

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

On behalf of Smoke Free Sweden, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and your esteemed colleagues for your part in Sweden's groundbreaking achievements in tobacco control policymaking. The Swedish parliament's dedication to evidence-based strategies and the well-being of the population has once again set the nation apart as a global leader in public health.

Members of the Riksdag have now reached another historic milestone that will undoubtedly save countless lives, with the formal adoption of a tobacco harm reduction (THR)-led policy framework.

By shifting the overarching goal of Sweden's tobacco and nicotine policy from "reducing consumption" to "reducing harm", they have embraced a pragmatic and science-driven approach.

This new objective, set out in the latest Budget, was overwhelmingly endorsed in a Parliamentary vote on December 11. By resolving to "take into account the varying harmful effects that different tobacco and nicotine products can cause", MPs demonstrated a deep understanding of the nuanced risks associated with various products.

Sweden's recognition that "cigarettes and smoked tobacco pose a greater health risk than smokeless tobacco and nicotine products, such as snus" is both logical and commendable.

It has long been proven that it is the smoke from cigarettes, not the nicotine, that poses the greatest risk of disease. But still too many policymakers worldwide continue to ignore such evidence, thereby putting the lives of millions of smokers unnecessarily at risk.

By officially integrating harm reduction into national tobacco strategy, Sweden has become one of the first countries in the world to do so - an achievement that cements its leadership on the global stage.

This commitment to evidence-based strategies has already yielded remarkable results. Official government statistics released in November show that only 4.5% of Swedish-born individuals over the age of 16 now smoke - a rate well below the global benchmark for smoke-free status. Remarkably, the data also revealed that people born elsewhere in Europe would on average be three times more likely to smoke if they had not moved to Sweden.

This extraordinary outcome reflects the success of Sweden's progressive policy of making safer alternatives to cigarettes accessible, acceptable and affordable to adult smokers seeking to quit or reduce harm.

However, with great achievement comes great responsibility. As an MEP, you will have a critical role to play as the European Union revisits its Tobacco Products Directive (TPD). Rather than maintain restrictive measures on safer alternatives to cigarettes, the EU should be guided by Sweden's example. We encourage you to campaign for harm reduction to become a central pillar of EU decision-making. This means upholding policies that prioritise public health, resist misinformation and continue to empower individuals with safer choices.

Every effort should be made to ensure that public health agencies provide factual information on their websites and update medical advice for doctors. A smoker should also be able to get advice from their doctor about less harmful alternatives like snus or nicotine pouches and how switching could improve their health - something that has not been the case previously.

Sweden's success story can serve as an inspiration to other nations, but sustaining and building on this momentum will require vigilance and dedication.

Sweden has shown the EU what can be achieved when policymakers follow the evidence and place the health of their citizens above all else. Smoke Free Sweden stands ready to support you in your ongoing efforts to maintain and expand this extraordinary progress.

Together, we can ensure that Sweden remains a beacon of hope for a healthier, smoke-free future.

Kind regards,



Dr. Delon Human, Smoke Free Sweden