

# PRESS RELEASE

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**United Kingdom, France and Ireland top new European ranking on tobacco control, while Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg are at the bottom. Top score (UK) is twice as high as lowest one (Germany)**

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## Contact

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**Berlin, Germany** - The new *Tobacco Control Scale*, launched today at the 8th *European Conference on Tobacco or Health (ECToH)*, shows United Kingdom, France and Ireland leading the ranking while three countries, Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg continue to disappoint with extremely poor scores. The top score (UK) is twice as high as lowest one (Germany).

A new ranking report describes the results of a survey of tobacco control activity in 36 European countries in 2019. The Tobacco Control Scale quantifies the implementation of tobacco control policies at country level and is based on six policies described by the World Bank, which they say should be prioritised in a comprehensive tobacco control programme.

The new ranking is being presented today at the 8th European Conference on Tobacco or Health in Berlin by Luk Joossens of the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL). Countries spend less than 2 Euros per capita on tobacco control.

"The extremely poor score of Germany is not surprising for us" explains Dr. Martina Pötschke-Langer, President of ECToH and CEO of the German Smokefree Alliance (ABNR). "Now is the time to act promptly and communicate the report's results to those who can make a change, including the Ministries of Finances, Economy, Justice, Nutrition and Agriculture and Health. Priorities should be tobacco tax increases, comprehensive advertising and marketing bans, smokefree workplaces and public areas and effective smoking cessation programmes for smokers."





Dr Sakari Karjalainen, President of ECL, welcomes the ranking update as *“an important policy tool in encouraging countries to strengthen their weak spots in tobacco control. We are very pleased that three countries with low scores in previous editions made huge progress.”*

Israel, included in the survey for the first time, did very well in terms of price policies. Slovenia, Greece and Austria made spectacular progress and improved their score compared to 2016.

*“Plain packaging for cigarettes exists now in eight countries and should be the standard for all countries in the European Region”* states Luk Joossens, the main author of the report.

Eight countries (UK, France, Ireland, Norway, Turkey, Slovenia, Belgium and Israel) have adopted and implemented plain packaging legislation. Hungary will implement its legislation in 2022, and the Netherlands and Denmark have agreed to introduce plain packaging very soon.

All countries assessed in the report, except for Switzerland, have ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and nineteen countries have ratified the WHO FCTC Protocol to eliminate the Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

The full report can be downloaded at <https://www.tobaccocontrolscales.org/2019-edition/>

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### 36 European countries ranked by total Tobacco Control Scale score in 2019

RANKING 2019 (ranking 2016)		Country	Price (30)	Public place bans (22)	Bud- get (10)	Ad bans (13)	Health warning (10)	Treat- ment (10)	Illicit trade (3)	Art 5.3 (2)	TOTAL (100)
1 (1)	-	UK	25	22	0	12	9	9	2	1	80
2 (4)	▲	France	22	18	4	11	9	7	2	1	74
3 (2)	▼	Ireland	18	22	1	13	9	8	1	1	73
4 (3)	▼	Iceland	23	17	9	13	4	4	0	0	70
5 (5)	-	Norway	22	17	1	13	8	4	1	0	66
6 (6)	-	Finland	18	18	2	13	5	5	1	0	62
7 (new)		Israel	27	15	1	11	1	6	0	0	61
8 (28)	▲	Slovenia	12	16	2	13	9	6	1	0	59
8 (9)	▲	Hungary	15	21	0	11	5	6	1	-	59
10 (8)	▼	Spain	15	21	1	9	5	5	2	0	58
10 (17)	▲	Belgium	16	16	1	8	9	6	2	0	58
12 (7)	▼	Romania	16	21	0	8	5	6	1	0	57
13 (31)	▲	Greece	18	20	-	7	5	3	1	0	54
14 (9)	▼	Netherlands	14	15	1	9	5	7	1	1	53
15 (9)	▼	Sweden	14	15	0	9	5	7	2	0	52
15 (13)	▼	Italy	15	16	0	9	5	6	1	0	52
17 (9)	▼	Turkey	10	15	0	8	10	6	2	0	51
17 (13)	▼	Malta	16	12	0	11	5	5	2	-	51
17 (23)	▲	Croatia	16	11	0	12	5	5	2	-	51
20 (15)	▼	Portugal	18	11	-	10	5	4	2	0	50
20 (35)	▲	Austria	11	20	0	7	5	5	2	0	50
20 (17)	▼	Ukraine	17	15	-	11	4	3	0	0	50



