

1. ENDGAME OF TOBACCO: WHEN AND HOW?

It is high time that the world puts end to the mass killing caused by tobacco: 100 million deaths in the 1900`s and with current figures 1000 million deaths in the 2000`s. Fortunately the trend is changing, tobacco use is declining in especially high income countries. The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is a landmark that during its ten years of existence has really started to turn the wheel and rapidly to introduce good tobacco control legislation all over the world. The reduction in smoking has in many countries gone so far that that the question of the final target has been raised. In Finland the latest prevalence of daily smoking is 14 % (both sexes combined, 15-84 years) and in the 2010 amendment of the tobacco act the Parliament decided in the first paragraph: "The aim of the Act is to end the use of tobacco products containing compounds that are toxic to humans and create addiction." The Finnish expert group feels that by 2030 the prevalence will be below 5 % which is commonly considered as criteria for "smokefree".

In addition to Finland a few other countries are also considering the strategy of this "endgame". Furthermore, European Health Ministers decided at their meeting in 2013 in Ashgabat that "we share the vision of working towards a tobacco-free European Region". For this aim it is important to continue and strengthen the existing strategies, especially the full implementation of the FCTC, since reduction in smoking is a long term social change process. At the same time it is important to introduce new elements, discussed eg. in the European Tobacco Control Status Report 2014.

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Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos –

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