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Madrid, October 24th, 2023

Letter of Support regarding the proposed changes to the Slovenian tobacco legislation

Dear Sirs and Madams,

“In Slovenia, tobacco is the leading preventable risk factor for premature death and lost healthy years of life. In the period 2017–2019, an average of 3,123 inhabitants died annually in Slovenia from diseases attributed to smoking, which means almost 9 deaths per day, or 60 every week.” (Source: Strategy for Reducing the Consequences of Tobacco Use for Slovenia Without Tobacco 2022–2030, No: 00700-2/2022/4, 12. 5. 2022).

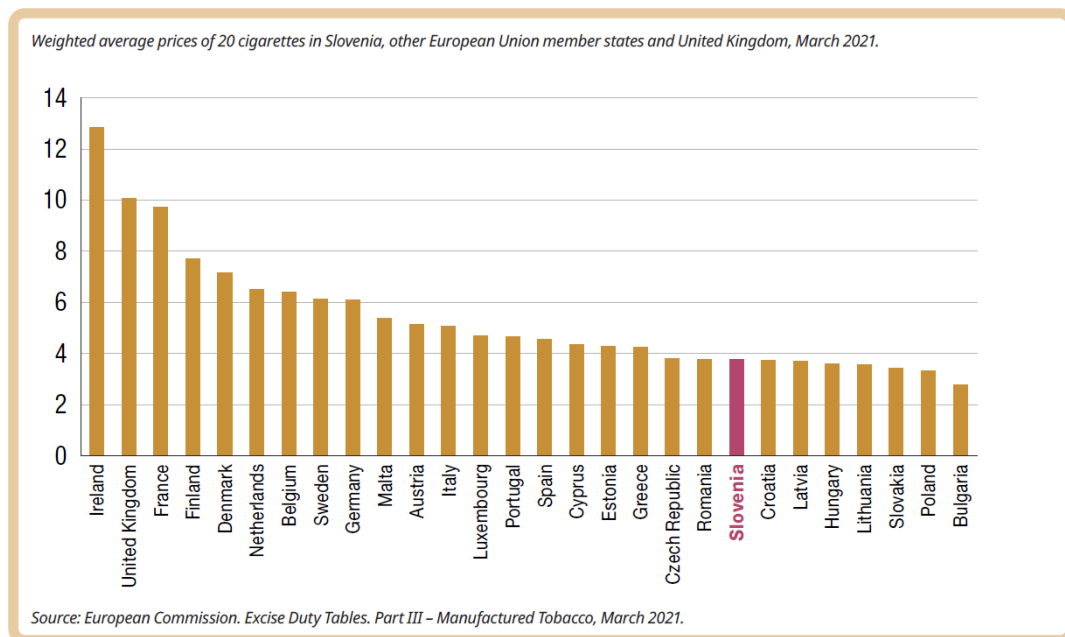
“The costs of treatment, reduction of productivity, and premature mortality due to tobacco use amount to 1,800,000,000 EUR annually.” (Source: Slovenija brez tobaka – Kdaj? (Slovenia Without Tobacco – When?), Slovenian National Institute of Public Health, 2015).

In February 2023, the proposal of the Act on Amendments to the Restriction of the Use of Tobacco Products Act (in accordance with the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2022/2100) was submitted into public consultation until 30th of March 2023. The proposal also includes: a ban on all flavours in electronic cigarettes, with the exception of some tobacco flavours; a ban on characteristic flavours for heated tobacco products and the introduction of health warnings on their

packaging; a ban on adding additives in electronic cigarettes without nicotine; a ban on smoking rooms with a transition period of five years; inclusion of definitions of new nicotine products in the existing legislation; a ban on internet and cross-border distance selling; and a more effective control over the implementation of the Restriction of the Use of Tobacco Products Act.

Tobacco industry heavily promotes tobacco and tobacco related products among children and adolescents. The use of electronic cigarettes (vapes), heated tobacco products, nicotine pouches (white snus) and smokeless tobacco products (snus, chewing tobacco) is increasing among adolescents in Slovenia. Electronic cigarettes are used by 10 % of 15-year-olds. (Source: Pregled najnovejših podatkov o uporabi tobačnih in povezanih izdelkov v Sloveniji (Review of the latest data on the use of tobacco and tobacco related products Slovenia), Slovenian National Institute of Public Health, 2021).

The excise duties on tobacco in Slovenia are among the lowest in Europe:



Source: Towards tobacco-free Slovenia 2040, Slovenian National Institute of Public Health, 2021

According to Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob, the Ministry of Finance should examine the possibility of raising excise duties on tobacco and tobacco related products. According to the Ministry of Finance, the increase in cigarette prices should increase income by 25 million EUR, and in 2024 by an additional 21 million EUR.

Although residents buy fewer tobacco products, state budgets still receive adequate financial inflows (Source: SCTC analysis: Good practices of other European countries, SCTC, 2019).

By adopting the proposed changes to the tobacco legislation, Slovenia would significantly contribute to the goals of the Strategy for Reducing the Consequences of Tobacco Use for Slovenia Without Tobacco 2022–2030 and move closer to the national goal of “Slovenia without Tobacco 2040”.

Slovenia should be among many successful European countries, which have already made the legislation changes in accordance with the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2022/2100.

European countries need and should move forward to the goal of a Tobacco Free Generation by 2040 and the only way to reach that goal is by making urgent, solid and courageous changes in each country's domestic policies made by brave and upright politicians. We count on you to be those politicians. Your legacy will be a legacy that save thousands of lives in Slovenia. And you will also set an example that other countries undoubtedly will follow.

Due to this, **we strongly support the changes proposed** by our colleges of the Slovenka Zveza Javno Zdravje, Okolje in Tobacno Kontrolo **to the Slovenian tobacco legislation and the increase in tobacco and tobacco related products excise duties.**

Raquel Fernandez Megina
President of Nofumadores.org

Nofumadores.org is an independent non-for-profit, non-political, and non-denominational association, registered in the Spanish National Registry of Associations with number 172,478. Nofumadores.org's main objective is to defend the right to live without tobacco smoke or vapors, monitor compliance with current legislation on this matter, as well as promote the advancement of legislation on tobacco control and prevention of smoking. Nofumadores.org is a member of ENSP (European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention) and a collaborating member of the National Committee for the Prevention of Smoking (CNPT). **Winner of the World No Tobacco Day 2022 Award granted by the WHO.**