

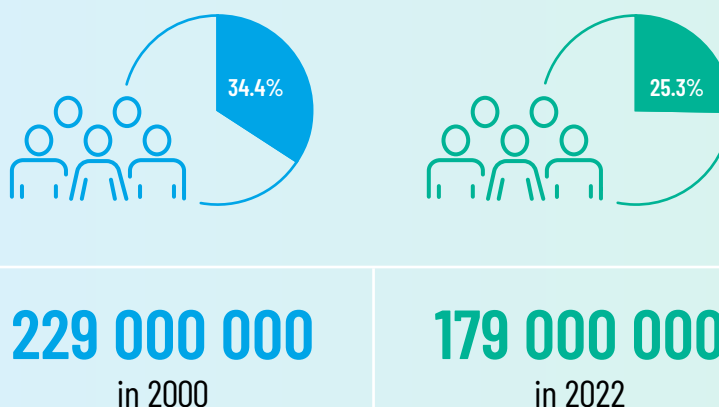
# Prevalence of tobacco use among adults in the WHO European Region in 2022

## OVERVIEW

The estimated **prevalence of current tobacco use decreased** from 34 per 100 adults (34.4%) in 2000 to 25 per 100 (25.3%) in 2022 (1).

An estimated **179 million people in the WHO European Region were current tobacco users in 2022** (down from 229 million in 2000) (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Estimated numbers of current tobacco users, WHO European Region, 2000–2022



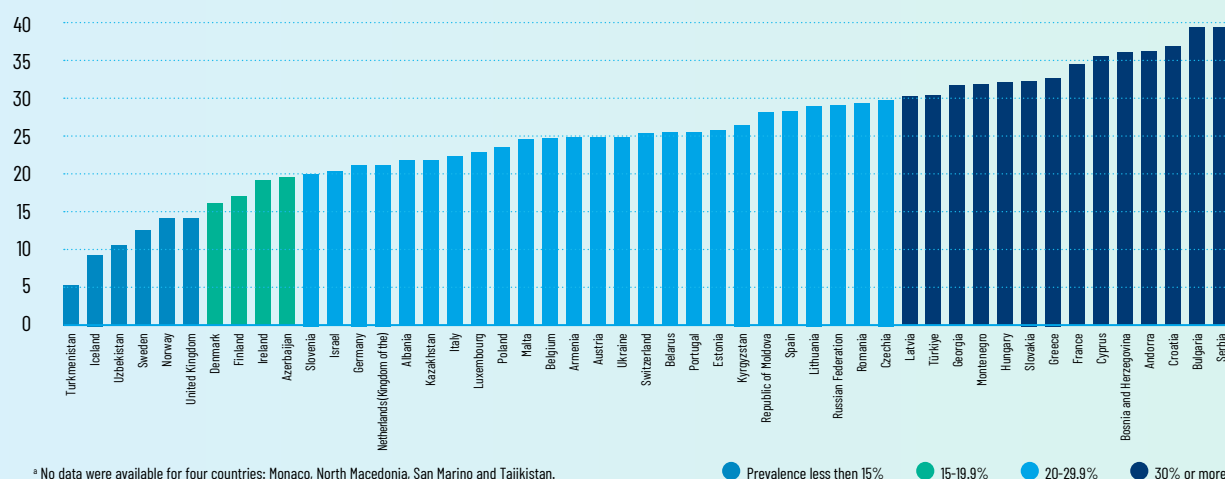
Source: WHO (1).

Modelling shows that the European Region will have a **relative reduction in rates** between 2010 and 2025 of only 17%, in comparison with the target of the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020 of a 30% reduction in global prevalence (2), and is projected to have the highest prevalence rate of tobacco use globally by 2030, of just over 23%.

The European Region is the only WHO region not expected to reach the female 30% relative reduction target by 2025.

Fig. 2 shows the current age-standardized prevalence rates in countries in the Region. As the figures are age-standardized, they should be used only for drawing comparisons among countries and must not be used to estimate the absolute numbers of current smokers in a country.

Fig. 2. Current rates of tobacco use among people aged ≥ 15 years; age-standardized prevalence (both sexes combined), estimates for 2022<sup>a</sup>



Source: WHO (1).

