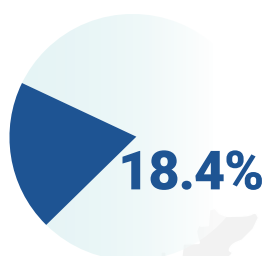


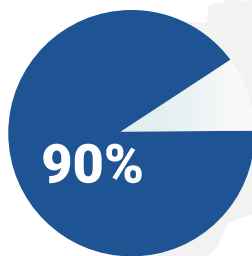
# TOBACCO ENDGAME TOWARDS A SMOKE-FREE GENERATION

WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control provisions set the minimum baseline of tobacco sales at 18 years old, but countries can do more. Many countries are examining tobacco endgame policies, which aim to rapidly reduce smoking prevalence to minimal levels. One such policy is raising the tobacco age-of-sale to 21 years, widely referred to as “**Tobacco 21**” (T21). Across the EU the minimum age of sales is set at 18 but an increase in age of smoking is significantly associated with a decreased likelihood to smoke later in life and decreased harm from the detrimental health effects of smoking.

## Smoking in the European Union



people >15 years old are daily smokers in the EU.



of smokers begin smoking before the age of 18 years.



average age to start smoking is **16 years** of age.



**1 in 6 15-year-olds** smoked cigarettes in the last six months (2018).

## Health risks

- Most significant cause of premature death across the EU. Responsible for **700,000** deaths every year.
- Smokers are at risk of developing lung cancer, COPD, coronary artery disease, stroke, diabetes, infertility, and many other conditions.
- 1 in 2 smokers die of tobacco-related causes.
- The brains of children and adolescents are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of nicotine and nicotine addiction. Brain development for decision-making, reward processing, and emotional regulation continue to develop at least until the age of 25 years old.

## Tobacco 21 Effectiveness Modelling

- Studies on Tobacco 21 have found that implementing this policy results in several societal benefits:
  - Decrease in the perception that tobacco purchase is easy.
  - Deters adolescents and young adults from attempting to purchase.
  - Discourages proxy purchases.
- Modelling evidence shows that Tobacco 21 legislation can result in:
  - Fewer tobacco attributable deaths:
  - **50,000** fewer deaths from lung cancer
  - Reduction in tobacco initiation in adolescents aged 15-17.



**ERS** EUROPEAN  
RESPIRATORY  
SOCIETY  
every breath counts

## Best practices

- Tobacco 21 has already been introduced in several countries such as the USA, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Kuwait.

### USA figures

**Prevention of 223,000** premature deaths among US-born people between 2000-2019.

**50,000** fewer deaths from lung cancer.

### After Tobacco 21 laws

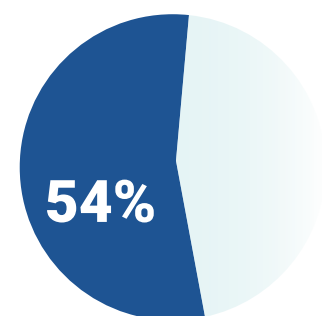
**Massachusetts:** reduction in 30-day smoking among adolescents.

**Ohio:** reduction in tobacco use among high-school children.

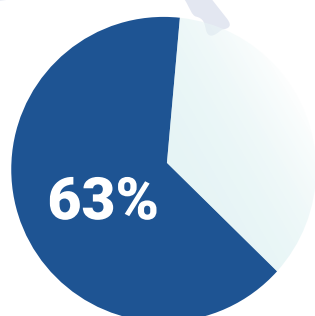
**California:** reduction in tobacco products purchases among **15-16-year-olds**.

Decline in illegal tobacco sales among **15-16-year-olds**.

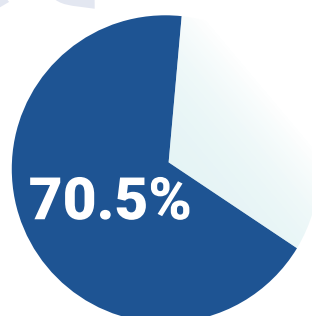
## Support for Tobacco 21



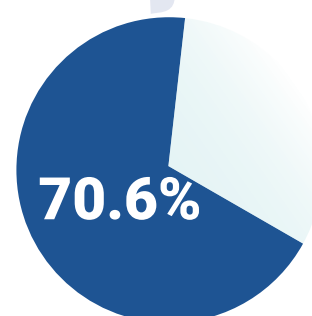
of **18 - to 24** year-olds supported the Tobacco 21 measure in England.



of adults supported increasing the age when it becomes legal to purchase tobacco from **18 to 21** years in England.



of USA adults surveyed supported raising the legal age of sale, with the strongest support found among never smokers, females, African Americans, and adults over **45** years of age.



people aged 15 years and older supported raising the legal age-of-sale to **21** years in Ireland.

## Recommendations

Implementing Tobacco 21 policies to denormalise and delay tobacco use. With this implementation several other points need to be considered and aligned to this policy:

- 1 A strategy on enforcing age-verification of retailers.
- 2 Aligning ENDS policy with tobacco related policy to prevent ENDS being a gateway to tobacco product uptake by adolescents and young adults.
- 3 Stop marketing tobacco and ENDS products throughout the EU.
- 4 Restricting online sales of tobacco products to protect children and young people.