

Dear Mme/Sir,

We write to you after reading the leaked report on beating cancer in the EU. As hopefully will be clear when viewing our message, we believe that the report does not focus on what really causes cancer but instead includes all ways of getting the daily nicotine regardless if they cause cancer or not. If the goal is to get rid of all nicotine use in the Union, that should be said and backed up by evidence, not hidden behind the just fight against traditional cigarettes.

To get smokers to abandon traditional cigarettes at a quicker rate than today, they, in many cases, need another, less harmful, source of nicotine. In the UK several organisations and public health agencies have understood and advocate for the principle of harm reduction also in the field of tobacco (inter alia, NICE, Cancer Research UK, the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Commons, British Medical Association, Royal College of General Practitioners, Public Health England).

The Swedish experience with oral, moist tobacco pouches (snus) supports that approach. According to EU statistics Swedish men use tobacco daily roughly in the same amount as men in the other EU countries. However, tobacco related deaths for Swedish men, including lung cancers, are the lowest in the EU. The reason is that Swedish men use snus rather than smoke traditional cigarettes (22 % use snus daily while 7 % smoke daily, <https://www.can.se/publikationer/tobaksvanor-i-sverige-2003-2019/>).

Again, to lower the rate of cigarette smoking faster than today, many smokers need an alternative source of nicotine that do not shorten their lives as cigarettes do. To be dependent on daily nicotine intake is, of course, a dependency that preferably should be avoided but if the nicotine does not cause harm to the health of the user and does not shorten their life expectancy, it is the right way to ween our societies away from smoking traditional cigarettes. To beat cancer, the EU should make smoking of traditional cigarettes more restricted but give present day smokers an alternative, less harmful way of getting their daily nicotine. By doing that, and by giving correct and truthful medical information to the citizens of the EU, smoking rates will be lowered quicker than today and stay low since alternatives are available.

You do not get cancer from snus ([http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32366-8/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32366-8/abstract)). As a matter of fact, Norway has around 6000 deaths from lung cancer yearly while Sweden with a population that is 90 % larger has 5200. The reason is not that they smoke so much more in Norway but rather that snus is used, and has been used for decades, in Sweden. Using snus to get the necessary nicotine is certainly a dependency, but a habit that does not shorten the life of the user. Traditional cigarettes, on the other hand, lead to a shorter life for at least half of the consumers. In the U.S., FDA has decided that Swedish snus can be advertised as a reduced risk tobacco product due to the fact that snus does not harm the health as does cigarette smoking.

To beat cancer in the EU, the authorities should be truthful and refrain from fake news, attack the main causes of cancer and allow less harmful sources of nicotine to be used so that the rates of smoking really are lowered quickly.

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[The Betrayal of Smokers \(pdf\)](#)

[Snus saves lives \(pdf\)](#)

[The health effects of snus \(pdf\)](#)