

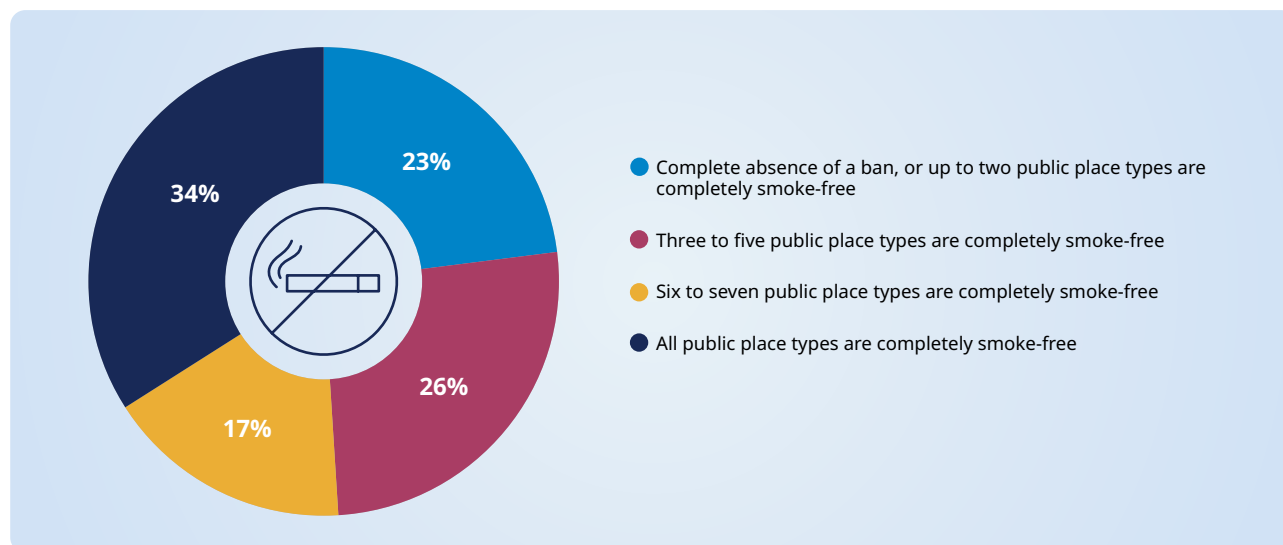
Protect people from tobacco smoke

The tenth edition of the WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic (1), released in June 2025, presents the latest comparative data to assess global, regional and national progress in protecting people from the harms of tobacco use. To support evidence-based policy dialogue in the WHO European Region, a set of measure-specific factsheets has been developed, each summarizing the implementation of one MPOWER¹ component. This factsheet provides an overview of the status of the **P — Protect people from tobacco smoke** measure as of 2024.

Key messages

The number of countries in the WHO European Region in which all public places are completely smoke-free (or at least 90% of the population is covered by subnational smoke-free legislation) increased from four in 2007 to 18 in 2024 (1). Still, two thirds of countries in the Region have more lenient laws that do not adequately protect people from the dangers of second-hand smoke (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Percentages of countries with bans on smoking in public places in the WHO European Region, 2024

