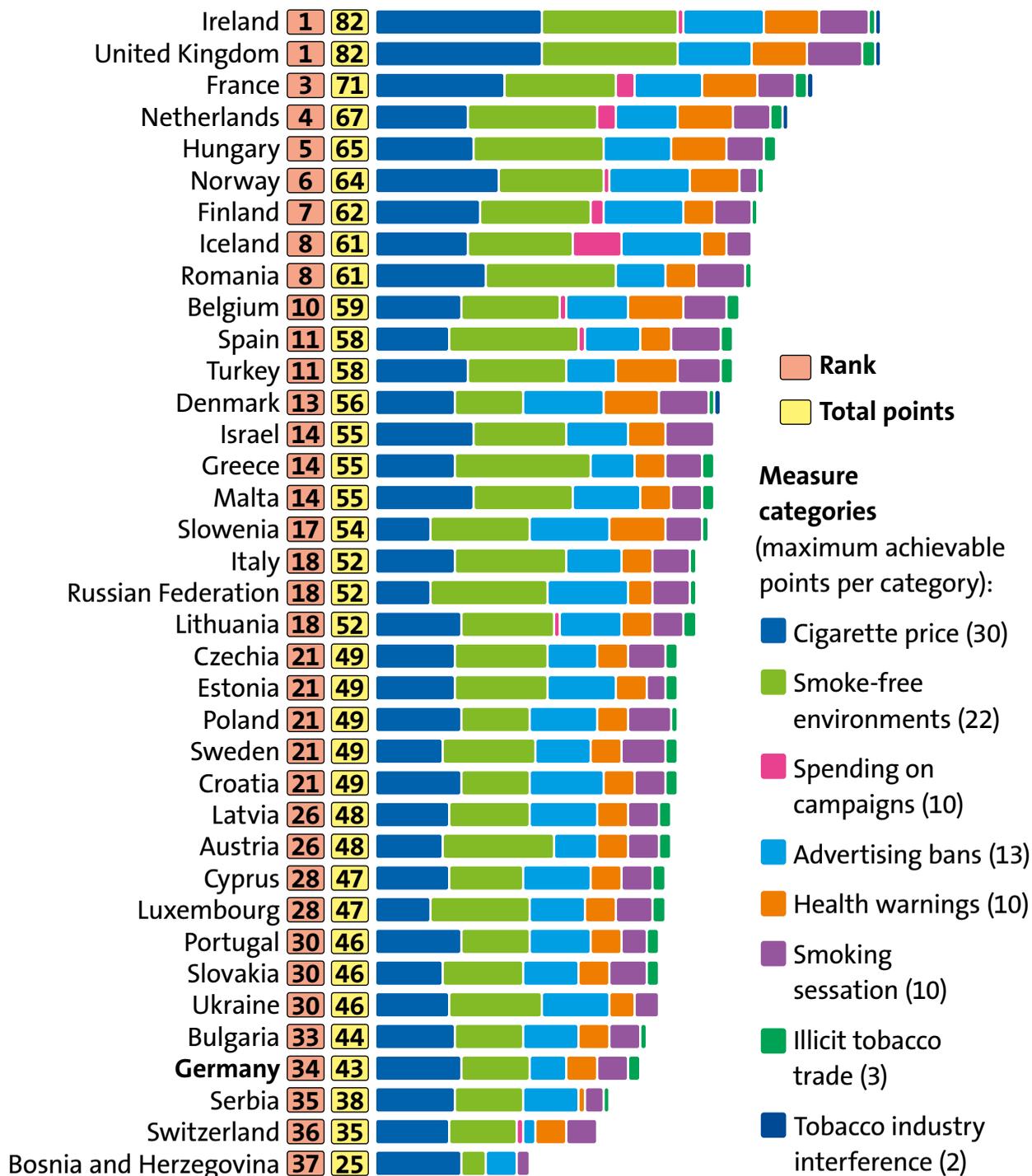
Measures to combat illicit tobacco trade (3)

- ratification of the Illicit Trade Protocol (1)
- track and trace system (2)

Measures to restrict tobacco industry interference (2)

Ranking of European countries on the Tobacco Control Scale 2021.

Data: Tobacco Control Scale



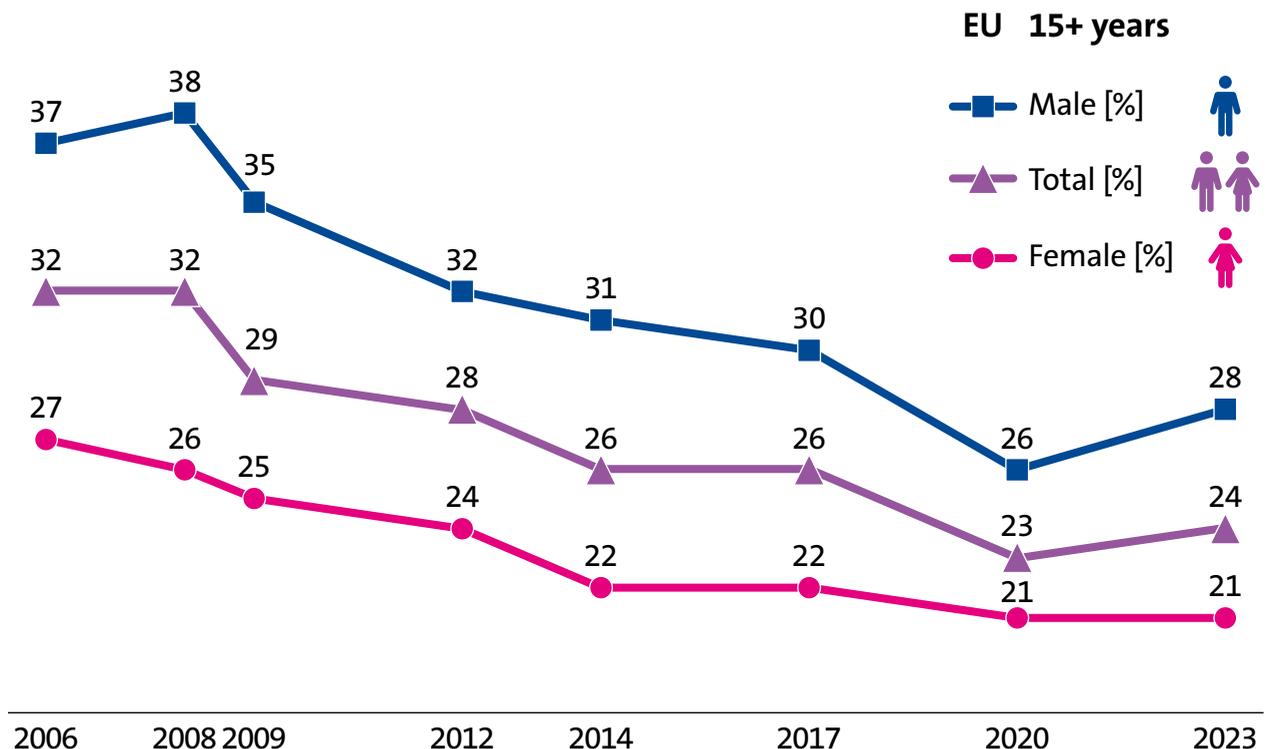
Trends in Smoking Prevalence and Tobacco Control Policies

Comprehensive tobacco control policies contribute to a reduction in smoking prevalence. From 2006 to 2023 the smoking prevalence declined by about 25 per cent in European Union countries. According to a representative European survey, smoking prevalence differs significantly between countries. For example, the smoking prevalence is declining significantly in Ireland, which

is consistently scoring very high on the Tobacco Control Scale (TCS), and in Hungary, which is constantly improving in TCS score since 2010. In contrast, in Germany, which was always scoring very low on the TCS, the smoking prevalence always has been in the European average and has hardly changed recently.

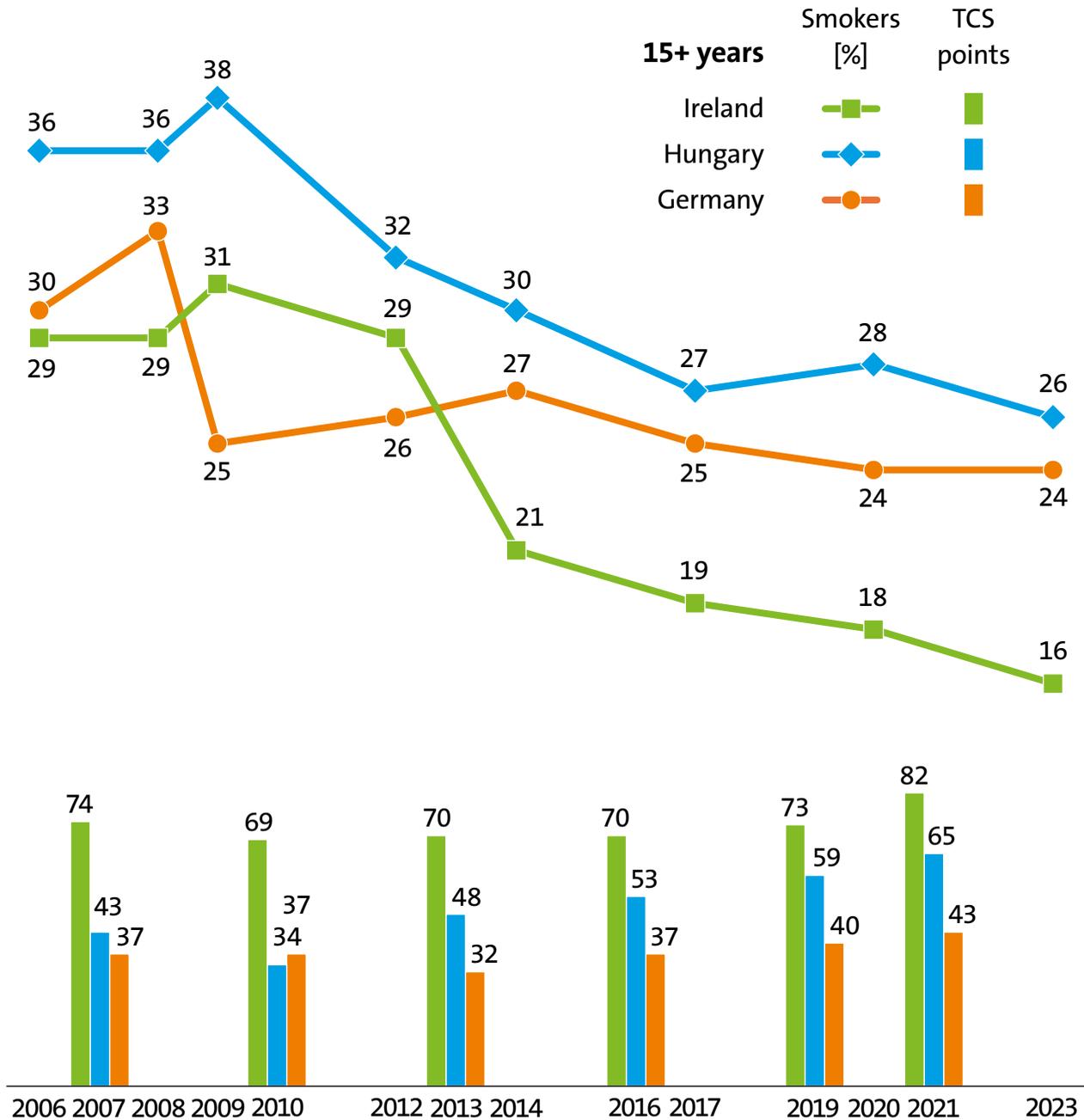
Trends in smoking prevalences in the European Union, 2006 to 2023, age 15 and over.

