

Smoke-Free Sweden, why them, why now?

**6th Summit Tobacco Harm Reduction – Novel Products, Research
& Policy - SCOHRE**

25-26 September 2023 – Athens/Greece

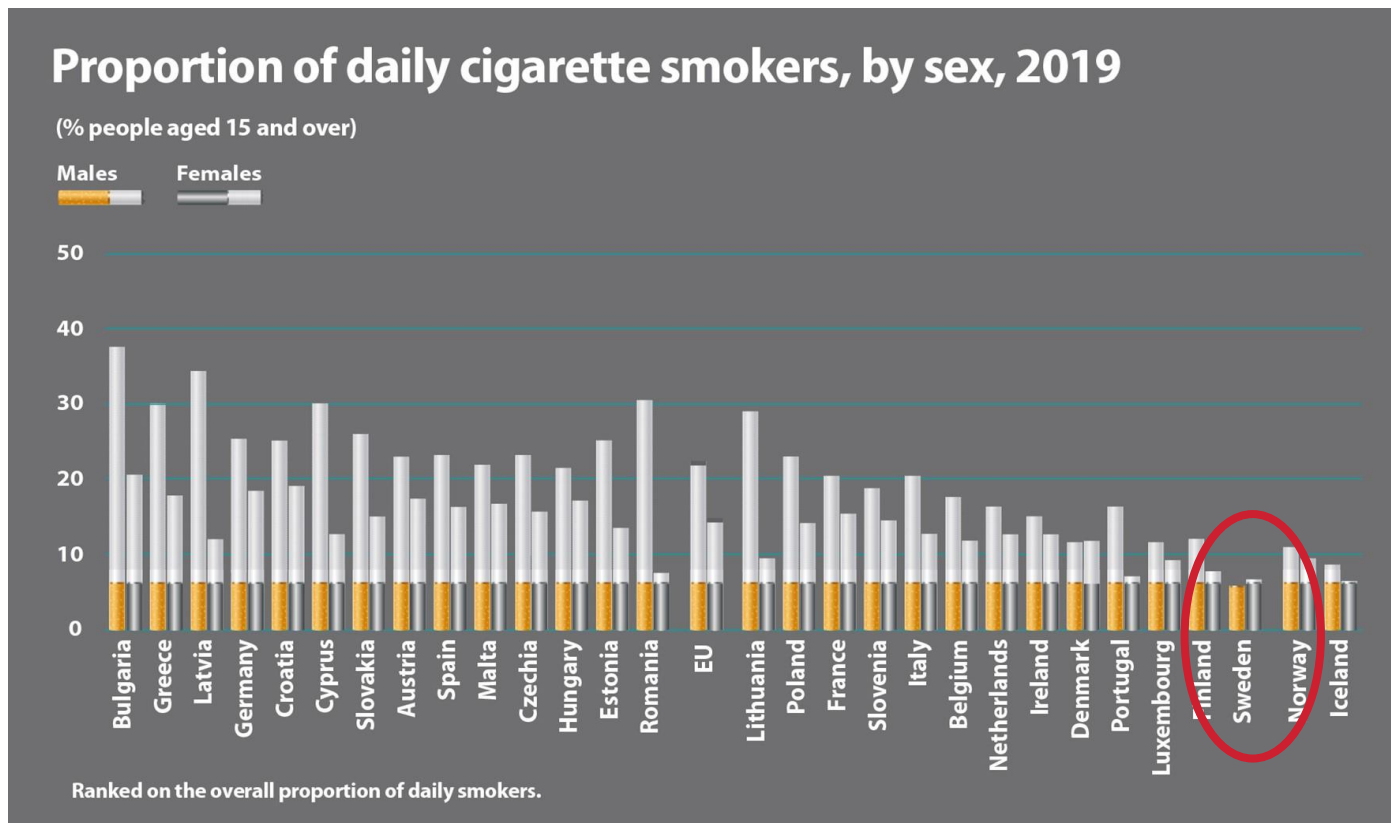
Prof. Dr. Heino Stöver/Dr. Meryem Grabski



Faculty of Health and Social Work

Sweden has the lowest share of male* smokers in the EU

Sweden is the first European country to become smoke free (less than 5% smokers) in 2025



Sweden has the lowest number of male smoking-related deaths in the EU

Smoking-attributable deaths: Sweden vs EU (2000-2019)

Cause of death	Smoking-attributable deaths, rate per 100k (2000-2019)		Smoking-attributable deaths, number (2000-2019)		Deaths that could have been averted, number
	Sweden	EU	EU (actual)	EU (if rated like Sweden)	
Non-communicable disease (NCD)	139.9	167.6	16,870,287	14,082,789	2,787,499
All cancers	56.0	79.6	8,020,071	5,637,051	2,383,020
Respiratory tract cancers	28.4	44.0	4,434,576	2,858,811	1,575,765
COPD	18.9	23.2	2,336,499	1,906,782	429,717
Cardiovascular disease	52.7	55.2	5,541,923	5,294,089	247,834
Lower respiratory tract infections	5.0	5.9	595,510	503,637	91,873
All causes	145.8	174.5	17,562,390	14,672,386	2,890,004