## ► BURDEN OF TOBACCO USE BY GENDER

WHO has estimated that about one third of men (32%) in the Region used tobacco in 2022. Male current tobacco users in 2022 (Fig. 3) numbered 114 million, a reduction from about 153 million (46.4%) in 2000; the number is expected to continue to decrease to about 109 million (30.6%) by 2025 and further to 101 million (28.3%) by 2030.

WHO has estimated that about one fifth of women (18.5%) in the European Region used tobacco in 2022. Female current tobacco users in 2022 (Fig. 3) numbered 65 million, a reduction from about 76 million (22.3%) in 2000; the number is expected to continue to decrease to about 64 million (18.2%) by 2025 and to 62 million (17.9%) by 2030.

Fig. 3. Numbers of current tobacco users, WHO European Region, by sex, 2022



Source: WHO (1).

Almost all (98% of male and 99% of female) tobacco users in 2022 were smokers of cigarettes or other forms of smoked tobacco. 1.4% (10 million) of people aged  $\geq 15$  years in the Region used smokeless<sup>1</sup> tobacco, of whom 2.6% (9 million) were men and 0.3% (1 million) were women.

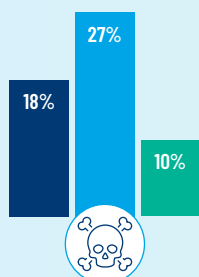
## ► DEATHS ATTRIBUTABLE TO TOBACCO USE

Eighteen per cent of deaths due to **noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)** in Europe in 2019 were attributable to tobacco use. Almost one in five premature deaths due to NCD could be avoided if tobacco use was eliminated from the Region (Fig. 4) (3).

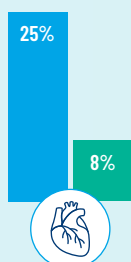
Fig. 4. Proportions of deaths attributable to tobacco use

● Both sexes ● Men ● Women

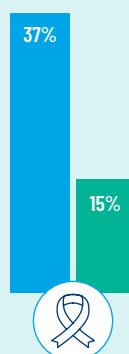
Of deaths **due to NCD**, 18% are **attributable to tobacco**. The proportion of deaths due to NCD that are attributable to tobacco use is almost three times higher for men (27%) than for women (10%).



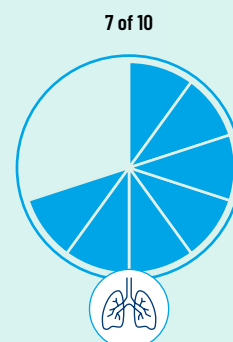
The proportions of deaths from **cardiovascular diseases** (e.g. heart diseases, stroke) due to tobacco use are estimated to be 25% for men and 8% for women.



The overall proportion of **deaths due to cancer** that are attributable to tobacco use is 37% for men and 15% for women.



Seven of 10 **lung cancers** in men are related to tobacco use.



<sup>1</sup> Examples of smokeless tobacco products include products for oral and nasal use. The most commonly used forms of smokeless tobacco in the WHO European Region are snus, a moist to semi-moist ground, oral smokeless tobacco product, and nasvay, a type of smokeless tobacco for oral use that is produced and used mainly in central Asian countries.

## WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- More countries should monitor all forms of tobacco use, including novel and emerging nicotine and tobacco products such as ENDS, ENNDS, nicotine pouches and HTPs.<sup>2</sup>
- Countries are encouraged to use standardized protocols and questions in tobacco surveys to monitor key tobacco control indicators.
- Countries' capacity for preparing and implementing surveys and disseminating and using the data for monitoring and evaluation of policy should be strengthened.
- Countries should integrate tobacco surveillance programmes into national, regional and global health surveillance programmes to ensure that the data are comparable and can be analysed at regional and international levels, as appropriate (4).

### References<sup>3</sup>

1. WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco use 2000–2030. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2024 (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240088283>).
2. Global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2013 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/94384>).
3. Global burden of disease database [website]. Seattle (WA): Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation; 2024 (<http://ghdx.healthdata.org/gbd-results-tool?params=gbd-api-2019-permalink/3acc2f53453c475233d848edad02182f>).
4. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control [website]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2024 (<https://www.who.int/fctc/en/>).

<sup>2</sup> ENDS: electronic nicotine delivery system; ENNDS: electronic non-nicotine delivery system; HTPs: heated tobacco products.  
<sup>3</sup> Weblinks accessed 10 January 2024.