Data: Eurobarometer



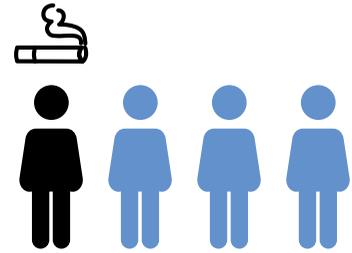
Comparison in the trends of smoking prevalence, 2006 to 2023, compared to the total score on the Tobacco Control Scale (TCS), 2007 to 2021, in selected EU countries.

Data: Eurobarometer and TCS



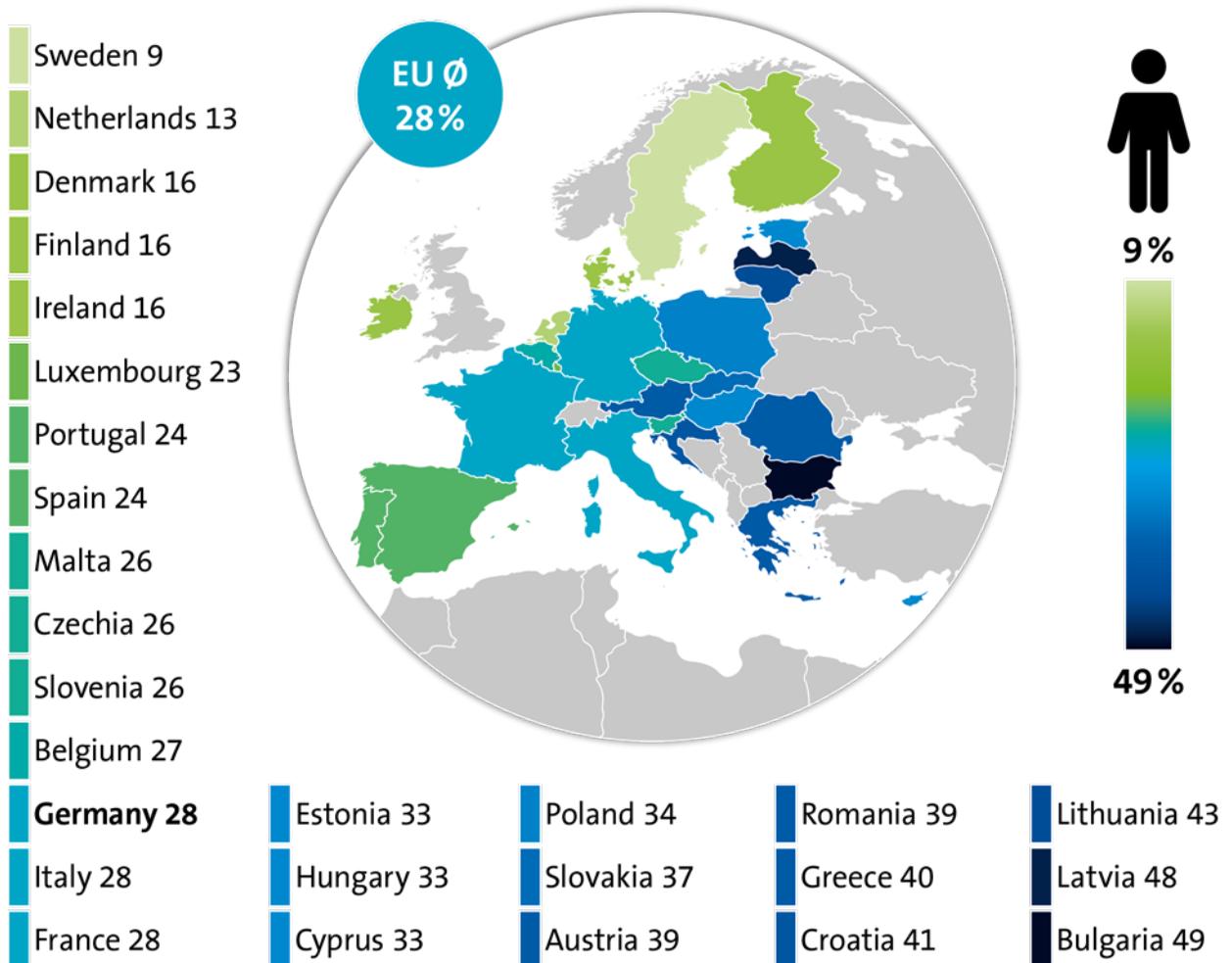
Current Smoking Prevalence

In the European Union, about one in four persons participating in a 2023 survey stated that they currently smoke. More men (28 per cent) than women (21 per cent) reported smoking. Sweden (8 per cent),



Male smoking prevalence, age 15 and over, in the European Union in 2023.

All numbers are given in per cent. Data: Eurobarometer

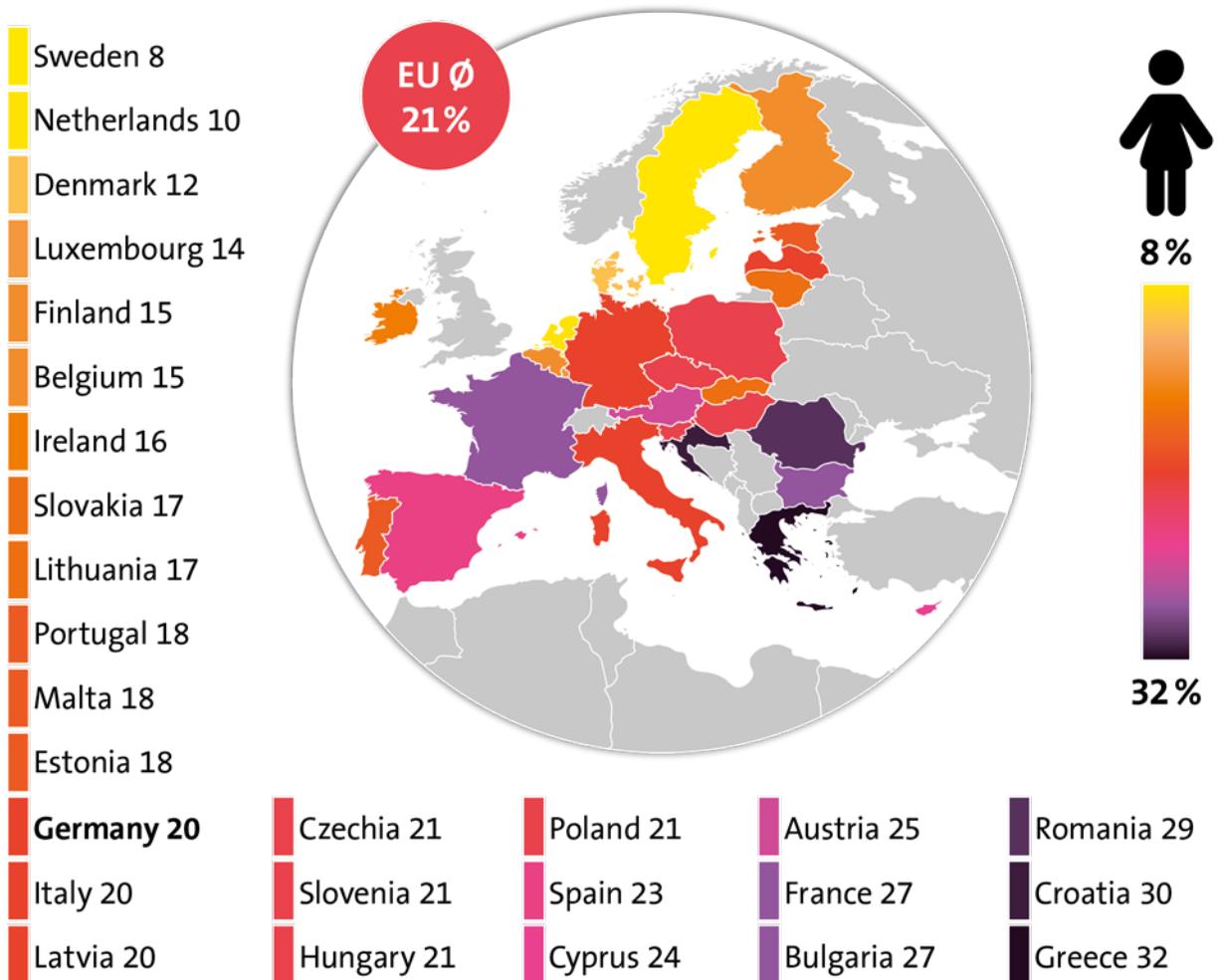


! Europe's Beating Cancer Plan aims at reducing tobacco use to less than five percent by 2040.

the Netherlands (11 per cent) and Denmark (14 per cent) had the lowest smoking prevalences, while Bulgaria (37 per cent), Greece (36 per cent), Croatia (35 per cent)

and Romania (34 per cent) had the highest smoking prevalences. Germany with a smoking prevalence of 24 percent is in line with the European average.

