



Swiss association
for tobacco control



krebsliga schweiz
ligue suisse contre le cancer
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SUCHT | SCHWEIZ
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Blaues Kreuz Schweiz
Croix-Bleue Suisse



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Schweizerische Gesundheitsligen-Konferenz
Conférence suisse des ligues de la santé
Conferenza svizzera delle leghe per la salute

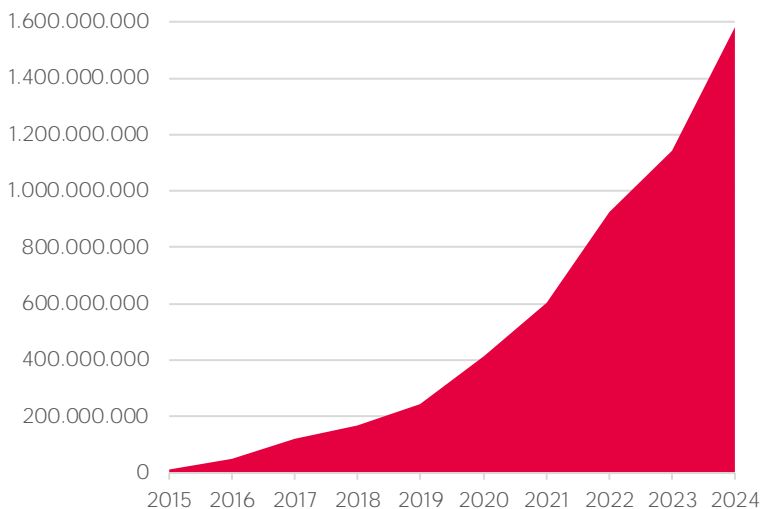
Heated Tobacco Products

Position Paper of Swiss Public Health and Addiction Prevention Organisations

Berne, September 2025

Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs) are often marketed by the tobacco industry as less harmful than cigarettes. This claim, however, is not supported by independent scientific studies. The harmful substances released by HTPs are harmful to health, addictive and, like cigarettes, can be fatal. Our main priority is to stop people from starting to use tobacco and nicotine products and to help them quit completely.

Taxed quantity of HTP sticks in Switzerland



HTPs have been available in Switzerland since 2015. Sales rose from 13 million units in 2015 to almost [1.6 billion](#) in 2024. Despite this development, HTPs are given significantly preferential treatment in legislation compared to conventional cigarettes, e.g., in terms of taxation.

False claims by the tobacco industry

Tobacco companies market HTPs as “[risk-reducing](#)” products. They claim that they produce “[95% fewer harmful substances](#).” However, these claims are not scientifically proven. Independent studies show that [HTPs release harmful substances](#), including fine particulate matter, tar, and carcinogens. A study by Reto Auer et al. (2017) already showed that the toxic and carcinogenic substances released when tobacco is heated are very similar to those in cigarettes.

The WHO and ERS come to the same conclusion

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and the [European Respiratory Society \(ERS\)](#) have concluded that all forms of smoking, including HTP, are harmful, addictive, and can cause cancer in humans.

For these reasons, HTPs should not be considered a smoking cessation aid.

Our key messages

1. To smokers: HTPs are not a safe alternative. Commit to quitting smoking completely. You can find support at www.stopsmoking.ch. The quit smoking helpline offers free advice on 0848 000 181.
2. To professionals: HTPs pose health risks just like cigarettes. Support those affected with effective smoking cessation methods. A combination of counseling, and medication is most effective.¹
3. To non-smokers: Nicotine is a highly addictive substance. All tobacco and nicotine products are harmful to your health. Continue to abstain and avoid passive smoking. This includes HTP, as it is also harmful to health.
4. To the tobacco and e-cigarette industry: We refuse to engage in dialogue with an industry that promotes life-destroying products, has lied to the public and health authorities for decades, and deliberately lures new generations into addiction.²
5. To politicians: Create a legal framework so that children and young people are no longer exposed to the temptations of the tobacco and nicotine industry. Regulations must be equally strict for HTPs and all other tobacco and nicotine products:
 - They must not be sold to minors.
 - Comprehensive advertising restrictions, for example, through plain packaging.
 - They must not contain any characteristic flavourings.³
 - Must not be offered as disposable devices.
 - Harmonised taxation with the aim of preventing tobacco and nicotine use.⁴
 - Sale only through licensed outlets.⁵
 - Must carry large warning labels.

Created by the Swiss Association for Tobacco Control, with the support of:

- Alliance pour la santé en Suisse ("Healthy Switzerland")
- Croix-Bleue Suisse
- Geliko Swiss Conference of Health Leagues
- Swiss Cancer League
- Swiss Lung League
- Addiction Switzerland

¹ Medicinal treatments include nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), varenicline (Champix®), bupropion (Zyban®), and behavioral support.

² **Art. 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC):** "in setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law".

³ The European Union's Tobacco Products Directive (2014/40/EU) prohibits products with a characteristic flavour, as well as additives that increase addictiveness or toxicity or have CMR properties (CMR = carcinogenic, mutagenic, reprotoxic).

⁴ Tobacco tax a) takes into account the disease and addiction potential based on evidence, b) complies with international recommendations, c) ensures high minimum prices, which deter children and young people in particular from buying tobacco.

⁵ Tobacco products and e-cigarettes must be sold at separate points of sale.