

# Regulation should adapt with, and foster innovation

Regulation must account for—and adapt to—the pace of scientific and technological progress.

Today there are around one billion smokers in the world. The World Health Organization predicts this number will remain roughly the same come 2025.<sup>1</sup> At Philip Morris International, we've spent over a decade developing smoke-free products, because adults who don't quit tobacco and nicotine altogether deserve better alternatives to continued smoking.

But for those adults who would otherwise continue smoking, to switch to better alternatives, they must first be allowed to access information about them. Unfortunately, in some countries we face regulatory roadblocks: old laws designed for cigarettes are limiting consumer choice.

The best choice any smoker can make is to quit cigarettes and nicotine altogether. But many will continue to smoke, in the absence of a better alternative.



Inclusive dialogue and an open mind about the role of smoke-free alternatives are needed

Preventing these men and women from learning about, and accessing science-backed smoke-free alternatives means accepting the status quo and the fact the vast majority of them will continue to smoke cigarettes, the most harmful form of nicotine consumption.

An inclusive dialogue and an open mind about the role smoke-free alternatives can play in addressing a major global health problem are needed for the hundreds of millions of men and women who would otherwise continue smoking.

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Regulation must account for, and adapt to, the pace of scientific and technological progress. The right mix of policy measures can maximize the opportunities that innovation offers, while at the same time minimizing its unintended consequences.

## A need for regulation

The well-known risks of smoking have led regulators to impose restrictions and excise taxes on cigarettes, yet they remain legally available to adults around the world.

Tobacco and nicotine-containing products are not risk-free and should be subject to strict rules and enforcement. However, not all of these products are the same, and consequently they should not be regulated in this same way.

The vast majority of harmful compounds found in cigarette smoke and associated with smoking-related diseases are generated by burning tobacco. Smoke-free alternatives, such as heated tobacco products, e-cigarettes, and oral smokeless products, don't burn tobacco.

If science validates that there is a fundamental difference between smoke-free alternatives and cigarettes, shouldn't they be treated differently? And shouldn't adult smokers know about them?

## Smoke-free products as a complement to existing tobacco control measures

Current regulations designed to prevent smoking and encourage cessation, alongside public health campaigns with the same ambition, are important initiatives to deliver a smoke-free future. We support governmental efforts around this. However, a third pillar is needed that will enable better choices for those adults who would otherwise continue smoking.

To be clear, regulations should continue to dissuade people from starting to smoke and encourage cessation. But it's equally clear the millions of adults who continue to smoke should have the opportunity to switch to scientifically substantiated alternatives. There is no substitute for quitting altogether, but we believe we can together contribute to positively impacting public health—by recognizing the potential of smoke-free alternatives to continued smoking.

**Science-backed, smoke-free alternatives can complement existing measures to help address the global health issue of smoking by providing an avenue for adults who don't quit tobacco and nicotine altogether to make a better choice than continued smoking. Coupled with the right regulatory encouragement and support from society, we can reach a smoke-free future, faster.**

1. WHO, Global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco use 2000-2025, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-global-report-on-trends-in-prevalence-of-tobacco-use-2000-2025-third-edition>

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