

Protect people from tobacco smoke

KEY MESSAGES

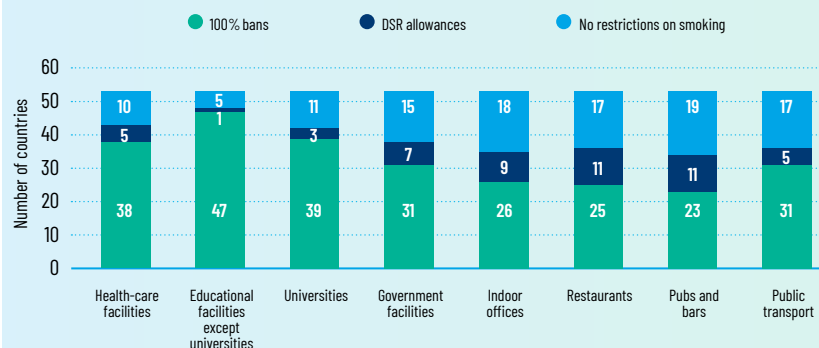
- The number of countries in the WHO European Region in which all public places are completely smoke-free (or at least 90% of the population is covered by subnational smoke-free legislation) increased from four in 2007 to 18 in 2022 (1). Still, two thirds of countries in the Region have more lenient laws that do not adequately protect people from the dangers of second-hand smoke (Fig. 1.).
- Prohibition of smoking, which provides protection from exposure to second-hand smoke, **remains insufficient in government facilities, indoor offices, restaurants, pubs and bars and on public transport**. Despite evidence that designated smoking rooms (DSR) do not fully protect people in indoor public areas, 12 countries continue to allow them in many venues, especially in the hospitality sector (Fig. 2).
- European countries are increasingly extending smoke-free laws to other public venues. Cultural facilities, such as theatres and cinemas, are the best covered (34 countries), followed by shops (31 countries) and indoor waiting areas for public transport (e.g. train and metro stations)(30 countries). While most countries now prohibit smoking on aircraft, only 19 have adopted 100% smoking bans in airports, with no DSR. Thus, 34 countries in the Region do not fully protect airport staff and passengers from second-hand smoke. In recognition of the harm of second-hand smoke for children, half of the countries in the Region ban smoking in children's outdoor areas such as playgrounds, and 14 countries have made smoking in cars with passengers under the age of 18 years illegal (Fig. 3)

Fig. 1. Percentages of countries with bans on smoking in public places in the WHO European Region, 2022



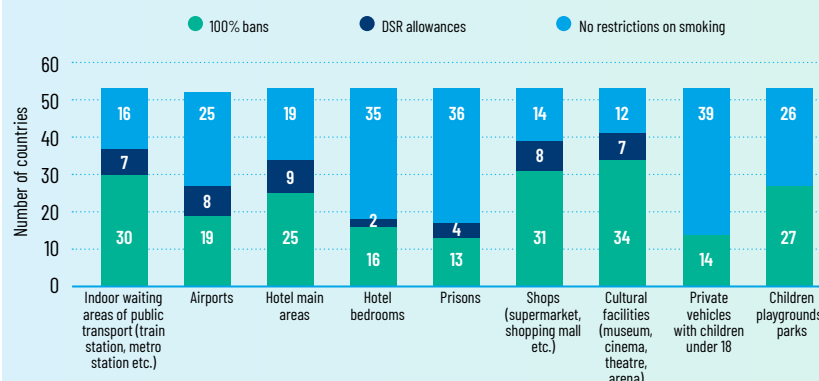
Source: WHO (1).

Fig. 2. Numbers of countries with comprehensive bans on smoking and with designated smoking rooms (DSR), by venue, 2022



Source: WHO (1).

Fig. 3. Indoor and outdoor smoke-free venues in the WHO European Region, 2022



Note: Andorra does not have an airport.

Source: WHO (1).

- Guidelines for implementation of Article 8 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) state that “each Party should strive to provide universal protection within five years of the WHO FCTC’s entry into force for that Party” (2). At present, 32 States Parties to the Convention have not yet implemented this measure at the highest level, and the deadline has now expired.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- Each country should “adopt and implement ... measures, providing for protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces, public transport, indoor public places and, as appropriate, other public places” (2).
- Ensure clear, comprehensive smoke-free legislation, with no exemptions, clear enforcement responsibilities and fines for violations (3).
- Involve civil society to achieve effective legislation. Effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement are powerful tools for coordinating advocacy and strengthening political will.
- Raise awareness to ensure early adoption and smooth implementation of smoke-free legislation.
- Monitor implementation and compliance, and measure the effect of smoke-free environments (1).

Table 1 lists the types of public areas and workplaces that were totally smoke-free in countries in the WHO European Region in 2022.

Table 1. Types of totally smoke-free public and work places in countries in the European Region, 2022

Country	Health-care facilities	Educational facilities, except universities	Universities	Government facilities	Indoor offices	Restaurants	Pubs and bars	Public transport
Albania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Andorra	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	Yes
Armenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Austria	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	•	•
Belarus	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Belgium	•	Yes	•	•	•	•	•	Yes
Bosnia and Herzegovina ^a	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	No	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Czechia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Denmark	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Estonia	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Finland	•	Yes	•	•	•	No	•	No
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	•	•
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Germany	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Iceland	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Israel	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Kazakhstan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

Country	Health-care facilities	Educational facilities, except universities	Universities	Government facilities	Indoor offices	Restaurants	Pubs and bars	Public transport
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Luxembourg	•	Yes	Yes	No	No	•	•	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monaco	•	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	•	•
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Macedonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	Yes
Republic of Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Romania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russian Federation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
San Marino	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	Yes
Serbia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Slovakia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	•	•	•	•	•
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Switzerland	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Tajikistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Türkiye	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turkmenistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uzbekistan	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Source: WHO (1).

Yes	Smoking is prohibited;
•	Separate, completely enclosed smoking rooms are allowed under very strict conditions;
No	Smoking is allowed

^a The three jurisdictions in the country (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina) have adopted separate tobacco control legislation with several differences.

In some countries, smoking is banned in a specific place, with exceptions. For example, in Czechia, smoking is banned in restaurants, pubs and bars, but the ban does not apply to use of waterpipes; in Georgia, smoking is banned in pubs and bars, except in cigar bars under very strict conditions; in Lithuania, smoking is banned in pubs and bars except in cigar or pipe clubs specific for this purpose; in Switzerland, places are not reported as completely smoke-free because the law provides for the possibility of creating DSR under specific conditions; in practice, however, many are completely smoke-free.

References¹

1. WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023: protect people from tobacco smoke. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023 (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240077164>).
2. Guidelines for implementation of Article 8. Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2007 (<https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/protection-from-exposure-to-tobacco-smoke>).
3. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control [website]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2024 (<https://www.who.int/fctc/en/>).

¹ Weblinks accessed 11 January 2024.