

Città del Tabacco

International

On 21st March 2003 the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted the first international treaty on health, the **Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)**. This treaty entered into force on 27 February 2005. It has been ratified by 175. Some of the major tobacco-producing countries have decided to stay out (USA, Argentina, Indonesia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Cuba, the Dominican Republic) and also some smaller producers (Switzerland, Morocco, Ethiopia).

FCTC Guidelines

The FCTC bases its activities on

- Limiting the sales of product, through measures on prices and taxation, on advertisement, on free sale, on the composition and preparation of products, on the minimum age of consumption
- Limiting the supply of products, through measure on illicit trade of tobacco products and on the supply of leaf.

The decisions on the guidelines that will support the various member countries to implement the FCTC articles into their national legislation are taken by the conference of the Parties which meets every two years.






The Conference of the Parties creates working groups and gives them mandate to propose guidelines. The activity of the working groups is directed by a small number of countries which act as “key facilitators” and prepare the larger part of the proposals: then they discuss with the other members of the working groups and should take into consideration their comments to reach a proposal which meets everyone’s approval. Once the members of the working group’s opinions are included in the proposals, these are circulated to all the parties for comments: the Parties will have to vote for them during the Conference. The current working groups and their members are listed at the bottom of this page.

In addition, an intergovernmental negotiating body formed by all the countries is working on a protocol on the illicit trade of tobacco products.

The proposals prepared by the various working groups are made public only 60 days before the [Conference of the Parties](#). The wish of the FCTC is that the fight against tobacco has the objective of total elimination of tobacco and that the debate is exclusively dominated by the medical world. This limits the participation of other

interested parties, as the guidelines also have an impact on agricultural production, on rural employment, on international trade, on the finances of the member states.

Three articles of the FCTC currently are under discussion:

-  Article 6 on the taxation of tobacco products
-  Articles 9 and 10 on the content of tobacco products and on disclosure of information on the content of products
-  Article 15 on Illicit trade: the protocol was approved and ratified by the Parties
-  Articles 17 and 18 on the support for economically viable alternative activities and the protection of the environment and the health of persons
-  Article 19 on the liability of the tobacco industry.

All the relevant documents concerning the 5th Conference of The Parties, along with the previous ones as well, are available, in English, [here](#).

The draft policy options on articles 17 and 18 presented (and rejected) in Seoul provided some wrong information. The draft contained wrong data on the value of production and the economic importance of tobacco, pretending that the measures to switch to alternatives are much lower than what is actually needed. At the same time the draft policy options provided wrong information on the production of tobacco, pretending that over 90% takes place in tropical areas under threat of deforestation, (when tobacco is mainly grown in temperate countries and the risk of deforestation exists only for very few countries - see "[Studies on tobacco/Environment](#)"), or regarding the use of child labour (see "[Studies on tobacco/Social impact](#)"). The draft was rejected during the Plenary session.

The current working groups are continuing work on the guidelines for the implementation of article 6 (taxation of tobacco products), articles 9 and 10 (content of tobacco products and on disclosure of information on the content of products) and on the policy options for articles 17 and 18 (support for economically viable alternative activities and the protection of the environment and the health of persons). In addition a new working group is dealing with sustainable measures to strengthen the implementation of the FCTC. The current working groups and their members can be seen [here](#).

The next Conference of the Parties will be held in Moscow in 2014. 