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23 (15)	▼	Poland	14	11	0	11	5	7	1	0	49
23 (26)	▲	Latvia	14	12	2	10	5	4	2	0	49
23 (31)	▲	Czechia	12	15	0	8	5	7	2	0	49
23 (21)	▼	Estonia	13	14	1	11	5	3	2	0	49
27 (19)	▼	Bulgaria	15	11	-	11	5	5	1	0	48
27 (26)	▼	Cyprus	15	10	0	11	5	5	2	-	48
29 (17)	▼	Russian Federation	8	15	0	13	4	6	1	-	47
29 (28)	▼	Lithuania	12	13	1	10	5	4	2	0	47
29 (23)	▼	Denmark	13	11	2	8	5	7	1	0	47
32 (30)	▼	Slovakia	12	12	-	9	5	6	2	0	46
33 (23)	▼	Serbia	19	11	0	9	1	4	1	0	45
34 (33)	▼	Luxembourg	5	16	0	9	5	7	2	0	44
35 (21)	▼	Switzerland (-1)	13	11	4	2	5	7	0	0	41
36 (33)	▼	Germany	14	11	0	4	5	4	2	0	40

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **About the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)**

ECL provides a unique platform as the only non-profit, pan-European umbrella organisation with the mission of uniting, at the European level, national and regional cancer leagues to achieve a cancer-free Europe. Active since 1980 and located in Brussels, ECL currently has 29 members from 24 countries in the European Region, covering 21 EU member states. ECL's members are cancer charities operating across the whole portfolio - from cancer research and awareness to patient support during and after diagnosis. Cancer leagues are often the main resource for the public for cancer control information and services. ECL's mission is to influence and improve cancer control and cancer care in Europe. This is done by providing a forum and voice for experienced charities and supporting new entrants facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing, primarily in the areas of cancer prevention, tobacco control, access to medicines and patient support, as well as creating opportunities to advocate for these issues at the EU level. ECL also collaborates with global and European institutions, other NGOs and research institutes. For further information about ECL, please visit their [website](#) and follow @CancerLeagues on Twitter and Facebook.

### **About the 8th European Conference on Tobacco or Health (ECToH)**

ECToHs are organised every 3 years under the auspices of the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) and by prominent cancer leagues. These conferences attract hundreds of committed scientists, policy-makers, researchers, health professionals as well as others strongly committed to fighting against tobacco. ECToH conferences are recognised internationally as the main European forum for tobacco control advocates and aim to present the most up to date advocacy trends, showcase successful tobacco control campaigns and provide a platform for experts to exchange information, network and create partnerships. Since the first ECToH in 1996 in Finland, significant strides have been made toward effectively addressing the tobacco epidemic, with the adoption and implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the 2014 EU Tobacco Products Directive. But we are still not here. Tobacco is still the major cause of cancer and remains one of the leading causes of death and disease in Europe. European and global experts are gathering in Berlin (Germany) from 19-22 February 2020 on the occasion of the 8th European Conference on Tobacco or Health, hosted by the German Cancer Society, German Cancer Aid, German Smokfree Alliance and the ECL. Our goal is to make Europe tobacco-free in the next 20 years. This conference will enforce cooperation and strengthen our movement to achieve such goal.

### **About the Tobacco Control Scale (TCS)**

In 2004, the European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP) provided a grant to Luk Joossens for a project to measure tobacco control activity at country level in Europe. A questionnaire was finalised with feedback from a panel of 10 international experts, researchers and specialists and sent to correspondents in 28 European countries who had agreed to fill in their country data. Although the original intention of the project was simply to describe tobacco control policies in Europe, it seemed worthwhile to quantify these policies, in order to be able to compare countries systematically. Hence, an expert panel scored the questionnaire and created a scale, assigning scores to each tobacco control policy. In 2005, Martin Raw joined the project to repeat the data collection in a more systematic manner with the intention to have the methodology published in and approved by a scientific journal. In the summer of 2005, the questionnaire survey was repeated, this time with 30 European countries. Data were collected using the 2004 questionnaire, but stricter definitions were applied in the scale for smoke free places and smoking treatment systems.

The Tobacco Control Scale (TCS) is based on key cost-effective policy interventions described by the World Bank. The TCS was first described by Joossens and Raw in a 2006 article, which was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Tobacco Control*. In 2007, the Swiss Cancer Leagues financed and published the report. In 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2020 it was published by the ECL. The research results were presented each time at the ECToH conferences in Basel, Amsterdam, Istanbul and Porto. This year, again, the latest edition of the report is being presented at the 8th ECToH in Berlin. Joossens and Raw remained the authors of the 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2016 editions. In 2018, Ariadna Feliu and Esteve Fernandez of the Catalan Institute for Oncology joined the project. The authors of the 2019 edition were Joossens, Feliu and Fernandez. Please visit the TCS's [website](#) and follow @scale\_tc on Twitter.

