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EP calls for strong EU and national action to protect people from passive smoking

Smoke-free Europe

The European Parliament today voted on a report towards a Europe free from tobacco smoke, dealing in particular with the scope of a smoke-free initiative (i.e. a total ban of smoking at the workplace versus a ban with exemptions), and on the appropriate policy option (voluntary or legislative, national or European). Speaking after the vote, German Green MEP **Hiltrud Breyer** said:

"Every year, more than 79,000 adults die as a result of passive smoking in the EU: the equivalent of a big plane crashing every day. It is high time that we protect non-smokers, who represent 70% of the population, against the fatal fumes from the smoking minority."

"The Commission now has a clear mandate for the most comprehensive EU-level action towards a smoke-free Europe, which is a major boost for public health in Europe. Enclosed workplaces, including restaurants and bars, all enclosed public buildings, transport and public playgrounds should become completely free of smoke. This is a clear rejection of the concept of separate smoking rooms."

Swedish Green MEP **Carl Schlyter** added:

"It is very welcome that MEPs supported Green proposals for strong action on tobacco additives. While there is no such thing as a safe cigarette, it is important to act on additives that make smoking more difficult to quit or more dangerous. Parliament wants all addiction-enhancing additives to be banned immediately. Furthermore, it wants to put an end to the current situation under which manufacturers are not obliged to do any testing of tobacco additives: additives for which there is no complete data set by 2008 should be banned automatically. Such clear bans are the only language the cigarette industry understands."

"Finally, Parliament was unanimous in calling for producers to become liable for the financing of all health costs arising from tobacco consumption. This now needs to be implemented as soon as possible as an important step to reduce tobacco consumption."

Further information:

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Press release

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