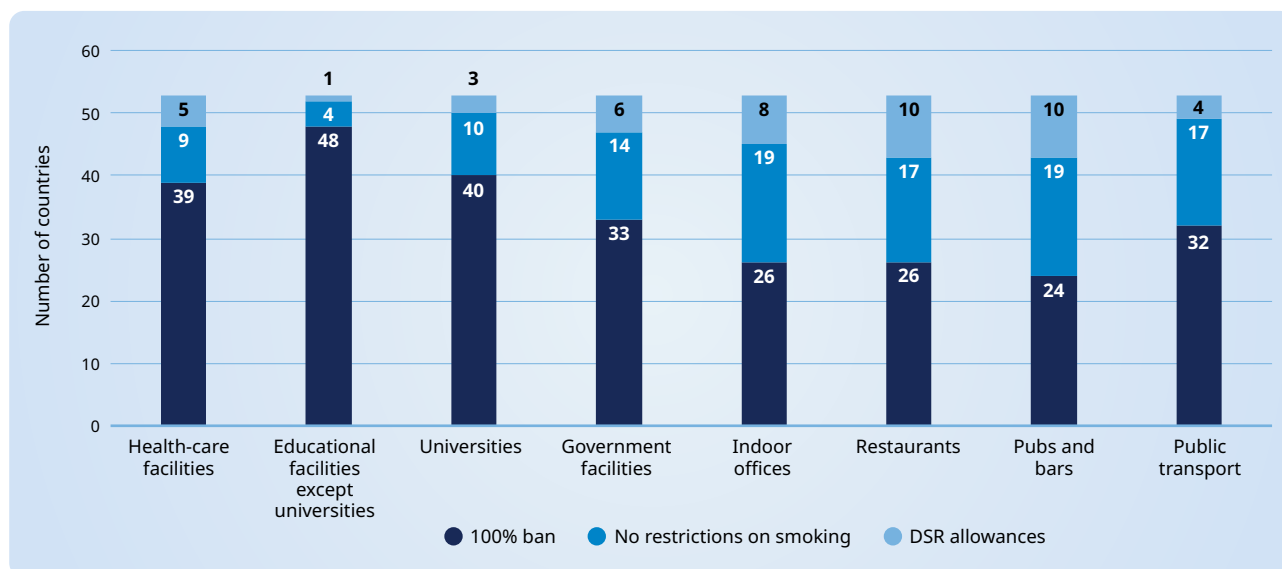


Source: WHO (1).

The prohibition of smoking, which provides protection from exposure to second-hand smoke, remains insufficient in government facilities, indoor offices, restaurants, pubs and bars and on public transport. Despite evidence that designated smoking rooms (DSR) do not fully protect people in indoor public areas, 11 countries continue to allow smoking in many venues, especially in the hospitality sector (Fig. 2).

¹ MPOWER is a set of six cost-effective and high impact measures that help countries reduce the demand for tobacco. The acronym MPOWER stands for: M: monitor tobacco use and prevention policies; P: protect people from tobacco smoke; O: offer help to quit tobacco smoking; W: warn about the dangers of tobacco; E: enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; and R: raise taxes on tobacco.

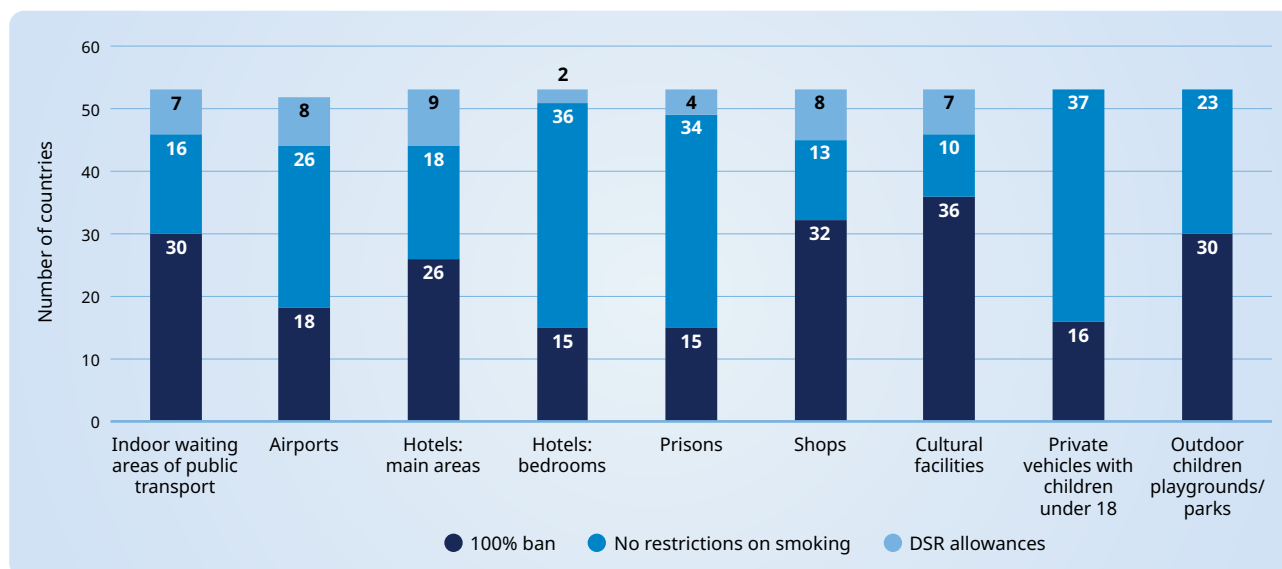
Fig. 2. Numbers of countries with comprehensive bans on smoking and with DSR, by venue, 2024



Source: WHO (1).