Female smoking prevalence, age 15 and over, in the European Union in 2023.
All numbers are given in per cent. Data: Eurobarometer



Youth Smoking Prevalence

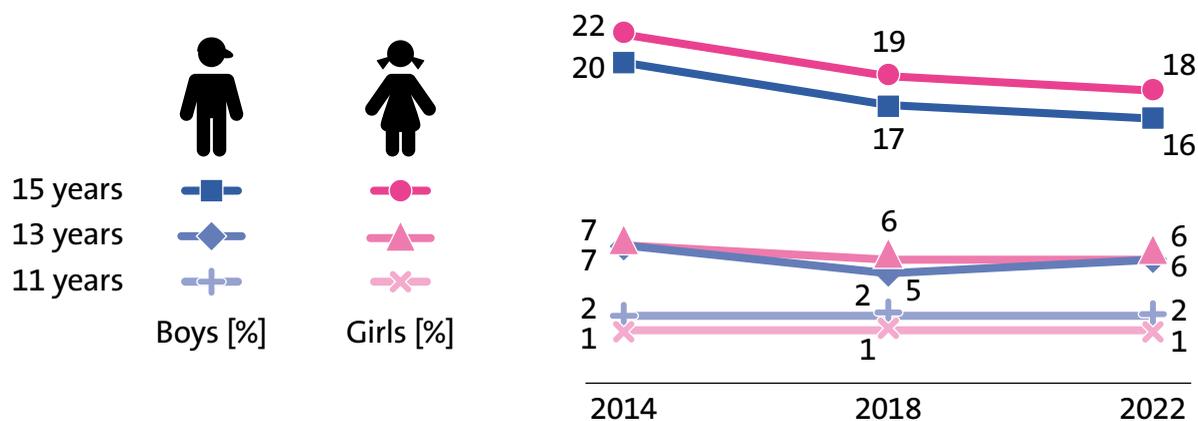
Since 2014, the proportion of smoking youth aged 15 has declined in the European Union. However, among youth aged 11 and 13 smoking rates has slightly increased. These are the results of an international representative survey on the health behaviour of schoolchildren.

Youth smoking prevalences increase with age.

In 2022 in the European Union an average of about 15 per cent of youth aged 15 were smokers. Smoking prevalence did not differ significantly between boys and girls.

Smoking prevalence of 15-year-olds was lowest in Ireland (6 per cent for boys and 8 per cent for girls) and highest in Bulgaria (32 per cent for both boys and girls).

Trends in smoking prevalences of youth aged 11-, 13- and 15 who have smoked at least one cigarette in the last 30 days in the European Union from 2014 to 2022, by gender. Including the United Kingdom, excluding Northern Ireland. Unweighted averages. Data: HBSC



! Globally, smoking prevalences of youth aged 13 to 15 (8 per cent) were highest in the WHO European Region in 2022. The global average was about 5 per cent.

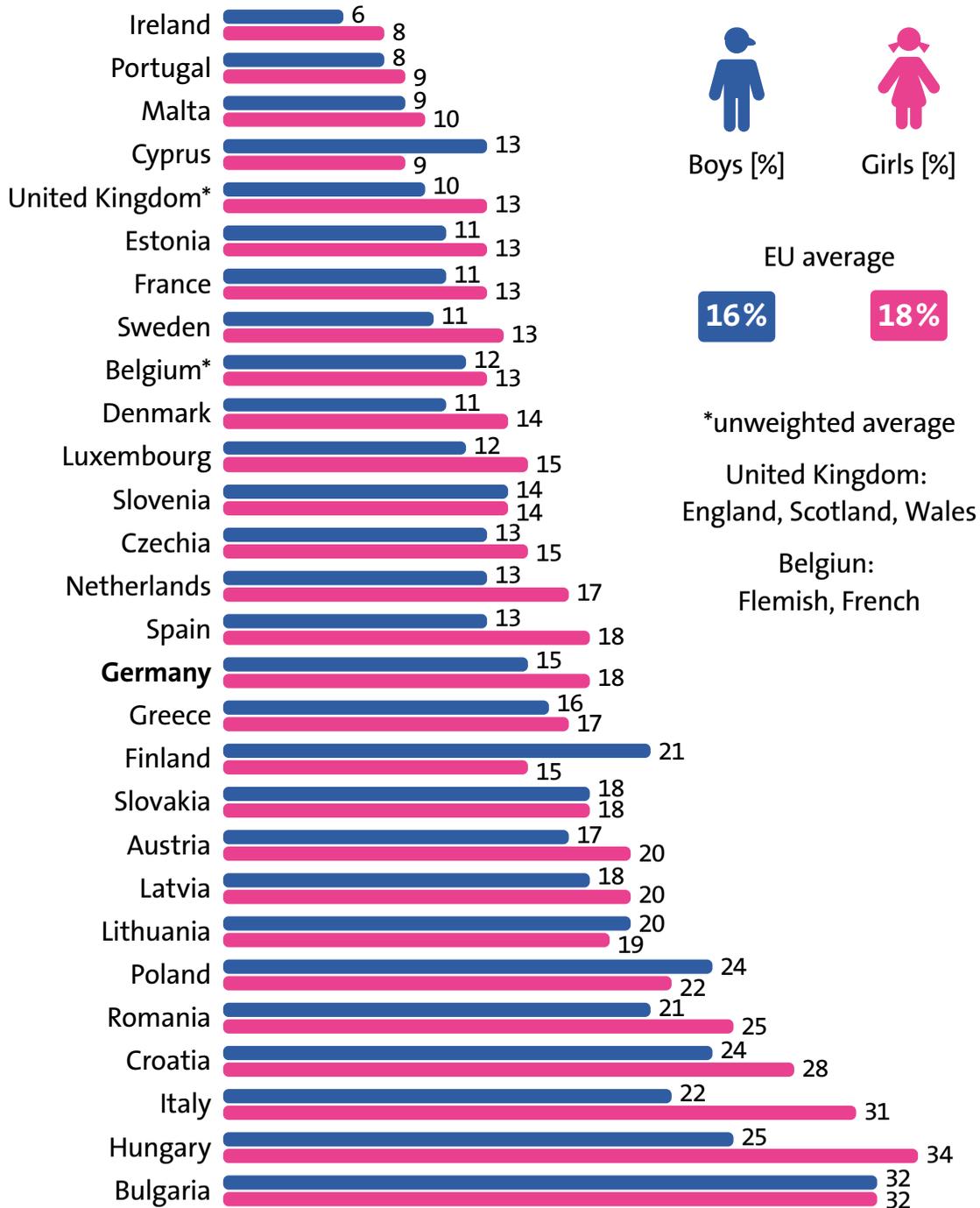


8%

WHO European Region

5% global

Smoking prevalences of youth aged 15 who have smoked at least one cigarette in the last 30 days in the European Union in 2022. Including the United Kingdom, excluding Northern Ireland. Data: HBS



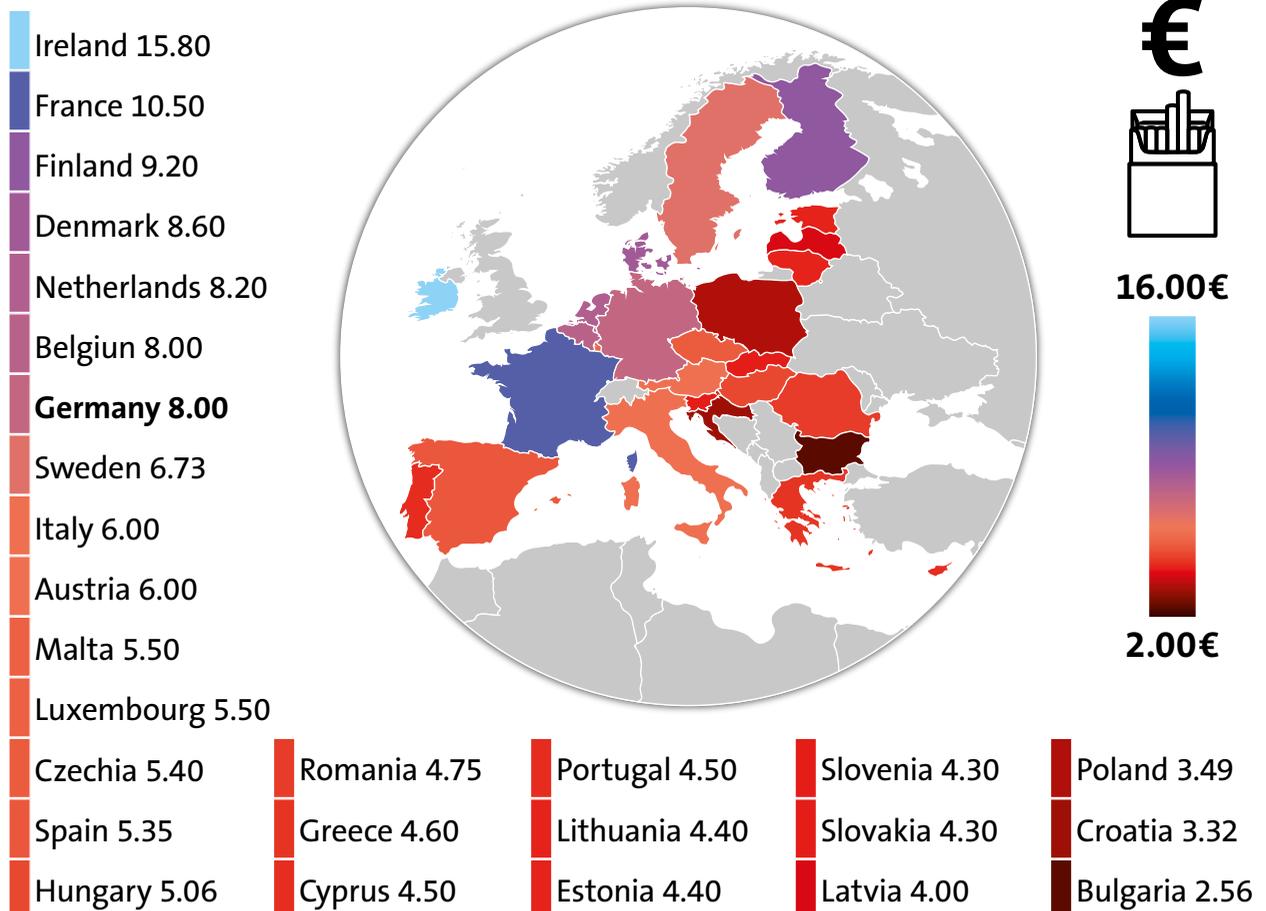
Cigarette Prices

The prices of cigarettes differ across EU countries. For example, the best-selling brand in each country costs only € 2.60 in Bulgaria, but € 15.80 in Ireland. With a price of € 7.60 for the best-selling brand, Germany ranks in

the upper mid-range in comparison to the European countries.

