



CPME/AD/Brd/130609/146 final/EN

At the CPME Board Meeting in Brussels on 13 June 2009, CPME adopted the following document "**CPME calls for higher taxes on Tobacco in the EU**" (CPME 2009/146 final EN/Fr)" (referring to CPME 2009/146 EN/Fr)

CPME calls for higher taxes on Tobacco in the EU

The governments of the EU member states should take on the responsibility of making tobacco less accessible and more expensive in order to fight the 1,600,000 tobacco related deaths in the EU¹. The Danish Minister of Health and Prevention Jakob Axel Nielsen will put forward a proposal for higher EU minimum level of tobacco taxes at the Council Meeting in Luxembourg, 9 June 2009.

Higher prices lead to lower death rates

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international organisations advise the governments to increase prices on tobacco. Numerous studies show evidence of prices being one of the strongest means to reduce smoking and tobacco related death.

WHO has analyzed tobacco prices and found that an increase in tobacco prices of 10 % leads to at 4 % decrease in sales. Higher prices have most impact on the young smokers on their way into at smoking habit but it also affects adult smokers' consumption. Some will smoke less, others will find higher prices a further argument for quitting smoking.

In the WHO European Region smoking prevalence is estimated at around 28.6% (40% among males and 18.2% among females).

The Danish Minister of health's call for a common European effort to increase tobacco taxes must be seen in the light of cross border shopping as an alternative purchase channel for smokers faced with an increased national tobacco tax and thus tobacco prices. The EU effort makes way for an increase of tobacco taxes nationally. It should cut off both the cheaper "foreign" tobacco and the politicians' argument against increasing tobacco taxes.

CPME strongly recommends

that the Council of Health Ministers and the ECOFIN council increase the minimum taxation of tobacco to a substantial higher level than the present one.

¹ The European tobacco control report 2007 p. 24, WHO Europe