

PUFFS: THE CNCT CALLS FOR A BAN ON DISPOSABLE ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

According to a recent survey conducted in France by the Alliance Contre le Tabac (ACT – Alliance against Tobacco), 13% of teenagers between the ages of thirteen and sixteen have already used “puff”-type disposable electronic cigarettes. The Comité National Contre le Tabagisme (CNCT – the French National Committee for Tobacco Control) joins with the Alliance’s call for a ban on disposable electronic cigarettes. For several years, the CNCT has been working on new tobacco and nicotine products alongside the Fonds de lutte contre les addictions (Fund for the Fight against Addictions) and it has also initiated a study on the opportunity and legal feasibility of such a ban, which is essential from a health and environmental point of view.

OVER ONE IN FOUR TEENAGERS EXPERIMENT WITH NICOTINE THROUGH PUFFS

The figures reported in the study show that puffs met with great success among teenagers aged 13 to 16:

- 66% of them say that they have already **heard** of this product;
- 13% of them have already **used** this product;
- 9% of them have already **bought** this product, despite the current ban on sales to minors.

The reasons for this success can be explained by the implementation of marketing strategies aimed at the younger generation. In this respect, manufacturers of disposable electronic cigarettes have turned massively to digital platforms in order to promote their products to teenagers, which constitutes a deliberate violation of the legislation. **Puff devices also constitute a tool specifically targeted towards this young market**, notably by using attractive flavourings and packaging. For half of all teenagers, the original and fruity taste is the main reason for experimenting with puffs.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUFF: AN OBSERVATION CORROBORATED BY THE MISSIONS OF THE CNCT

This study corroborates the analysis of the CNCT, which has, for several months, been following the emergence and rapid proliferation of disposable electronic cigarettes, as part of its project on new tobacco and nicotine products, funded by the Fund for the Fight against Addictions of the CNAM (*Caisse nationale de l’assurance maladie* – the National Fund for Health Insurance), and its missions of monitoring the points of sale, funded by the Directorate General of Health (DGS – *Direction générale de la santé*). Thus, in May 2022, the CNCT reported the presence of puffs in 70% of the tobacconists and vape shops visited, as well as in many Parisian kiosks and supermarket chains, and even in shops selling decorations.

Based on all these observations, **the CNCT is currently involved in judicial proceedings on the subject** against the company Liquideo, manufacturer of vaping products and editor of a promotional website and of advertising accounts on social networks for the brand Wpuff.

AN INTERNAL CONSULTATION OF THE CNCT ASSESSES THE LEGAL FEASIBILITY OF SUCH A BAN

Along with the ACT, the CNCT stresses the urgency of banning the sale of these products, whose addictive nature and role as a gateway to tobacco use have now been demonstrated. Moreover, the rapid growth of electronic cigarette consumption, in general, poses a new environmental problem. In conjunction with the projects on new products, the CNCT is currently assessing whether a ban on disposable electronic cigarettes is, legally, a feasible option.

For Professor Yves Martinet, President of the CNCT, "the development of disposable electronic cigarettes is linked with obvious environmental damages and, as young people are the main target of these new products, puff-type devices constitute a health threat of the first order, given their highly addictive nature. Puffs are a further hurdle to the President of the French Republic's goal of achieving a tobacco-free, nicotine-free generation."