However, purchasing power also varies significantly between European countries. This means that people can buy different

Price of a pack of 20 cigarettes of the best-selling brand in each country in euros in the European Union. As of 2022



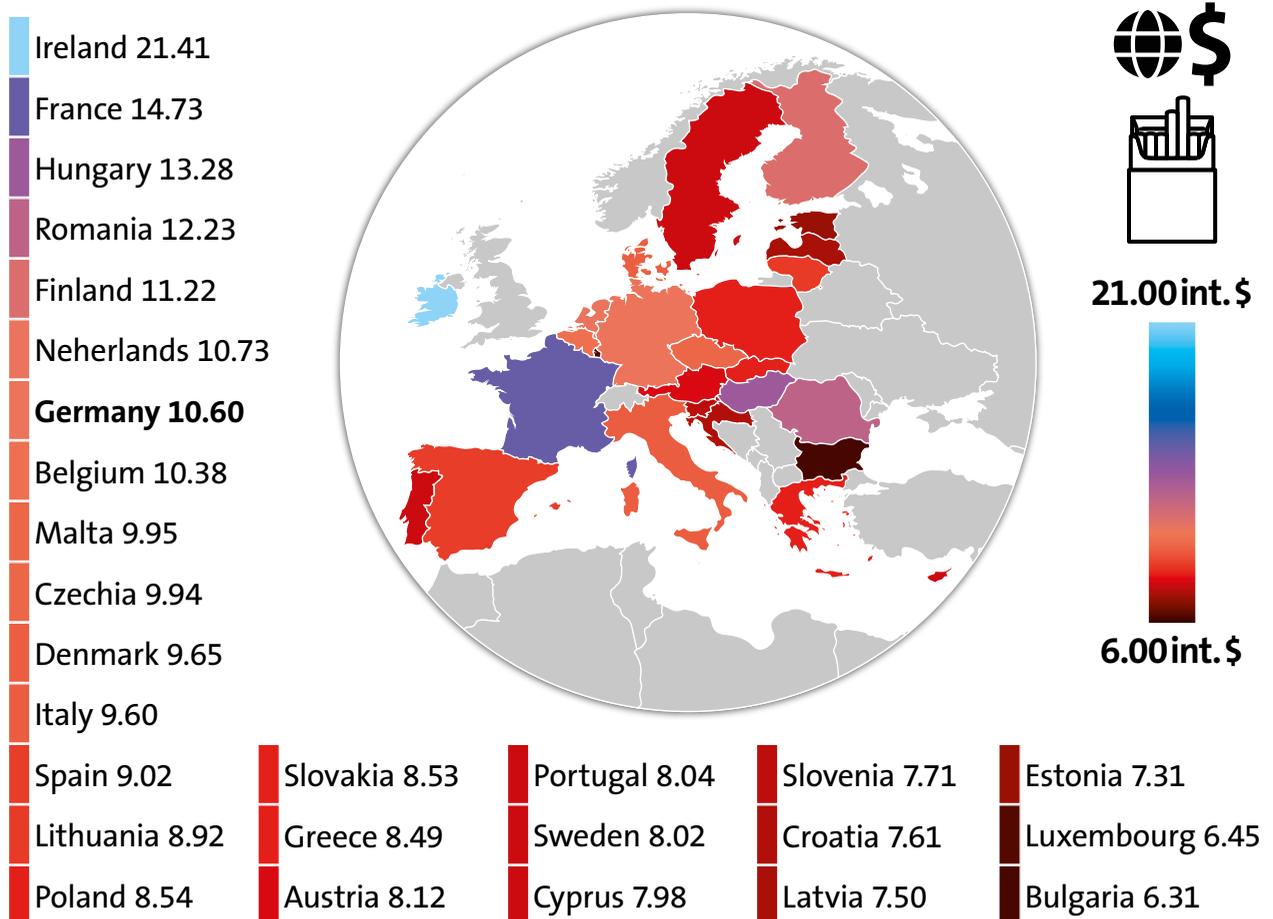
! In high income countries, such as EU countries, a price increase by ten per cent reduces demand for cigarettes by around four per cent.

amounts of goods with a given amount of money in different countries. However, it is possible to compare prices by converting them into international dollars, a common artificial currency that takes purchasing

power parities into account. Measured in terms of purchasing power, the relatively low cigarette prices in Romania and Hungary, for example, are among the highest in the European Union.

▣ Price of a pack of 20 cigarettes of the best-selling brand in each country in international dollars (taking into account purchasing power parity) in the European Union.

As of 2022

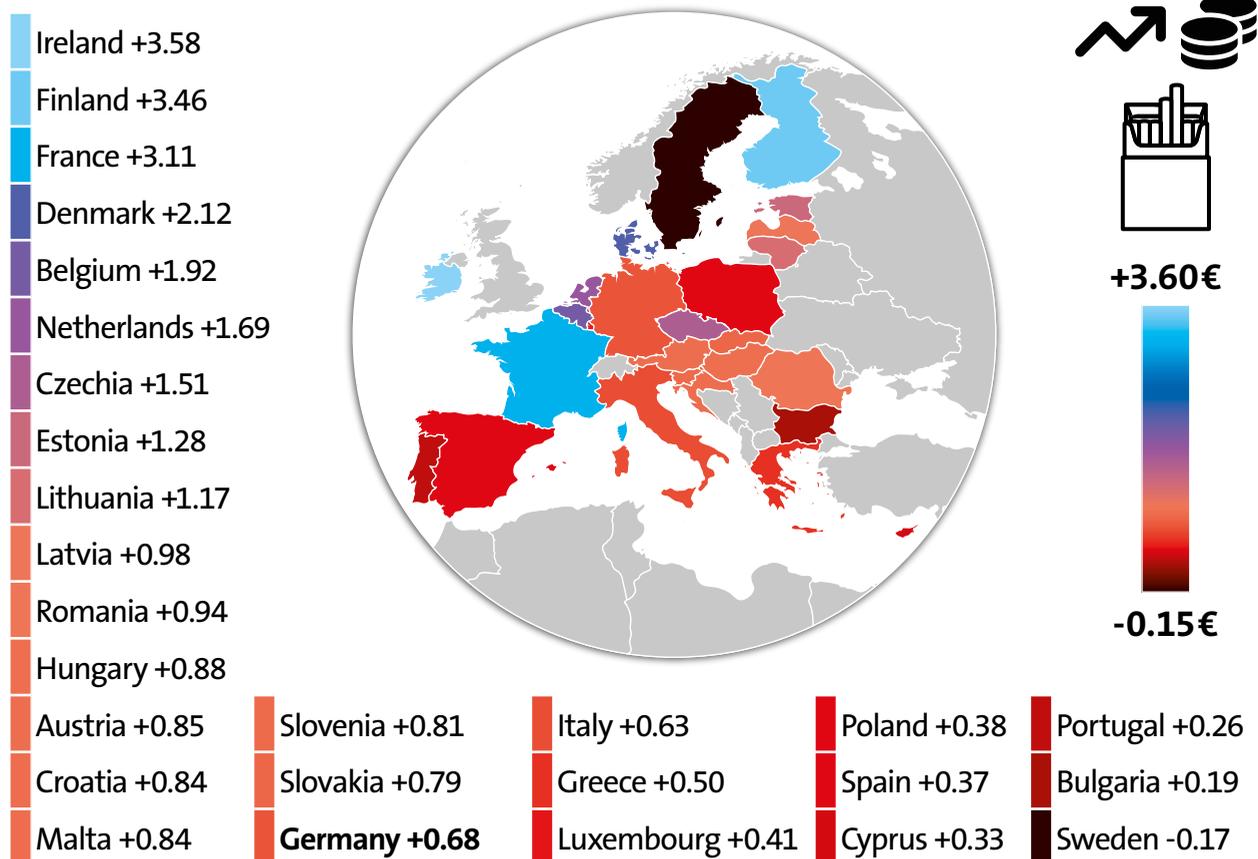


Taxation of Tobacco Products

In the European Union, Directive 2011/64/EU regulates the minimum and maximum tax rates for tobacco products as well as the type of taxation. Tax rates and changes in taxation over time vary greatly from country to country.

The WHO recommends a total tax of at least 75 per cent of the retail price. By 2022, twenty countries in the European Union had implemented this. Germany is not one of them; it has the lowest tax rate on cigarettes in the European Union.

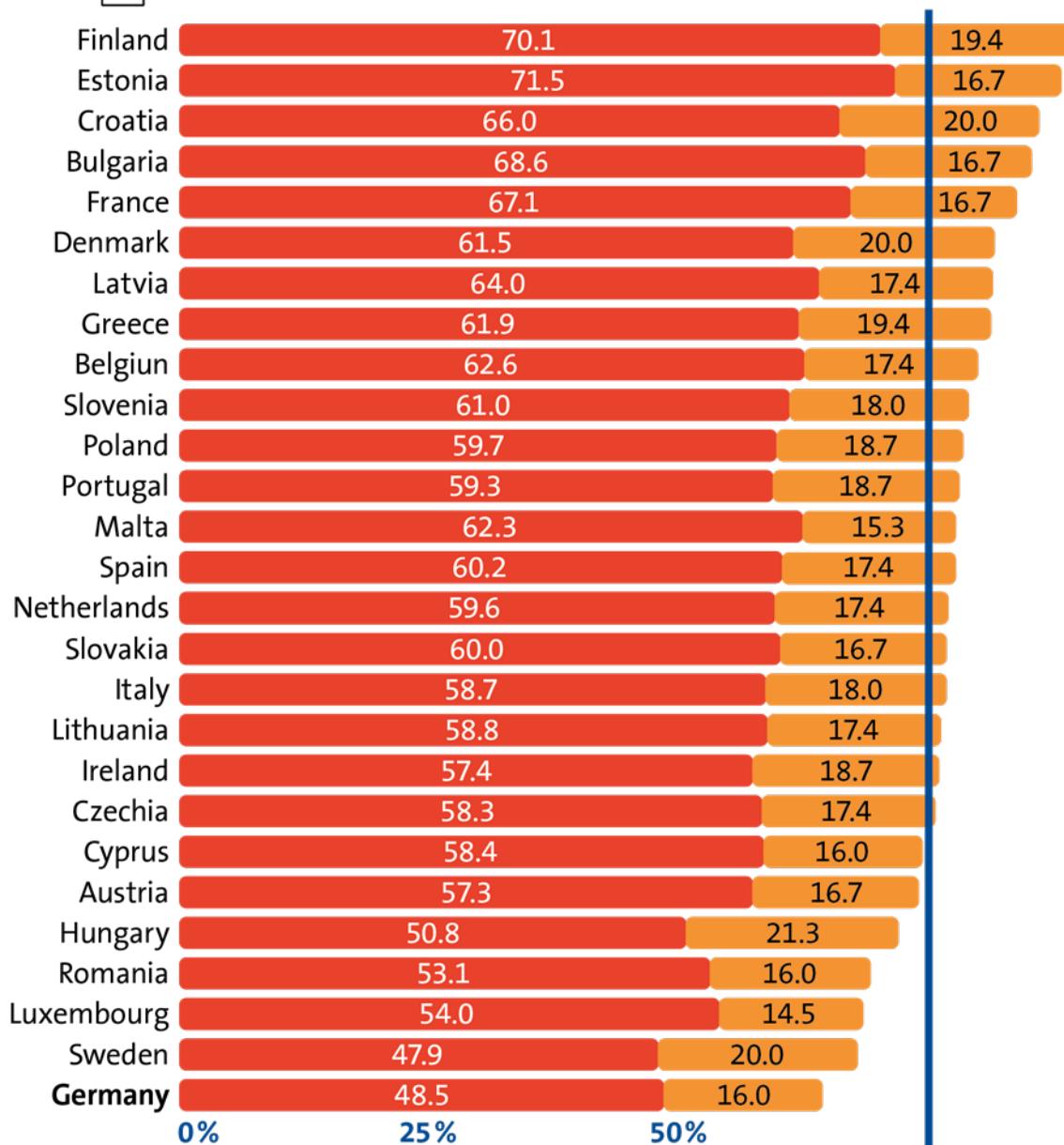
▣ Changes in tobacco tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes of the best-selling brand in each country from 2012 to 2022 in euros in the European Union.