European Region countries are increasingly extending smoke-free laws to other public venues. Cultural facilities, such as theatres and cinemas, are the best covered (36 countries), followed by shops (32 countries) and indoor waiting areas for public transport (e.g. train and metro stations) (30 countries). While most countries now prohibit smoking on aircraft, only 18 have adopted 100% smoking bans in airports, with no DSR. Thus, 35 countries in the Region do not fully protect airport staff and passengers from second-hand smoke. In recognition of the harm of second-hand smoke for children, 30 countries in the Region ban smoking in children's outdoor areas such as playgrounds, and 16 countries have made smoking in cars with passengers under the age of 18 years illegal (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Indoor and outdoor smoke-free venues in the WHO European Region, 2024



Note: Andorra does not have an airport.

Source: WHO (1).

Guidelines for implementation of Article 8 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) state that “each Party should strive to provide universal protection within five years of the WHO FCTC’s entry into force for that Party” (2). At present, 32 States Parties to the Convention have not yet implemented this measure at the highest level, and the deadline has now expired.



What should be done?

- ▶ As indicated in Article 8 of the WHO FCTC, each country should “adopt and implement [...] measures, providing for protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces, public transport, indoor public places and, as appropriate, other public places” (2).
- ▶ Ensure clear, comprehensive smoke-free legislation, with no exemptions, clear enforcement responsibilities and fines for violations (3).
- ▶ Involve civil society to achieve effective legislation. Effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement are powerful tools for coordinating advocacy and strengthening political will.
- ▶ Raise awareness to ensure early adoption and smooth implementation of smoke-free legislation.
- ▶ Monitor implementation and compliance, and measure the effect of smoke-free environments (1).
- ▶ Ensure indoor smoke-free places do not exempt electronic nicotine delivery systems, electronic non-nicotine delivery systems and heated tobacco products from a ban (4).

Table 1 lists the types of public areas and workplaces that were totally smoke-free in countries in the WHO European Region in 2024.

Table 1. Types of totally smoke-free public and work places in countries in the WHO European Region, 2024

Country	Health-care facilities	Educational facilities except universities	Universities	Government facilities	Indoor offices	Restaurants	Pubs and bars	Public transport
Albania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Andorra	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	Yes
Armenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Austria	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR
Belarus	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Belgium	DSR	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	Yes
Bosnia and Herzegovina ^a	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	No	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Czechia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Denmark	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Estonia	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Finland	DSR	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	No	DSR	No
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Germany	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Iceland	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Israel	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Italy	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR
Kazakhstan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Country	Health-care facilities	Educational facilities except universities	Universities	Government facilities	Indoor offices	Restaurants	Pubs and bars	Public transport
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Luxembourg	DSR	Yes	Yes	No	No	DSR	DSR	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monaco	DSR	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR	DSR
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Macedonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	Yes
Republic of Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Romania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russian Federation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
San Marino	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	DSR	DSR	DSR	Yes
Serbia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Slovakia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Switzerland	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Tajikistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Türkiye	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turkmenistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uzbekistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: DSR: separate, completely enclosed smoking rooms are allowed under very strict conditions; no: smoking is allowed; yes: smoking is prohibited.

^a The three jurisdictions in the country (Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) have adopted separate tobacco control legislation with several differences.

Source: WHO (1).

In some countries, smoking is banned in a specific place, but with some exceptions. For example, in Czechia, smoking is banned in restaurants, pubs and bars, but the ban does not apply to use of waterpipes; in Georgia, smoking is banned in pubs and bars, except in cigar bars under very strict conditions; in Lithuania, smoking is banned in pubs and bars except in cigar or pipe clubs specific for this purpose. Furthermore, in Switzerland, places are not reported as completely smoke-free because the law provides for the possibility of creating DSR under specific conditions; in practice, however, many are completely smoke-free.

References²

1. WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2025: warning about the dangers of tobacco. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/381685>). License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
2. Guidelines for implementation of Article 8. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017 (<https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/protection-from-exposure-to-tobacco-smoke>).
3. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control [website]. World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/fctc/en/>).
4. Call to action on electronic cigarettes. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023 (<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/electronic-cigarettes---call-to-action#:~:text=Overview,health%20harms%20to%20the%20population>).

² All references were accessed 14 November 2025.