

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTES FOR A TOBACCO-FREE GENERATION

ACT calls for strong actions to achieve this goal.

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ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac welcomes the goal of a ‘tobacco-free generation’ by 2040 as set out in the report ‘on strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer’ which was adopted by the European Parliament.

In the context of the French presidency of the Council of the European Union, ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac calls on the European institutions to take up the initiative it drives in France with 18 NGOs and to commit to strong and bold measures for a progressive end to tobacco in Europe.

European Parliament’s Cancer Plan : “tobacco-free generation” goal and harmonisation of the excise tax for tobacco products

This Wednesday 16th of February, the European Parliament adopted in plenary a report on “strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer”. This report, drafted by the Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA), details various recommendations to strengthen the role of the European Union in the fight against cancer, particularly regarding tobacco products.

ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac welcomes the goal of a “tobacco-free generation” as set out in this report, following the “Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan” published by the European Commission in 2021. Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable cancer in the European Union and is still responsible for over 700,000 deaths per year in Europe.

As pointed out by the Members of the European Parliament in their report, an effective fight against tobacco requires an increase and an upward convergence in minimum excise duties for all tobacco products. ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac supports the combination of these measures to intensify the fight against tobacco, particularly in view of the revision of the tobacco tax regime that is expected to be debated in Europe from May 2022.

ACT calls for a European commitment to strong and innovative measures

Some proposals from the report are in line with the initiative led by the ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac and 18 other associations to call on the candidates in the French presidential election to commit to strong and innovative measures for a gradual and sustainable tobacco-free society.

Therefore, in the continuity of this initiative and on the vote by the European Parliament of its report, ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac calls on the European institutions to support these measures adapted to the European scale, and which are essential to put an end to the leading cause of preventable cancer:

Measure 1 : phase out tobacco sales to protect future generations

Starting from 2040, and in the context of a “tobacco-free generation” for the European Union, end the sale of tobacco products to anyone born after 2022 so that future generations are no longer exposed to tobacco and its consequence.

This measure will help stop gradually and in a durable way this plague which concerns, according to the European Commission, still 20% of the young people in Europe¹.

Measure 2: smoke-free areas around all schools

The presence of tobacco around schools exposes young Europeans to the direct dangers of passive smoking on their health, while dangerously trivializing the act of smoking.

Such a measure could take the form of a revision of the Council Recommendation of 30 November 2009 on smoke-free environments to extend it to the surroundings of schools.

¹ European Commission, Report on the application of Directive 2014/40, 20th May 2021



Measure 3 : increase transparency around tobacco lobby

Despite the ratification by the European Union of the Who Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which aims to limit the tobacco industry's influence, the industry's lobby continues to intervene regularly with European decision-makers, which considerably hampers tobacco control policies.

It is therefore necessary to impose on the European institutions, and particularly on the Commission, the transparency of its meetings with the tobacco industry as well as the publication of a report of these exchanges. This transparency should also apply to members of parliament, particularly regarding the authors of the amendments they table.

ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac calls on the European Union to adopt all of these measures so that it remains a pioneer in public health and enables the emergence of a tobacco-free society.

ACT-Alliance contre la Tabac: who are we?

ACT-Alliance contre le Tabac is a group of associations committed to public health and general interest. ACT has been working for nearly thirty years to defend the well-being of all against the interests of the tobacco industry.

As a representative of its member associations, ACT is determined to expose the manipulations of this industry and influence the public debate for a more sustainable future.

ACT's commitment to the fight against tobacco has led to significant public health gains in France. Through information and advocacy campaigns, ACT continues to fight against the tobacco industry who are redoubling their efforts to normalize the consumption of its addictive products in various forms.

Through its unifying action, ACT mobilizes decision-makers, public health, environmental, human rights, and financial stakeholders, as well as the media, to see the emergence in 2030 of the first generation in France to be free of the harmful effects of tobacco and its industry.

www.alliancecontreletabac.org

PRESS CONTACTS

AGENCE BCW

Véronique Machuette – Cell : 06 15 39 90 23 | veronique.machuette@bcw-global.com
Maëly Daviles – Cell : 06 13 20 51 02 | maely.daviles@bcw-global.com

ALLIANCE CONTRE LE TABAC

Charlotte Dekkers – Cell : 07 49 94 04 08 | charlotte.dekkers@alliancecontreletabac.org