Proportion of tobacco tax and VAT in the price of a pack of 20 cigarettes of the best-selling brand in each country in the European Union. As of 2022



Tobacco tax [%] **Value added tax [%]**



! WHO recommendation: total tax share of 75 per cent of the retail price

75%

Smokefree Environments

Smokefree legislation protects against the health risks of second-hand smoke. It also helps more people quit smoking, reduce smoking among current smokers, and discourage young people from starting.

! Designated smoking areas do not protect against second-hand smoke exposure.

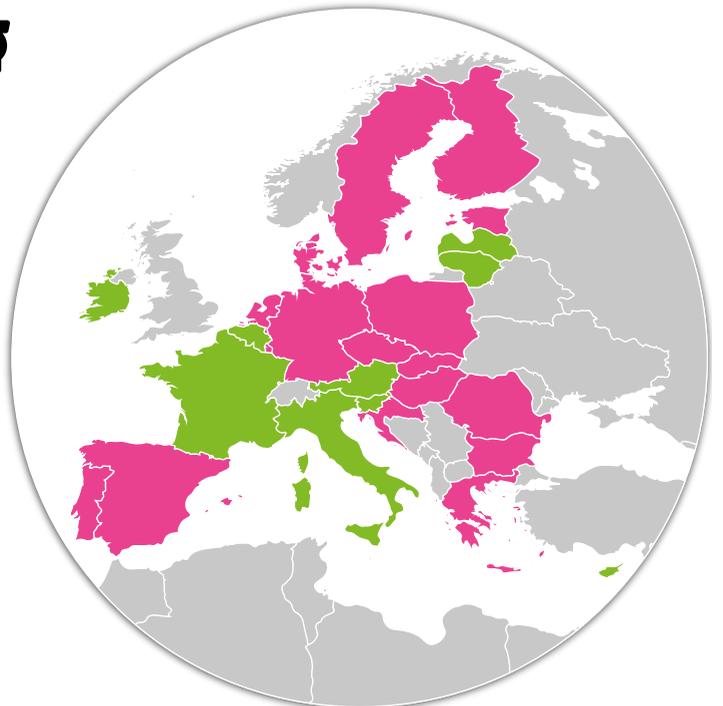
The countries of the European Union offer different degrees of protection against the dangers of secondhand smoke. In 2022, only in about a quarter of countries all public indoor areas were smokefree. Around two-thirds of countries had inadequate legislation that did not provide sufficient protection against secondhand smoke, particularly for minors. Some countries also explicitly include other products, such as e-cigarettes or heated tobacco products, in their regulation.

🚗 Smokefree legislation for private cars if persons under 18 years of age are present in the European Union. As of 2022

Smoking in private cars in the presence of under-18s



■ Banned	■ Permitted
■ Belgium	■ Greece
■ France	■ Croatia
■ Ireland	■ Luxembourg
■ Italy	■ Malta
■ Latvia	■ Netherlands
■ Lithuania	■ Poland
■ Austria	■ Portugal
■ Slovenia	■ Romania
■ Cyprus	■ Sweden
■ Bulgaria	■ Slovakia
■ Denmark	■ Spain
■ Germany	■ Czechia
■ Estonia	■ Hungary
■ Finland	



Smokefree legislation for public places in the European Union by country.

As of 2024

									
Bulgaria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	 Complete ban
Greece	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Malta	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Netherlands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Romania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Slovenia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Spain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hungary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	 Health care facilities
Cyprus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
Croatia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	 Educational facilities except universities
Portugal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	
Latvia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	
Lithuania	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	 Universities
Austria	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	
Slovakia	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	 Government facilities
Czechia	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	
France	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	 Indoor offices and workplaces
Luxembourg	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	
Poland	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	
Belgium	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	 Restaurants
Denmark	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Estonia	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	 Pubs and bars
Finland	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Germany	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	 Public transport
Italy	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Sweden	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	

Health Warnings and Plain Packaging for Tobacco Products

Health warnings on tobacco products and plain packaging are cost-effective, evidence-based policies for tobacco prevention. They reduce the appeal of tobacco products and remove the advertising effect of packaging. Plain packaging increases the visibility of health warnings.

Health warnings

According to the EU Tobacco Products Directive, tobacco products must carry health warnings. These warnings inform consumers about the dangers of tobacco use. The warnings must cover at least 65 per cent of the front and back of the packaging and must contain text and images. All Member States of the European Union have already introduced combined health warnings on cigarette packages.

Plain packaging

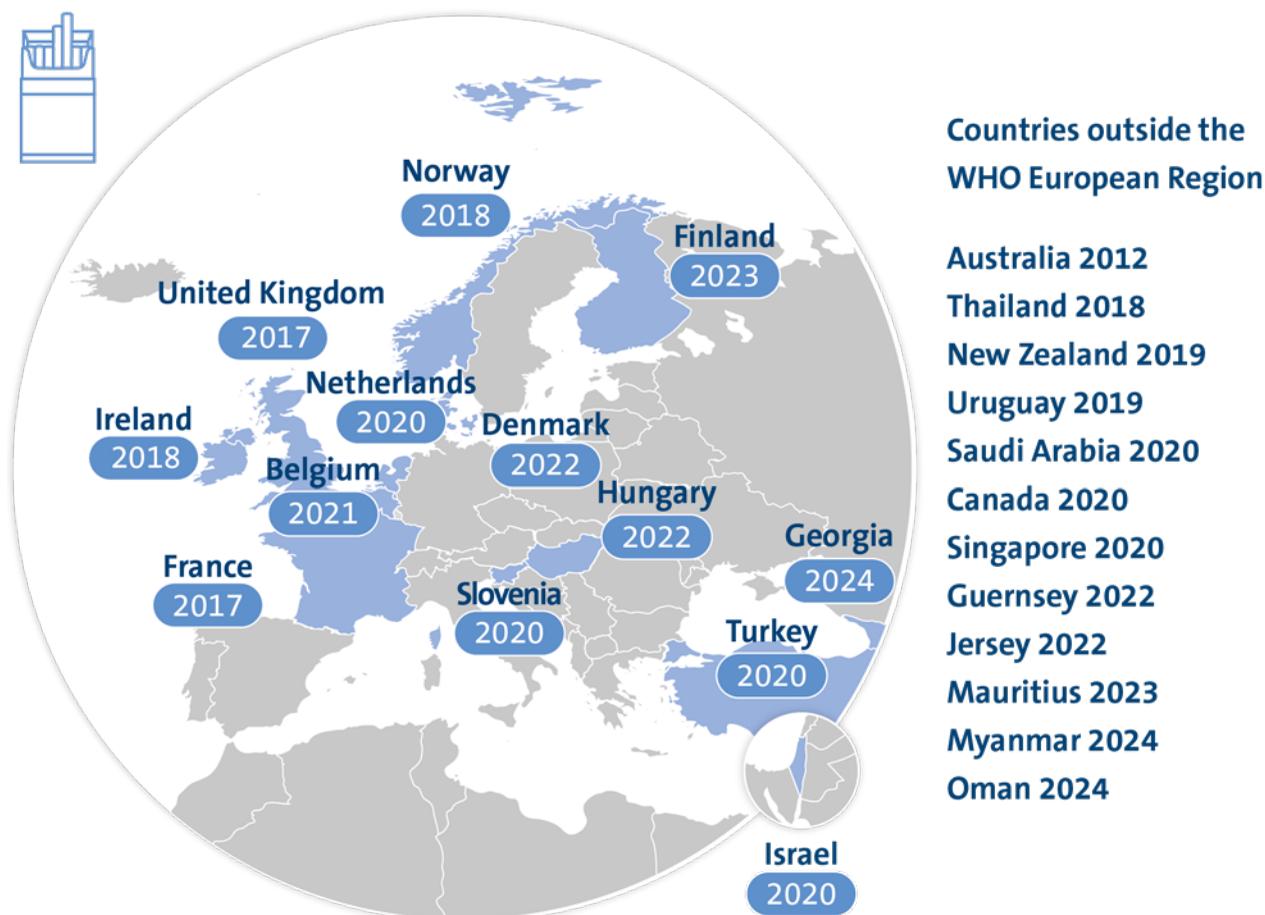
Plain tobacco packaging requires simple font, packaging colour, size, shape and material. Only basic information such as brand and product names, product quantity and contact details may appear on the packaging in a standard font, together with mandatory elements such as large pictorial health warnings, references to smoking cessation programmes and tax stamps.



Health warnings and plain packaging are effective

Large pictorial warnings and plain packaging raise awareness of the dangers of tobacco use. They can deter young people from taking up smoking, motivate smokers to quit and help former smokers to stay smokefree.

Year of introduction of plain packaging for cigarettes in countries in the WHO European Region



 Twenty-five countries have already introduced plain packaging, and several more are considering doing so. Germany is not among them.

