



Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2 (JATC 2)

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Work Package 9 – Best practices to develop an effective and comprehensive tobacco endgame strategy (Objective 9.3)

Case studies on potential best practices:

Towards Tobacco- and Nicotine-Free Slovenia 2040

Summary

In Slovenia, the official endgame goal is included in the Strategy for reducing harmful consequences of tobacco use – For Tobacco-Free Slovenia – 2022 to 2030 with its first action plan for implementation for the period of 2022-2024. Many stakeholders in tobacco control, joined in the tobacco control stakeholder group called Anti-Tobacco Working Group coordinated by National Institute of Public Health, have been jointly working to achieve the adoption of the endgame goal for more than 5 years. In 2022, the government adopted the strategy including endgame objective that states that in 2040, there will be less than 5% users of tobacco, related and other nicotine products (not registered as nicotine replacement therapy) among inhabitants of Slovenia, aged 15 or more. The Strategy for reducing harmful consequences of tobacco use – For Tobacco-Free Slovenia – 2022 to 2030 includes the measures necessary to set the path towards tobacco and nicotine free Slovenia. The important player in proposing new measures is also the Coordination group of the Ministry of Health, including a broad group of stakeholders.

The case study builds on JATC-2 WP4 [M4.3-M4.4 Guidance on how to identify best practices in tobacco control in Europe](#). It has not been formally assessed as a best practice. Formally assessed best practices are available in the [EU Best Practice Portal](#).



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Context and justification

In Slovenia, the first Restriction on the Use of Tobacco Products Act was adopted in 1996 and later the legislation has been continuously complemented by a number of important tobacco control measures. In 2017, the new Restriction on the Use of Tobacco Products and Related Products Act was adopted. It contains numerous important tobacco control measures, such as plain packaging for cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco, total ban on advertising, display, promotion, sponsorship and donations for tobacco and related products, ban on smoking/use of electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products in all vehicles with minors, ban on use of electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products where smoking was already forbidden (enclosed public and workplaces, functional land of kindergartens, schools and universities), permits to sell tobacco and related products and others.

Until 2022, there was no specific tobacco strategy in Slovenia, but the goals related to tobacco were included in other strategic documents – Resolution on the National Health Care Plan 2016–2025 and National Cancer Control Programme 2010-2015 and 2017-2021. Also, Anti-Tobacco Working Group coordinated by the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) and all individual stakeholders in tobacco control gave numerous recommendations and underlying arguments for new effective tobacco control,¹ which resulted in the new law in 2017. The Working Group together with individual voices from the civil society started the path towards forming the endgame goal. The Working Group consists of members from different stakeholders, WHO office in Slovenia, Ministry of Health, NIJZ, National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food, University Clinic of Respiratory and Allergic Diseases Golnik, two major nongovernmental organizations (No Excuse Slovenia and Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment and Tobacco Control). Every year, the group organizes national symposium and other activities at the World No Tobacco Day and among others, invites Ministers of Health to attend as the introductory speakers. At the 2018 WNTD National symposium the current health minister Milojka Kolar Celarc gave the introductory speech. The next step was the preparation of the first strategy on tobacco control in Slovenia, which was authored by the Ministry of Health and NIJZ and was later reviewed and complemented by other relevant tobacco control stakeholders. The preparation of the draft strategy started in 2018, was finished at the beginning of 2019, followed by the public and inter-sectoral consultation that led to its adoption in 2022² followed by the adoption of the first implementation plan for the period 2022-2024. This will be followed by two-year implementation plans till 2030 and before 2030 the new strategy for the period of 2030-2040 is foreseen.

