



Notes to Editors

INFORMATION ABOUT the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) – Tobacco-Free Europe (TFE) 26th January 2023

What is an ECI?

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is a relatively unknown mechanism that compels the European Commission to consider any initiative that gathers one million signatures from EU citizens distributed across, at least, seven EU member states, and to take action to achieve it.

What is TFE?

Tobacco-Free Europe (TFE) is an ECI submitted by 15 EU Member states, including Ireland, which can be signed at this link <https://eci.ec.europa.eu/029/public/#/screen/home/allcountries>.

Its aims and objectives are described below

Who is organising the TFE initiative?

The ECI is being carried out under the auspices of the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention (ENSP) and was initiated by the Spanish organisation Nofumadores.org. TFRI

The TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland (TFRI), an independent research institute focused on issues of tobacco dependence and tobacco control, especially in young people (www.tri.ie) is coordinating the Irish limb of TFE with the support of organizing partners, Irish Heart Foundation, ASH Ireland, the Irish Thoracic Society and Irish Cancer Society.

Aim of the TFE initiative

The aim of TFE is the progressive abolition of the sale of tobacco and nicotine products in the EU, starting with citizens born on or after January 1, 2010.

Objectives of the TFE initiative

TFE has 6 objectives:

1. Promote the first tobacco-free European generation by 2030, ending the sale of tobacco and nicotine products to citizens born since 2010.
2. Create a European Network of beaches and riverbanks, free of tobacco and cigarette butts, making these spaces more healthy and environmentally sustainable.
3. Establish a European Network of National Parks, free of tobacco and cigarette butts, making them more healthy and reducing contamination and risk of fires.
4. Eliminate tobacco advertising and presence in audio-visual productions, and social media, especially addressing covert advertising through influencers and product placement.
5. Extend outdoor smoke and vapour free spaces, especially those frequented by minors (parks, swimming pools, sports events and centres, shows and restaurants terraces).
6. Finance Research & Development projects for diseases caused by tobacco use to improve their prognosis and make them curable.

Who is eligible to sign the TFE initiative?

To support a European Citizens' Initiative, a person must:

1. be a European Union citizen (i.e., a national of an EU country);
2. be old enough to vote in European Parliament elections or, in the case of some nationalities, be 16 years old.

TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland

Focas Research Institute, TU Dublin, Kevin Street, Dublin 8.

Ph: 087 6887678 EMAIL tobaccofreeireland@gmail.com

www.tri.ie

Ms Valerie Duncan, Mr. Ivor Fitzpatrick (Chair), Prof. Pat Goodman, Mr Kevin Halpenny, Mr Walter Young
Registered in Ireland. Co Reg No 351908

TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland, Focas Institute, City Campus Kevin St, TU Dublin, D08NF82



Timeline of TFE initiative

ECIs are committed to collecting 1 million signatures within a period of one year from their official start. TFE was registered on 24th August 2022, with collection of signatures starting on 16th January 2023 across the EU. Following its formal launch on 26th January 2023, organisations supporting the initiative will have until January 16th, 2024 to reach the desired number.

Number of signatures required for the TFE initiative

The required number of citizen signatures across the EU member states is 1 million signatures. The threshold for Ireland is 9,165 signatures.

Rationale for signing the TFE initiative

Tobacco is a highly addictive and harmful substance that will kill 1 out of 2 smokers and that kills 8.5 million people worldwide every single year, 600,000 in the EU, and 6,000 in Ireland.

For the tobacco industry, teenagers are the client replacement the tobacco industry needs to generate profits, regardless of the perpetuation of the cycle of addiction, disease and death of citizens. Cigarette butts are the most frequently littered item, with estimates that 4.5 trillion butts are discarded each year worldwide, ending up on roads, beaches and in waterways. Tobacco filters, made of cellulose acetate, are the number one ocean plastic, more numerous than plastic bottles, plastic bags or plastic straws.

The objective of TFE is to save the next generation from the pandemic created by the tobacco industry, to ensure that public spaces are healthier and environmentally sustainable, to eliminate tobacco advertising, and to support research on the prevention and cure of tobacco-related diseases. European Citizens have a right, as defined by the EU Constitution, to make a change for themselves, for their loved ones and for the next generation. By signing this initiative citizens could actively contribute to a healthy population, a healthy environment, and a healthy Europe.

Where is the official decision to register this ECI recorded?

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/1430 of 24 August 2022 on the request for registration of the European citizens' initiative entitled 'Call to achieve a tobacco-free environment and the first European tobacco-free generation by 2030', pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/788 of the European Parliament and of the Council (notified under document C (2022) 5968) (Only the English text is authentic)

C/2022/5968

In force

ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2022/1430/oj

Where can a citizen sign the TFE initiative?

Link to sign: <https://eci.ec.europa.eu/O29/public/#/screen/home>

Link for information: <https://eci.ec.europa.eu/O29/public/#/screen/home/allcountries>

Contact for further information about the TFE initiative in Ireland

Prof Luke Clancy, Director General, TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland

Dr Joan Hanafin, Director of Social Research, TobaccoFree Research Institute Ireland

Email: lclancy@tri.ie or jhanafin@tri.ie Mobile 0868364337

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