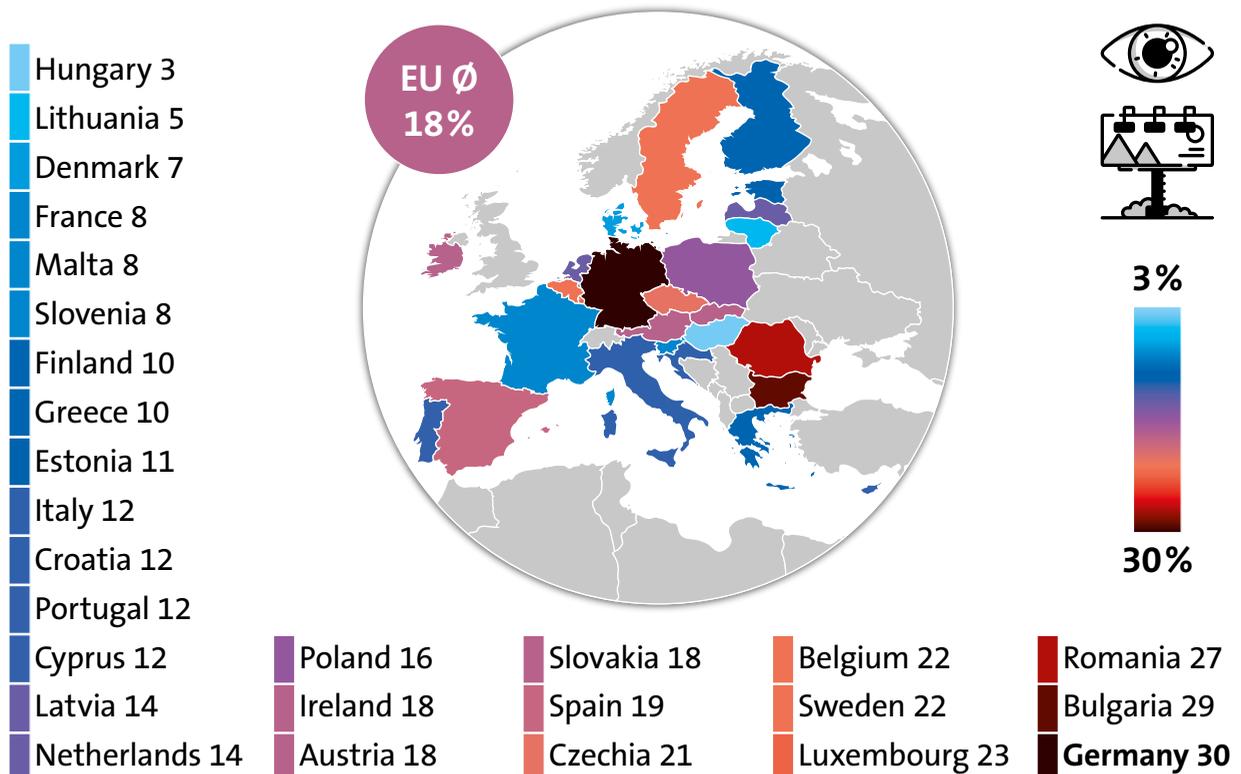
Tobacco and E-Cigarette Marketing

Comprehensive marketing bans are evidence-based effective policies in reducing the smoking prevalence. Therefore, in the European Union (EU), advertising and promotion of tobacco products and nicotine-containing e-cigarettes on TV, radio, in print media and on the internet, as well as cross-border sponsorship, are prohibited. However, as other marketing channels,

such as advertising at the point of sale, remain unrestricted, advertising for tobacco and nicotine products is still present in the EU despite existing advertising bans.

! The WHO recommends banning all forms of marketing for tobacco and related products.

📊 Noticing of tobacco advertising in the European Union. Percentage of respondents who have noticed advertisements for tobacco products for smoking often or occasionally in the last 12 months. All numbers are given in per cent. Data: Eurobarometer 2021



🏠 Bans on different forms of marketing for tobacco products in the European Union. As of 2024

						
Denmark	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Complete ban
Finland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Croatia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ No complete ban
Netherlands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Slovenia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ No complete ban
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
France	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗ No complete ban
Portugal	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	
Spain	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗ No complete ban
Cyprus	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	
Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	 Billboards and outdoor advertising
Italy	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗ No complete ban
Latvia	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	
Lithuania	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	 Point of sale
Malta	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗ No complete ban
Poland	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	
Austria	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	 Product display
Sweden	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗ No complete ban
Estonia	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	
Germany	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	 Product placement
Greece	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗ No complete ban
Romania	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	
Czechia	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗ No complete ban
Hungary	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	
Slovakia	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗ No complete ban
Luxembourg	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	
Bulgaria	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	 Sponsoring

Smoking Cessation

Many smokers want to quit smoking: According to a representative European survey, more than half of smokers have tried to quit smoking at some point in their lives.

Using evidence-based smoking cessation support to quit smoking increases success rates – but only few smokers rely on support. Most smokers (67 per cent) try to quit on their own without any support. However, over 90 per cent of those who quit without using cessation support relapse to smoking in the long term. The majority of successful quitters (86 per cent) used at least one means of smoking cessation support.

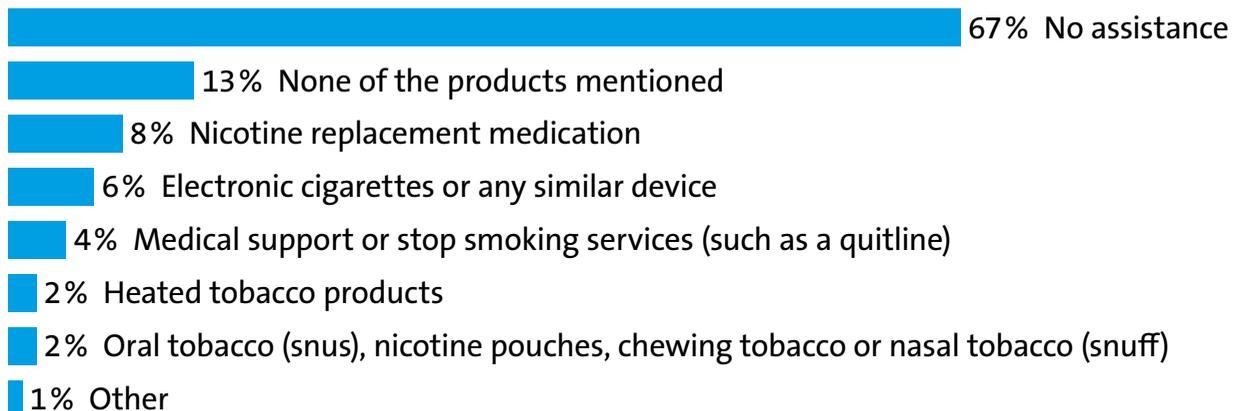
Nicotine replacement therapy increases the chances to stay smokefree in the long term by about 50 per cent.

Most countries in the European Union offer nicotine replacement therapies. Only eleven countries cover the costs at least partially through health insurance.

! Without any cessation support only about three to five per cent of smoking cessation attempts succeed in the long term.

Smoking cessation products used to stop smoking in the European Union in 2023.

Multiple answers possible. Data: Eurobarometer



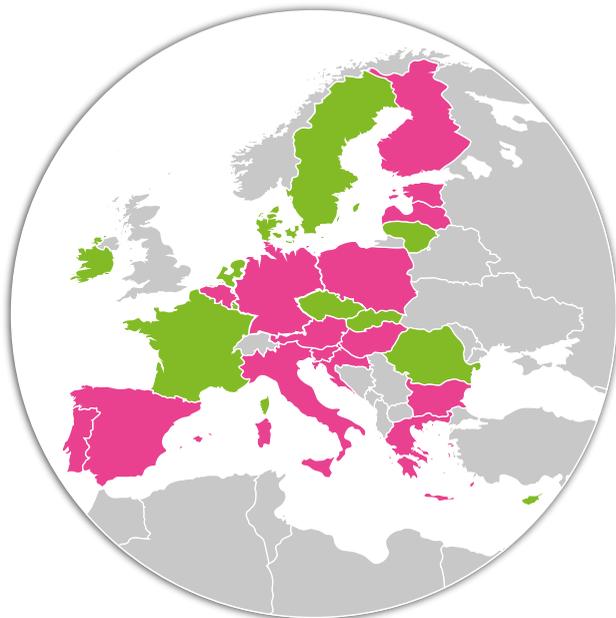
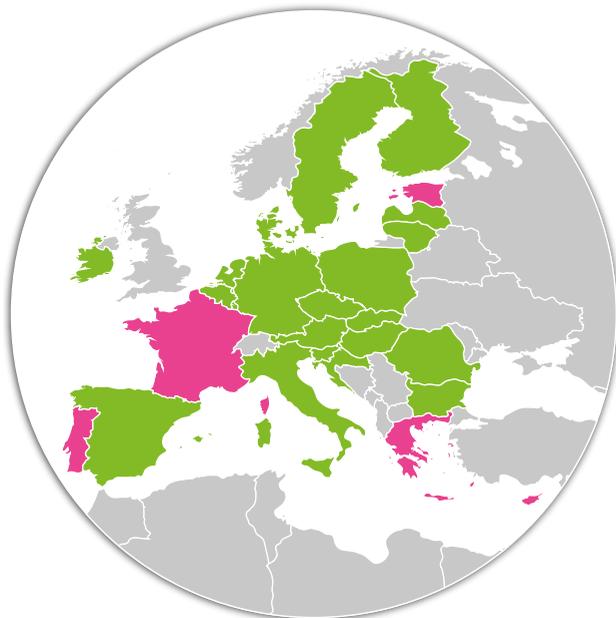
Free telephone quitline and reimbursement of the costs of nicotine replacement therapy in the European Union. As of 2024

