

**mgr Jakub Szymański**

Department of Environmental Hazard Prevention

Allergology and Immunology, Medical University of Warsaw

**Analysis of measures related to the reduction of the use of nicotine products  
which are an important element in shaping an effective national and global  
public health policy**

Abstract

Tobacco smoking is one of the most important factors influencing the occurrence of tobacco-related diseases, for example, every year 55% of deaths of men and 27% of women due to respiratory system diseases are related to tobacco smoking. In Poland, the total annual number of deaths related to smoking is 67 000. Considering that numbers, smoking reduction is undoubtedly one of the important elements of shaping an effective national and global public health policy.

Related actions have been defined both at global level (WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and at European level (Directive 2014/40/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products)- repealing Directive 2001/37/EC) and national law (Act from 9 November 1995 on health protection against the consequences of the use of tobacco and tobacco products).

Poland implements actions to reduce smoking at the national level not only through the implementation of the above-mentioned Tobacco Directive. Examples of additional regulations restricting smoking of tobacco products include bans on smoking in public places, fiscal policy, offering help in giving up smoking and taking part in the implementation of nationwide tobacco prevention programmes.

## **Purpose of work**

The aim of this paper is to analyse anti-smoking activities carried out both at the international and national level. In addition, the aim of the work is to identify the current public health challenges in reducing nicotine use.

## **Content and methods**

The paper is based on four publications on the subject, which are presented in chronological order.

**It concerns the section devoted to the analysis of international legal acts related to tobacco control and the assessment of the implementation of Directive 2014/40/EU into national law.**

The study analyses the provisions of the Act of 22 July 2016 amending the Act on Health Protection against the Consequences of the Use of Tobacco and Tobacco Products, in terms of the implementation of the provisions resulting directly from Directive 2014/40/EU and indicates additional legal regulations. In addition, the most important international legal acts were presented.

**It concerns the part of the paper pointing new public health challenges in tobacco policy.**

Within the scope of the publication, a comparative analysis of selected legal regulations concerning tobacco products (cigarettes, tobacco heating systems and electronic cigarettes) in Poland was made and the differences between national and international (EU, WHO) legal regulations concerning the mentioned types of products were identified.

**It concerns the part of the paper devoted to assessing the level of knowledge about tobacco diseases among adults in Poland.**

The cross-sectional study was conducted in March 2022 on a representative nationwide sample of 1090 adults in Poland (52.6% women), aged 18–84 (average age 45.2 ± 16.2), of which 28.8% were smokers. CAWI research technique was used during survey.

**It concerns the part of the paper devoted to the analysis of selected national health prevention programmes in the scope of proposed measures to reduce the use of tobacco products in Poland.**

The analysis included twelve nationwide health prevention programmes coordinated by the Ministry of Health, whose implementation is related, among other things, to the reduction

of tobacco use. Websites and publications of the Ministry of Health and subordinate bodies responsible for the implementation of the Programme were analysed. A detailed analysis of three prevention programmes that implement anti-smoking activities in a comprehensive manner by identifying the precise tasks related to tobacco control was suggested.

### **Conclusions:**

- The implementation of mandatory regulations stemming from international commitments is the right moment to introduce additional regulations restricting the use of nicotine products, both for traditional tobacco products, novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes.
- All forms of action to reduce exposure to tobacco smoke are one of the most important elements of an effective national health policy, and it is therefore necessary to support both preventive and any legal actions that help to combat the widespread phenomenon of addiction.
- The WHO FCTC Convention sets out the so-called "gold standard" for regulating the tobacco market, which can be implemented in specific countries, regardless of their level of socio-economic development. Polish anti-smoking laws do not go significantly beyond the Convention..
- After 20 May 2020, the transitional period allowing the sale, throughout the European Union, of cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco with a menthol characterising flavour ended. From the group of menthol smokers, a large proportion of smokers did not give up smoking but only replaced it with the use of electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products.
- There are currently significant gaps in awareness of tobacco-related diseases between smokers and non-smokers. Education on tobacco-related diseases should be part of smoking reduction and smoking cessation interventions should be offered to smokers during their visits to health care facilities.
- Currently, there is no institution that comprehensively coordinates anti-smoking activities in Poland, including through appropriate allocation of financial resources and quality control of developed activities.