

## BAT deplors the French government's move to ban nicotine pouches

Paris - February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 - While the French Conseil d'Etat<sup>1</sup> had ruled that a ban on nicotine pouches was not a proportionate measure, the French government has just notified the European Union of its draft banning decree. **This decision ignores the opinion of the country's highest administrative court**, as well as the fundamental principles of dialogue and respect for institutions.

### Forceful passage against the advice of the Conseil d'État

Last January, the Conseil d'État clearly stated **that banning nicotine pouches was not the appropriate solution**. Yet the French government is ignoring this advice and initiating a disproportionate ban, without parliamentary debate, without consultation with the stakeholders concerned, and in total contradiction with its own National Tobacco Control Program 2023-2027.

What's more, just a few weeks ago, the French Minister of Health said **"Let's stop annoying the French"** about smoke-free terraces, **advocating a more tolerant and less intrusive approach**. Yet today, this same government is imposing a brutal ban on nicotine pouches, which are used by thousands of adult smokers as an alternative to tobacco. **Where is the consistency?**

This decision, far from protecting consumers, is likely to exacerbate public health problems **by driving smokers into uncontrolled illicit channels**. **An ineffective strategy** that History has already shown to be doomed to failure.

*"We are deeply outraged that the industry was not consulted on the implementation of these regulations, which seem totally out of touch with French people's expectations,"* says **Sébastien Charbonneau, Director of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs at BAT France**.

*"We call on the government to show responsibility by establishing a strict but balanced regulatory framework, rather than imposing a hasty ban that will provide no concrete solution to the protection of minors."*

### A ban that will encourage the illicit market

By simply banning nicotine pouches, France is opening the door to an **uncontrolled parallel market** where unregulated, potentially dangerous products with no quality control will flood the French market.

A Webdrone study<sup>2</sup>, commissioned by BAT France, had already **revealed 370 online sales outlets** selling these products without traceability in France. Rather than regulating the market responsibly, **the government is encouraging the development of an underground market** that is dangerous for consumers, especially young people.

### A political and ideological decision, not based on science

Many European countries,, **have opted for strict regulations** to guarantee consumer safety while offering an alternative to traditional tobacco products. **France**, on the other hand, **is taking**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.contexte.com/actualite/pouvoirs/document-contexte-le-conseil-detat-defavorable-a-linterdiction-des-sachets-de-nicotine-censes-etre-deja-delivres-par-ordonnance\\_218134.html](https://www.contexte.com/actualite/pouvoirs/document-contexte-le-conseil-detat-defavorable-a-linterdiction-des-sachets-de-nicotine-censes-etre-deja-delivres-par-ordonnance_218134.html)

<sup>2</sup> [https://revuedestabacs.com/static/media/uploads/etude\\_bat\\_-\\_annee\\_2024.pdf](https://revuedestabacs.com/static/media/uploads/etude_bat_-_annee_2024.pdf)

**the opposite path**, ignoring the successful experiences of its neighbours like Sweden which is set to become Smokefree this year and refusing to establish a balanced regulatory framework.

Indeed, the solution lies in robust regulation, including :

- **A strict ban on sales to minors** for the purchase of nicotine pouches, as already in place for tobacco and vaping
- **A maximum nicotine content** to guarantee consumer safety
- **A ban on flavors attractive to young people**
- **A clear framework for sales and distribution**

*“The only way to effectively protect minors and ensure control over these products is to adopt intelligent regulation, not a ban that will only fuel an illegal market,”* insists Sébastien Charbonneau.

### **A step backwards for democracy and a threat to public health**

While the French National Tobacco Control Program called for a concerted, well-considered approach, the French government has opted for an authoritarian, expeditious approach, with no room for parliamentary debate or consideration of alternatives.

**BAT France calls on the government to engage in a genuine dialogue with all the players concerned, in order to put in place responsible and effective regulations, rather than a pointless and counter-productive ban.**

**END**

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#### **About BAT**

BAT is a leading, multi-category consumer goods business with a purpose to build “A Better Tomorrow” by reducing the health impact of its business through offering a greater choice of enjoyable and less risky products for adult consumers.

The company continues to be clear that combustible cigarettes pose serious health risks, and the only way to avoid these risks is not to start or to quit. BAT encourages those who would otherwise continue to smoke to switch completely to scientifically substantiated, reduced-risk alternatives\*†.

To deliver this, BAT is transforming into a truly consumer centric multicategory consumer products business.

BAT’s ambition is to have 50 million consumers of its non-combustible products by 2030 and to generate £5billion of New Categories revenue by 2025. BAT has set stretching ESG targets including achieving carbon neutrality for Scopes 1 & 2 by 2030 and eliminating unnecessary single-use plastic and making all plastic packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025.

BAT employs over 50,000 people and operates in over 180 countries. The BAT Group generated revenue of £27.28 billion in 2023 and profit from operations of £12.46 billion.

The company’s Strategic Portfolio is made up of its global cigarette brands and a growing range of reduced risk\*\*† New Category tobacco and nicotine products and traditional non-combustible tobacco products. These include vapour, tobacco heating products, modern oral products including tobacco-free nicotine pouches, as well as traditional oral products such as snus and moist snuff. By the end of 2023, we will have 26.4 million consumers of our non-combustible products, an increase of 1.5 million compared with 2022.

\* Based on the weight of evidence and assuming a complete switch from cigarette smoking. These products are not risk free and are addictive. † Our products as sold in the US, including Vuse, Velo, Grizzly, Kodiak, and Camel Snus, are subject to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulation and no reduced-risk claims will be made as to these products without FDA clearance.