

# Review of: "Evidence-based policies benefit the men and women who smoke"

Manuela Epure<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Spiru Haret University

**Potential competing interests:** The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

The article is looking at a topic which is highly important today - smoking and how this habit is affecting the health on long-run of a huge population of smokers all over the world.

The analysis of the TobReg report (WHO) is sharp and consistent, authors being very methodic in reading and commenting the text. Although, some critics are not rigorously supported by evidence, the message is that the policymakers should take into consideration all kind of scientific evidences coming not only from WHO or other similar bodies but also coming from the tobacco industry. Actually tobacco industry is highly profitable therefore is interested to innovate and to give smokers a less harmful products to consume. Well, the completely non-harmful nicotine-based products doesn't exist, smoking is widely recognized as being a habit which affects dramatically the health of smokers. Smokers are informed in many different ways about the smoking consequences and still the number of those cease smoking have not been increased significantly. So, smokers are nicotine addicted, that clear, and addiction cannot be treated only with information on health issues. It is about changing behavioral patterns of smokers and that means a well-articulated strategy and funding coming from policymakers.

Some ideas formulated in the article (like the one below) are not supported with strong evidence, I believe that the declining trend mentioned is not because of IQOS products consumption. A wide range of factors or health policies can generate the Japan trend authors mentioned.

*"It is needed more of that. in Japan we see an encouraging declining trend in the hospital admission rate for both ischemic heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exacerbations that temporally coincide with the introduction of heated tobacco products like IQOS".*

I am not sure but it seems that authors are coming from tobacco industry or they have been financed in their research by this industry. Even though, the impartiality and coherence in scientific evidence presentation should be their main goal. At the end, I enjoyed reading the article especially the critique of TobReg report. Smoking is a health problem not only for those which are smoking but also for passive smokers as well. This aspect was not discussed at all, the smoking residuals are clearly harmful (classic or IQOS type) and if smokers are decided themselves to continuing despite the health damages, the passive smokers are innocent victims. Steps has been done to protect non-smokers in public places (offices, restaurants etc) but it seems that smokers vaping perception is that this kind of tobacco products are unharmed, which is not entirely truth.

Well, If I was too critique is because I am against smoking and perhaps I am subjective, but if you would ask a smoker to answer to the question : " Why are you smoking?" well no valid reasons will be provided, just phycological and emotional



kind of excuses.