Access to a toll-free quit line

 Yes  No

Cost coverage for nicotine replacement therapy

 Yes  No



  Czechia

  Slovakia

  **Germany**

  Spain

  Denmark

  Sweden

  Hungary

  Cyprus

  Ireland

  Austria

  Italy

  France

  Lithuania

  Belgium

  Latvia

  Estonia

  Luxembourg

  Bulgaria

  Malta

  Greece

  Netherlands

  Croatia

  Poland

  Portugal

  Romania

  Finland

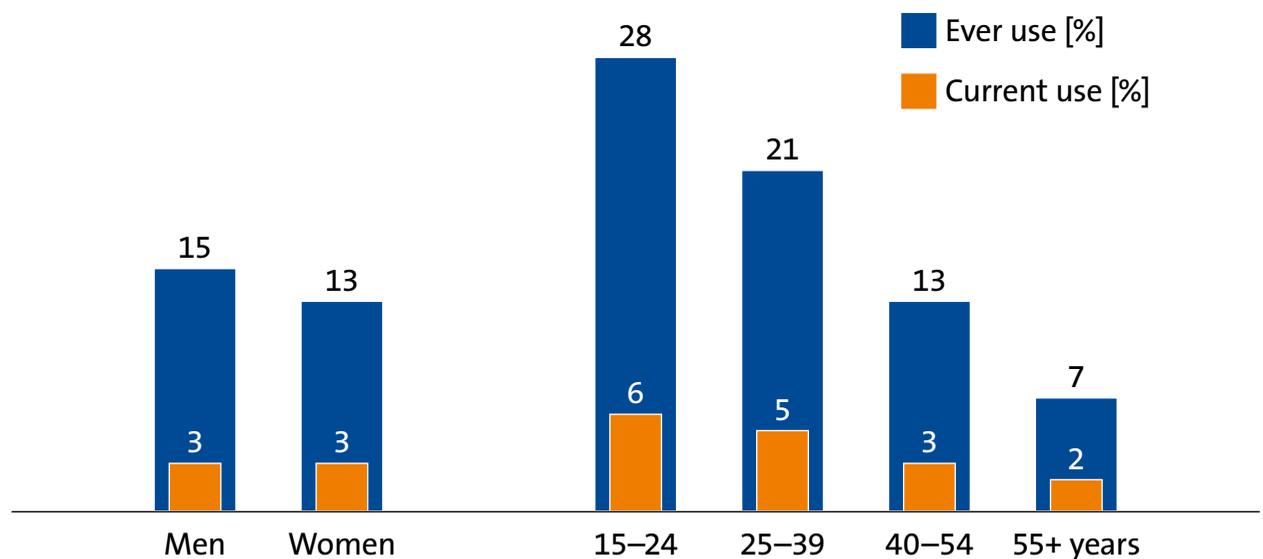
  Slovenia

11 Prevalence of E-Cigarette Use

More young than older persons use e-cigarettes. In the European Union, current e-cigarette use increased from 2 per cent in 2020 to 3 per cent in 2023. The prevalence of current e-cigarette users varies from less than 1 per cent in Portugal to 9 per cent in Estonia. 3 per cent are former users and 8 per cent have tried e-cigarettes just once or twice. E-cigarettes with nicotine are preferred over those without nicotine.

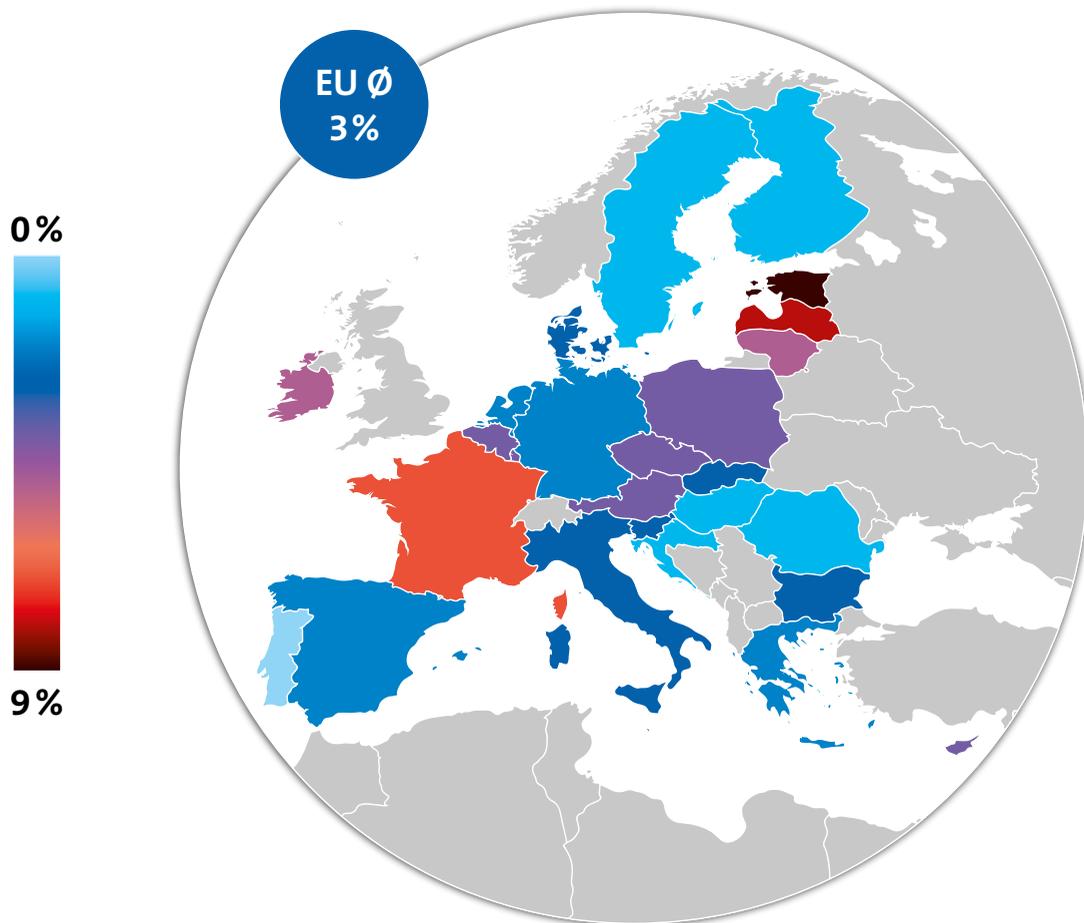
More than one third of e-cigarette users want to reduce tobacco use with the help of e-cigarettes. Other reasons for e-cigarette use are the perception that e-cigarettes are less harmful than conventional cigarettes and that they can be used in smoke-free places. Refillable tank devices are used most frequently (77 per cent), followed by disposable e-cigarettes (41 per cent) and pod systems (40 per cent). Most popular are fruit or tobacco-flavoured liquids.

Ever and current e-cigarette use in the European Union. Ever use: current use, former use and tried once or twice. Data: Eurobarometer 2023



Prevalence of current e-cigarette users aged 15 and over in the European Union. All numbers are given in per cent.

Data: Eurobarometer 2023



Portugal <1	Germany 2	Bulgaria 3	Belgium 4	Ireland 5
Finland 1	Greece 2	Denmark 3	Luxembourg 4	Lithuania 5
Sweden 1	Croatia 2	Italy 3	Austria 4	France 7
Hungary 1	Netherlands 2	Malta 3	Poland 4	Latvia 8
Romania 1	Spain 2	Slovakia 3	Czechia 4	Estonia 9
		Slovenia 3	Cyprus 4	

12 Regulation of E-Cigarettes

In the European Union, product safety and quality as well as the ingredients of liquids, packaging, labelling and advertising for e-cigarettes are regulated by the Tobacco Products Directive 2014/40/EU. In addition to this regulation, most countries prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes to minors

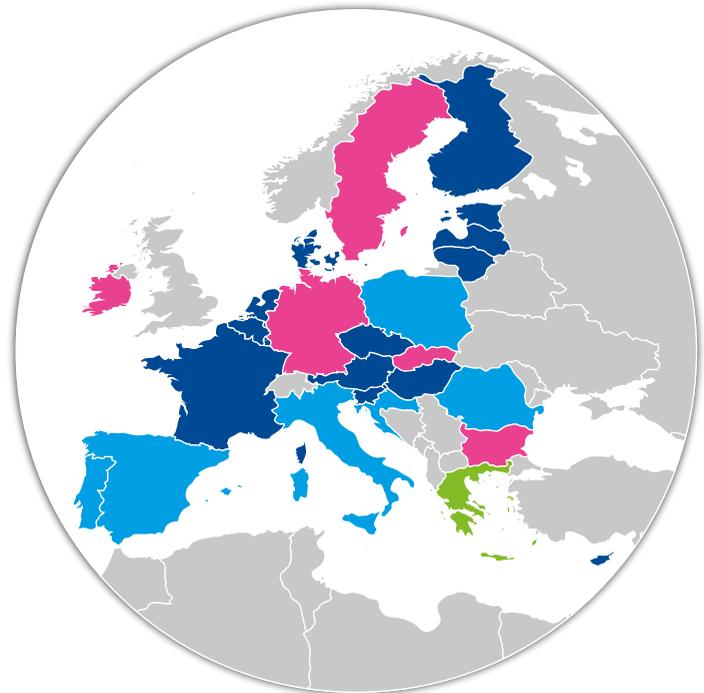
and restrict the use of e-cigarettes in public places. Some countries levy a tax on e-cigarette liquids.

In Germany, e-cigarettes are covered by the federal smokefree legislation since 2024.

Regulation of e-cigarette use in public indoor areas in the European Union.

As of 2022

Use of e-cigarettes



*Germany: new regulation since 2024 (banned in some public indoor areas)



Regulation of e-cigarettes with regard to sale to minors, marketing and taxes in the European Union. As of 2023

	Sales ban to minors	Marketing ban	Tax on liquids without/with nicotine	Tax rate on liquids [€/ml]
Lithuania	✓	✓	✓	0,63
Finland	✓	✓	✓	0,30
Germany	✓	✓	✓	0,26
Estonia	✓	✓	✓	0,22
Denmark	✓	✓	✓	0,20/0,34*
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	0,15
Italy	✓	✓	✓	0,09/0,13**
Poland	✓	✓	✓	0,13
Portugal	✓	!	✓	0,32
Sweden	✓	!	✓	0,18/0,37***
Spain	✓	!	✓	0,15/0,20****
Luxembourg	✓	!	✓	0,12
Cyprus	✓	!	✓	0,12
Greece	✓	!	✓	0,10
Latvia	✗	✓	✓	0,24
Hungary	✗	✓	✓	0,06
Ireland	✗	!	✓	0,50
Romania	✓	!	✓	ND
France	✓	✓	✗	
Netherlands	✓	✓	✗	
Bulgaria	✓	!	✗	
Croatia	✓	!	✗	
Austria	✓	!	✗	
Slovenia	✓	!	✗	
Malta	✗	✓	✗	
Slovakia	✗	!	✗	
Czechia	✗	✗	✗	

-  Ban in place
-  Restrictions in place
-  No ban/no restrictions
-  Tax on liquids
-  No tax on liquids
-  ND No data

*for <12/≥12 mg/ml nicotine **for liquids without/with nicotine
 for <15/≥15 mg/ml nicotine *for ≤15/>15 mg/ml nicotine

