

Towards tobacco-free generation: Implementation of preventive tobacco policies in the Nordic countries.

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INTRO

- EU Cancer Plan set a goal of creating a Tobacco-Free Generation in Europe by 2040.
- Prevention of tobacco use through comprehensive policies is the key in achieving this goal.
- All Nordic countries have succeeded in reducing adolescents' daily smoking, yet smokeless tobacco, and novel tobacco and nicotine products, such as e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches, are creating new challenges for prevention. In 2019, e-cigarette use during the last 30 days was most common in Iceland (17%) and least common in Sweden (6,4%).

AIM

- We compare Nordic countries' preventive tobacco policies and discuss what may underlie the similarities and differences in policy adoption and implementation between the countries.
- Based on the analysis, we provide recommendations on how to improve implementation of the tobacco policies in the Nordic countries.

METHODS

- We used the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and the Behavior Change Wheel (BCW) to identify and classify the key preventive policies for this narrative review.
- We focused on the Articles 6, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 16 of the WHO FCTC, and analyzed the status of required (core) and recommended (advanced) tobacco policies and the application of these policies to novel and emerging tobacco and nicotine products.
- Information on the implementation of strategies, acts and other regulations were searched from global and national tobacco control databases, websites and from scientific articles via PubMed and MEDLINE.

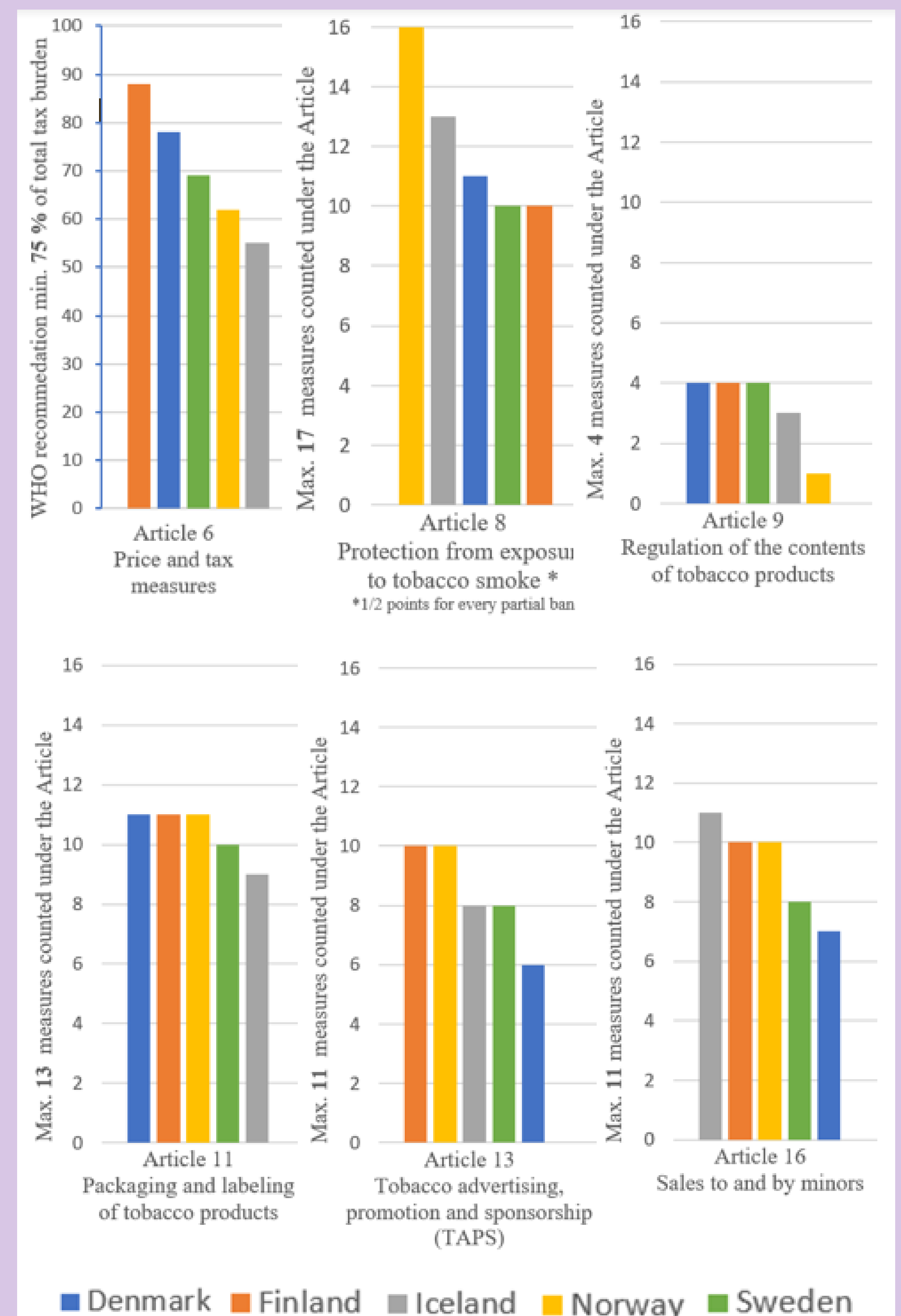
RESULTS

- Global and European regulations such as the WHO FCTC and the EU Tobacco Products Directive have significantly harmonized tobacco policies in the Nordic countries in the past decade and ensured that the core policies are mostly in place. EU-regulations have provided protection from the tobacco industry's interference, yet also forced countries with stronger tobacco control to weaken their regulations especially on novel products.
- Strong national structures and actors have facilitated some countries to implement more comprehensive preventive tobacco policies than the others, and to adopt advanced policies among the first countries in the world, such as point-of-sale display bans (Iceland), plain packaging (Norway), outdoor smoking bans (Sweden), and flavor bans on e-cigarettes and tobacco endgame (Finland).
- Yet, common deficiencies and policy differences between the countries remain and continue to impact countries' tobacco prevention. Common deficiencies are seen especially in regulations on smokeless tobacco and novel nicotine products and advertising in social media.

CONCLUSIONS

- To facilitate implementation of comprehensive and consistent preventive tobacco policies towards the tobacco-free generation in the Nordic countries we recommend: Nordic collaboration and participation in strengthening the European regulations, national intersectoral cooperation, adequate funding, and regulations to provide protection from the tobacco industry's interference.

Figure 1. Comparison of the comprehensiveness of core and advanced preventive WHO FCTC policies in the Nordic countries.



The study is part of Nordic Adolescents and the New Nicotine Market (NADNIC)- project, which is funded by the Nordic Cancer Union (NCU).

Take a picture to read more about the NADNIC -project.