After the adoption of the strategy the Restriction on the Use of Tobacco Products and Related Products Act was complemented with new measures besides those from the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2022/2100 of 29 June 2022 amending Directive 2014/40/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the withdrawal of certain exemptions in

¹ NIJZ. Towards tobacco-free Slovenia 2040. Available at: https://nijz.si/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/towards_tobacco-free_slovenia_2040.pdf

² Strategija za zmanjševanje posledic rabe tobaka. Za slovenijo brez tobaka 2022–2030. Available at: https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MZ/DOKUMENTI/DJZ-Preventiva-in-skrb-za-zdravje/kajenje/Strategija_za_zmanjsevanje_rabe_tobaka_e-publikacija.pdf

respect of heated tobacco products, the most important being a ban on flavours in electronic cigarettes (with the exception of tobacco flavours) and a ban on smoking rooms; the first will come into force in April 2025 and the second at the end of 2025.

Overall goal and specific objectives

The Strategy for reducing harmful consequences of tobacco use – For Tobacco-Free Slovenia – 2022 to 2030 contains the endgame goal for 2040 and specific goals until 2030.

Endgame goal:

In 2040, there will be less than 5% users of tobacco, and other related nicotine products (not registered as nicotine replacement therapy) among inhabitants of Slovenia, aged 15 or more.

Specific interim goals for the period of 2022-2030 include clear and measurable targets for decrease in the prevalence of tobacco, and related nicotine products among adults and youth, the decrease in inequalities in smoking, decrease in the exposure to tobacco smoke and decrease of the detected infringements of certain tobacco control measures in current Act. For example:

- To decrease the difference in prevalence of smoking among highest and lowest educational groups from 9.3 percentage points in 2019 to less than 5 percentage points in 2030
- To reduce the proportion of detected infringements of the ban on sales to minors to below 20% by 2030;
- To reduce the proportion of detected infringements under the advertising ban to below 5% by 2030.

Methods

The strategy covers different areas of tobacco control:

- Legislation to create an environment conducive to non-smoking.
- Measures to reduce the affordability of tobacco and related products and provide funding for health promotion, prevention and treatment programmes.
- Prevention of initiation of use of tobacco and related products.
- Promotion of smoking cessation and cessation of use of related products.
- Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke.
- Monitoring.
- Other measures.

The implementation plans of the strategy, prepared by the relevant ministries and bodies within ministries, professional institutions, and non-governmental organizations, include details on activities, responsibilities and financing of different actors.

The Coordination group under the Ministry of Health, consisting of different stakeholders in the area of tobacco control, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the strategy and implementation plans, as defined in the Restriction on the Use of Tobacco Products and Related

Products Act. The reports on implementation of the strategy and implementation plan will be prepared.

Coordination and implementation responsibilities

Coordination:

The Coordination group of the Ministry of Health

Implementation:

Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Administration, Health Inspectorate, Market Inspectorate, Labour Inspectorate, NIJZ, National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food, Police, Financial Administration of the Republic of Slovenia and two major non-governmental organizations (No Excuse Slovenia and Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment and Tobacco Control and other stakeholders.

Involvement of target population and stakeholders

Different tobacco control stakeholders were included in the preparation and review/update of the strategy and its goals, other stakeholders were invited to participate in the public consultation in 2019.

National public health authorities, health care professionals, stakeholders other than health sector and civil society organizations are/will be included also in implementation and evaluation.

Outcomes

The main outcomes to be achieved are described under the objectives for 2030 and endgame 2040 and new data will be published end of 2024. However, different studies currently show that the prevalence of use of new tobacco and nicotine products is increasing, especially among youth.

Monitoring and evaluation

NIJZ carries out monitoring of the effects of the tobacco control measures by different studies among adults and youth and publish the results on its webpage. Also, all government proposals for tobacco control legislation include some sort of regulatory impact assessment, including available evidence and opinions received in the public consultation and inter-sectoral review.

Sustainability and funding

There is a lasting and strong commitment of key people in the participating organizations. Funding is from the state budget mainly, also from own resources of different stakeholders.

Equity and ethical principles

All participating organizations consider equity and ethical principles in their work and adhere to Article 5.3. of the WHO FCTC. No participants from entities affiliated with the tobacco industry or front groups were ever included in this practice or any of the described working groups.