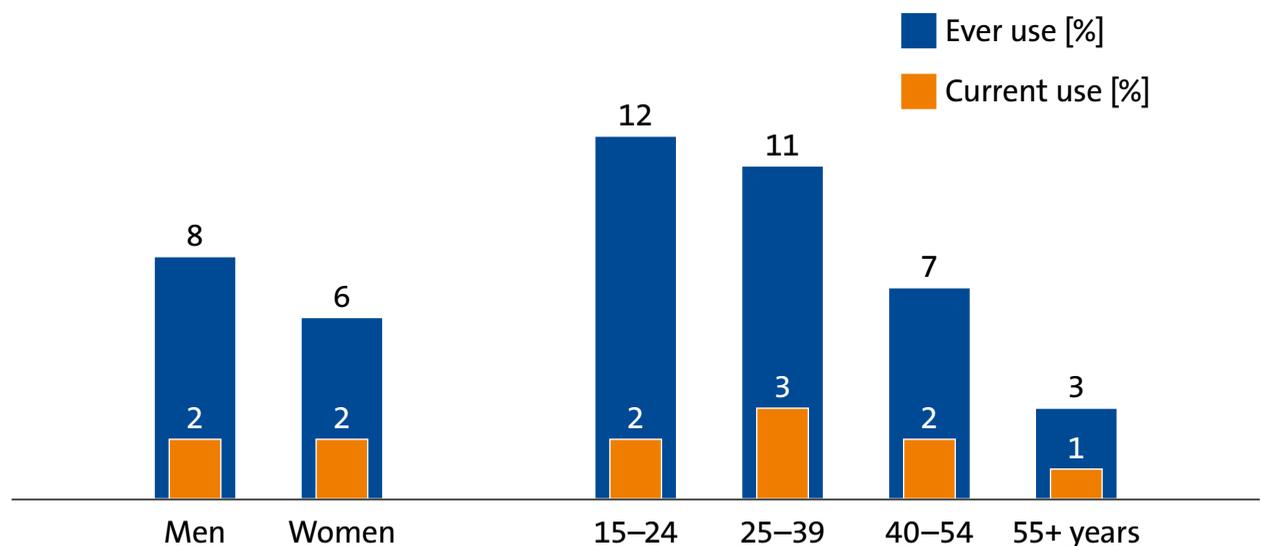
Prevalence of Heated Tobacco Product Use

Currently, prevalence of heated tobacco product use is low in the European Union. Current use increased from about one per cent in 2020 to two per cent in 2023. Prevalence differs in EU countries: In some countries the prevalence is below one per cent, while in other countries it is up to five per cent. In the European Union, four per cent of citizens have tried heated tobacco products only once or twice and one per cent have used the products for a while but then stopped. More young than older adults use heated tobacco products. Many users are dual users, smoking conventional cigarettes alongside heated tobacco products.

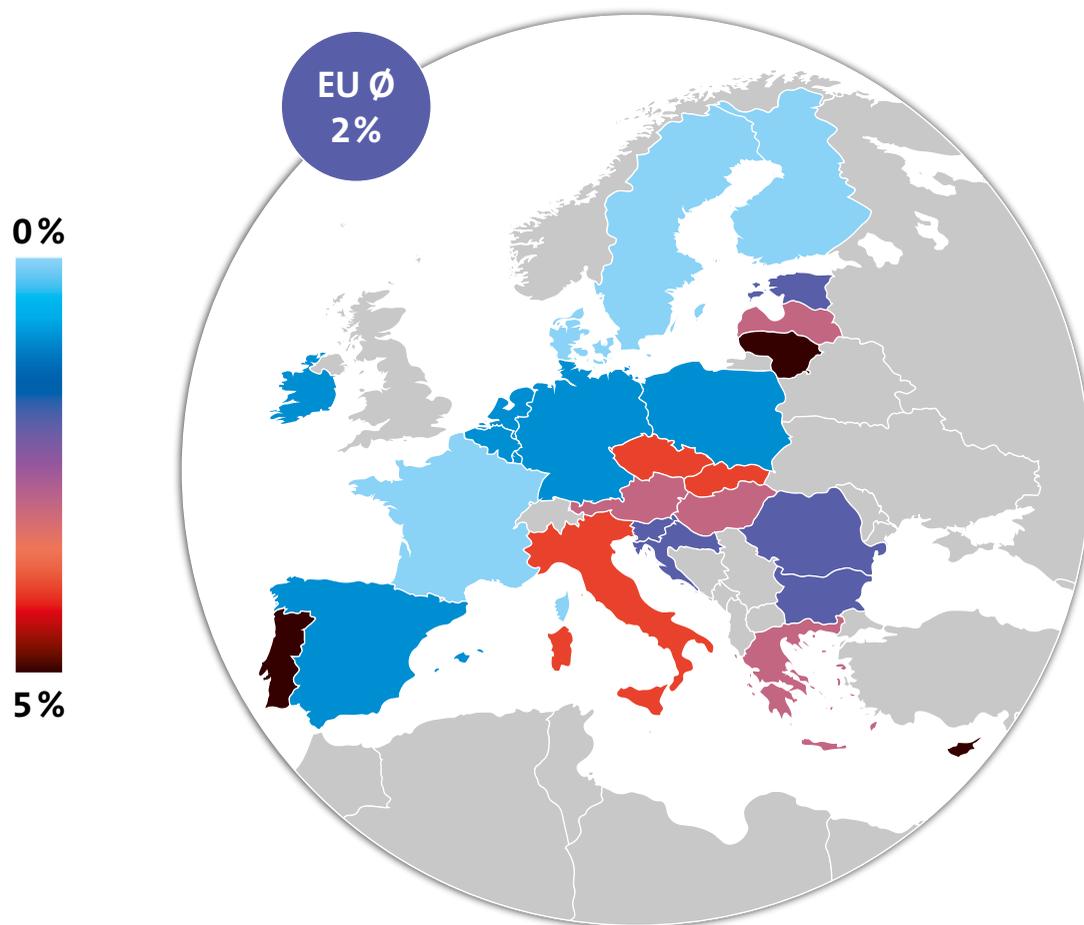
Reasons for heated tobacco product use are the perception that the products are less harmful than cigarettes (32 per cent), that they can help quit smoking (24 per cent), the flavours (17 per cent), the attractiveness of the products (15 per cent), the desire to circumvent smoking bans (13 per cent), higher social acceptance than cigarette smoking (13 per cent) and the price (9 per cent).

! Flavours for tobacco sticks are banned in the EU since 2023.

Ever and current use of heated tobacco products in the European Union. Ever use: current use, former use and tried once or twice. Data: Eurobarometer 2023



Prevalence of current heated tobacco product users aged 15 and older in the European Union. All numbers are given in per cent. Data: Eurobarometer 2023



Finland <1	Germany 1	Bulgaria 2	Greece 3	Italy 4
Sweden <1	Ireland 1	Estonia 2	Latvia 3	Slovakia 4
Malta <1	Luxembourg 1	Croatia 2	Austria 3	Czechia 4
France <1	Netherlands 1	Romania 2	Hungary 3	Lithuania 5
Denmark <1	Poland 1	Slovenia 2		Portugal 5
Belgium 1	Spain 1			Cyprus 5

Regulation of Heated Tobacco Products

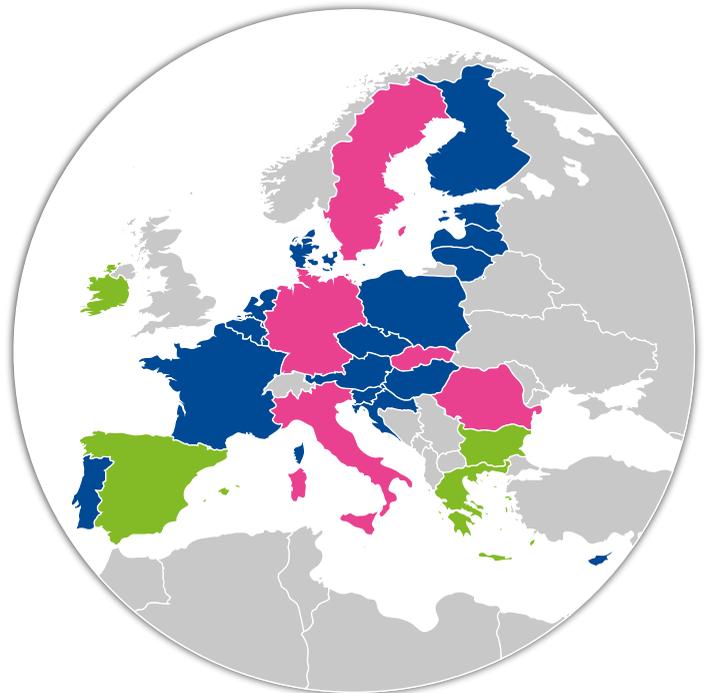
In the European Union (EU), heated tobacco products are regulated by the Tobacco Products Directive 2014/40/EU. In 2018, the Conference of the Parties defined heated tobacco products as tobacco products, thus all provisions of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) apply to

them. Nevertheless, currently the different EU countries regulate heated tobacco products in different ways.

In Germany, heated tobacco products are covered by the federal smokefree legislation since 2024.

Regulation of heated tobacco product use in public indoor areas in the European Union. As of 2022

Use of heated tobacco products



*Germany: new regulation since 2024
(banned in some public indoor areas)



Regulation of tobacco sticks for heated tobacco products with regard to sales to minors, marketing and taxation in the European Union. As of 2023

	Sales ban to minors	Marketing ban	Tax on tobacco sticks
Denmark	✓	!	✓
Germany	✓	!	✓
France	✓	!	✓
Ireland	✓	!	✓
Netherlands	✓	!	✓
Poland	✓	!	✓
Romania	✓	!	✓
Sweden	✓	!	✓
Greece	✓	!	✗
Slovenia	✓	!	✗
Italy	✓	✗	✓
Spain	✓	✗	✓
Lithuania	✗	!	✓
Luxembourg	✗	!	✓
Portugal	✗	!	✓
Finland	✓	✗	✗
Croatia	✓	✗	✗
Estonia	✗	✗	✓
Czechia	✗	✗	✓
Bulgaria	✗	✗	✗
Latvia	✗	✗	✗
Malta	✗	✗	✗
Austria	✗	✗	✗
Slovakia	✗	✗	✗
Hungary	✗	✗	✗
Cyprus	✗	✗	✗

✓ Ban in place

! Ban or regulation of advertising, promotion and sponsoring

✗ No ban or no regulation

✓ Tax in place

✗ No tax

Note:
In Belgium, heated tobacco products are not available on the market, so it is not listed here.

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