

BAT France highlights the collective failure of anti-smoking policy in favor of organized crime

Over-taxation and prohibitionist reflexes encourage the illicit market for nicotine products

Paris – September 24th, 2025 – During its hearing today before the Social Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, BAT France once again alerted parliamentarians to the limitations of an ideological approach based solely on prohibition and taxation, which fuels the illicit market without sustainably reducing smoking.

“Who can still claim that tax increases are effective in reducing the number of smokers in France, where smoking prevalence remains at over 30%? This excessive tax policy has mainly encouraged structured, and industrial smuggling,” said Sébastien Charbonneau, Director of Public and Regulatory Affairs at BAT France.

Prohibition: an ideological reflex with predictable consequences

The government's announced ban on tobacco-free nicotine pouches will only make the situation worse. The precedents are well known: every time a product is banned, a thriving black market emerges, with no benefit to public health and to the detriment of the protection of minors.

Conversely, countries such as Sweden and New Zealand demonstrate that a pragmatic approach with clear regulations and strict controls can significantly reduce smoking prevalence.

The pragmatic approach: regulation rather than prohibition

BAT France proposes a policy of compromise and responsibility:

- Prohibition of sales to minors;
- Strict regulation of tobacco-free nicotine products (*control of points of sale, limits on nicotine content and flavours*);
- Significant penalties for violations.

“The government has a moral duty to adopt the principle of reducing the harm associated with smoking to allow adult smokers to have access to alternatives to tobacco, legally. All we are asking is that they look at the scientific data and regulations that have enabled many countries to achieve their public health goals,” urges Sébastien Charbonneau.

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About BAT

BAT is a leading global multi-category consumer goods business. Underpinned by world-leading science and R&D, our purpose is to create A Better Tomorrow™ by Building a Smokeless World where, ultimately, cigarettes have become a thing of the past. BAT's purpose is backed by Omni™, an evidence-based manifesto for change which captures its commitment and progress.

BAT employs more than 48,000 people and, in 2024, generated revenue of £25.9bn, with an adjusted profit from operations of £11.9bn.

BAT's aim is to have 50 million adult consumers of its Smokeless products by 2030 and generate 50% of its revenue from Smokeless products by 2035. BAT's portfolio is made up of a growing range of nicotine and smokeless tobacco products which include its Vapour brand Vuse; Heated Product brand glo; and Velo, its Modern Oral (nicotine pouch) brand. After only a decade of investment in these products, the Group has delivered New Category revenue of £3.4bn in 2024, with strong progress in profitability. BAT's portfolio reflects our commitment to meeting the evolving and varied preferences of today's adult consumers.

BAT is also reducing the use of natural resources, improving livelihoods, and delivering on its climate goals to be Net Zero across its value chain by 2050. BAT received a Triple A rating from CDP in 2024 for its disclosures on Climate Change, Water Security, and Forests, showcasing its commitment to environmental transparency and action.

**Based on the weight of evidence and assuming complete cessation of smoking. These products are not risk-free and are addictive.*

†Our products as sold in the United States, including Vuse, Velo, Grizzly, Kodiak and Camel Snus, are subject to FDA regulation and no reduced risk claims will be made regarding these products without FDA clearance.

