

# EU NICOTINE USERS SURVEY 2020 REPORT: THE RISE OF HARM REDUCTION

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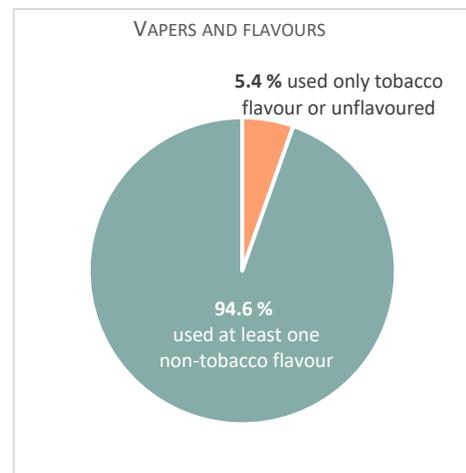
**European Tobacco Harm Reduction Advocates (ETHRA) today publishes the report on its huge EU Nicotine Users Survey. The results - from more than 35,000 EU respondents - confirm that there is an unstoppable movement towards harm reduction in Europe.**

Launched online by ETHRA in the last quarter of 2020, the questionnaire addressed consumer use of nicotine products. Topics included smoking and the desire to quit, use of safer nicotine products and barriers to switching caused by European and national regulations. Over 37,000 people, including more than 35,000 EU residents, participated in the ETHRA survey. ETHRA has now processed the data and today we publish our analysis in a report, which opens with a summary of 10 key facts. The data sets and comments for individual EU countries will be made available on the ETHRA site at a later date.

## HARM REDUCTION HELPS WITH QUITTING SMOKING

Significantly, more than 27,000 of the survey participants had completely quit smoking. Vapes, snus and nicotine pouches are the main harm reduction products used to quit. Amongst the respondents who had ever smoked, 83.5% of vapers, and 73.7% of snus users had successfully stopped smoking.

Over 93% of vapers and 75% of snus users cited harm reduction and improvements to health as their reasons for adopting these products. The report shows that the reduced cost compared to smoking, the availability of flavours, the availability of products and the ability to adjust vaping products are other major factors for consumers when switching to harm reduction products.

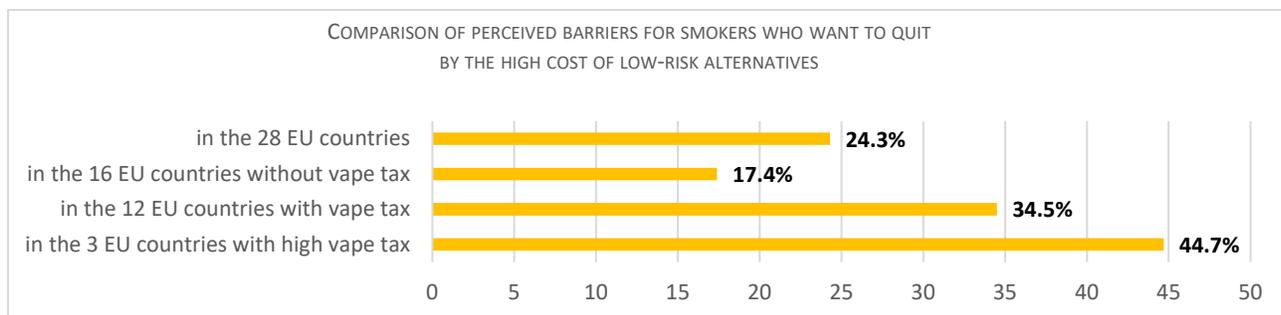


## BARRIERS TO QUITTING SMOKING

However, smoking remains the predominant way of consuming nicotine in Europe. More than 67% of the current smokers who responded to our survey want to quit, but, as our report shows, they face barriers in their desire to be smoke-free.

The lack of availability of low-risk nicotine products presents a major obstacle to consumers wishing to quit smoking. The EU ban on the sale of snus (except for in Sweden), illustrates this barrier, with 31% of current smokers indicating that they would be interested in trying snus if its sale was legalised in the EU.

A quarter (24.3%) of those who smoke but who want to quit cited the high price of safer alternatives as a barrier to quitting smoking. This number rises to 44.7% in countries with a high tax on vaping products (Estonia, Finland and Portugal).



The TPD restrictions of a maximum nicotine concentration of 20mg/ml and a maximum bottle volume of 10ml have led to a shift in consumer behaviour, where vapers have moved to using very low nicotine e-liquids. More than 30% of people who vape and smoke ('dual users') believed they could completely quit smoking if the EU nicotine limit was increased.

## HOPES AND FEARS

The future is full of hopes and fears for European nicotine users, in light of the TED and TPD revisions. If the EU bans flavours, 28% of vapers are likely to restart smoking, and 71% would consider using the black market or other alternative sources. In the 16 EU countries without a vape tax, only 1% of vapers are currently using alternative sources.

If the EU repealed the 10 ml bottle limit, 89% of vapers said they would buy larger bottles of e-liquid to reduce plastic waste. 83% of vapers are in favour of having access to an EU database on e-liquid ingredients.

## ETHRA RECOMMENDS

In light of the results from the EU Nicotine Users Survey 2020, ETHRA recommends the lifting of the EU ban on the sale of snus, revising upwards the 10ml refill bottle and 20mg/ml nicotine concentration limits, and the publication of databases on vaping products.

The repeal of vaping taxes in 12 countries and the lifting of flavour bans in Estonia, Finland and Hungary are also necessary to allow European smokers to have the freedom to quit smoking using low-risk products.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

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## ETHRA EU Nicotine Users Survey

The survey and report are the joint work of the European Tobacco Harm Reduction Advocates (ETHRA) with the 22 association members, the help of scientific partners, vapers, snus users and friends. Nobody was paid for any work for this survey. The coordination work was done by Philippe Poirson (Sovape), who has no financial ties to any industry nor business, including philanthropy ones. Use of the Evalandgo GDRP compliant survey platform (€50/month

subscription) was provided by Sovape, a French non-profit association with no links to the tobacco or pharmaceutical industries.

**The EU Nicotine Users Survey report will be available on the ETHRA website from 10 June 2021, in English and French, at: <https://ethra.co/news/80-ethra-eu-nicotine-users-survey-report>**

**European Tobacco Harm Reduction Advocates (ETHRA)** promotes discussion and the exchange of information and potential actions to reduce exposure to smoking-related harm. ETHRA is an alliance of 22 grass root consumer groups in 16 European countries, representing approximately 27 million consumers across Europe and supported by scientific experts in tobacco control or nicotine research. We have a unique pan European perspective on how nicotine users are using safer products. ETHRA is not funded and has no industry conflicts of interest.

ETHRA is registered on the EU Transparency Register, number 354946837243-73.

**Website:** <https://ethra.co/>

**Twitter:** [@europethra](https://twitter.com/europethra)

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