2,890,004



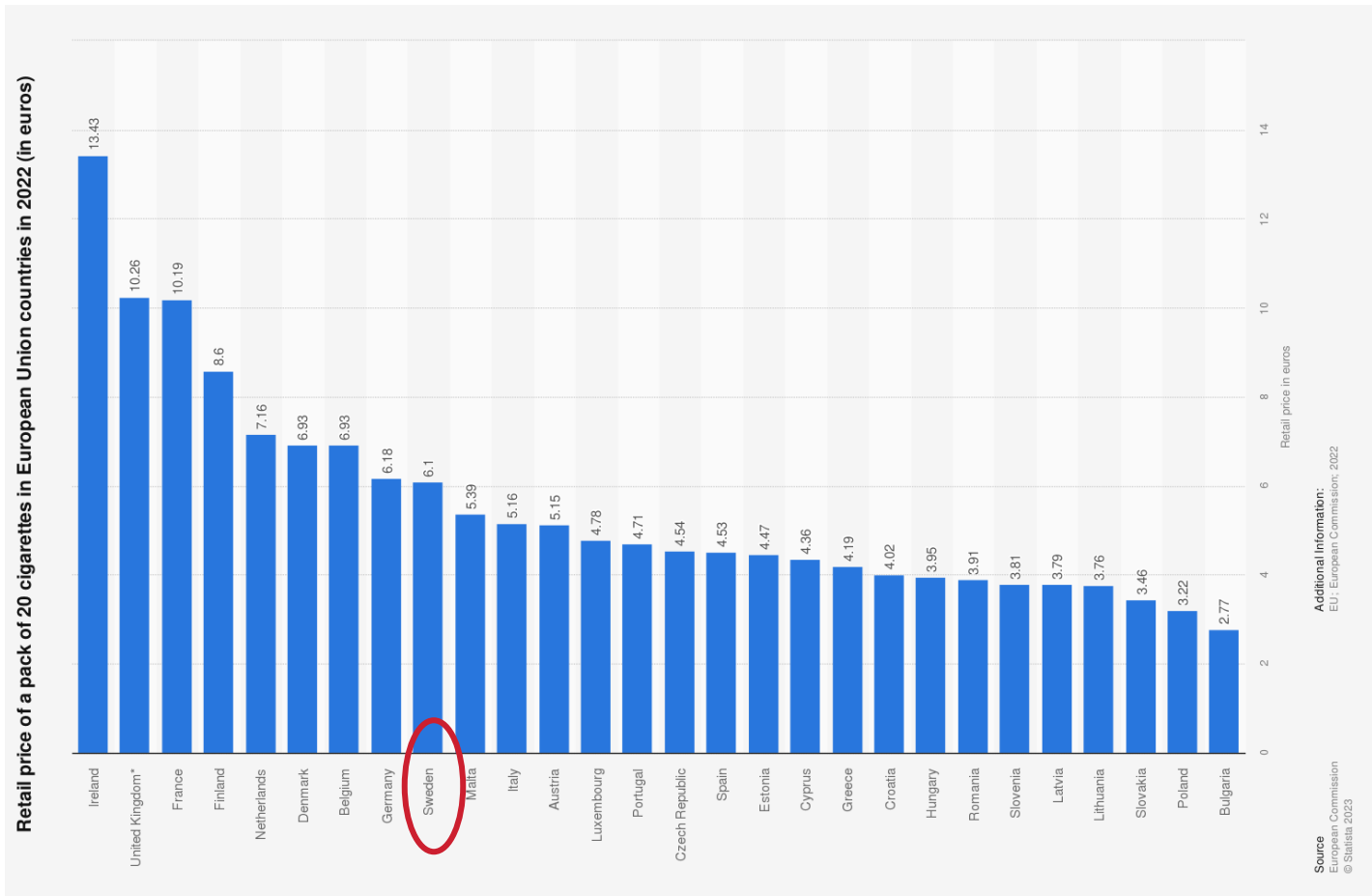
SMOKE FREE SWEDEN 2023
www.smokefreesweden.org

So why is Sweden so successful?

- Tobacco Control Policies?
- Harm reduction approaches?

Tobacco Control Policies Sweden

Price of Cigarettes



Tobacco Control Policies Sweden

Introduction Advertising Bans & Health Warnings

Member State	Advertising Ban	Health Warnings
Austria	1995	1975
Finland	1977	1977
France	1991	1976
Germany	1974	1982
Ireland	1971	1991
Italy	1983	1993
Netherlands	1990	1990
Portugal	1983	1991
Spain	1994	1988
Sweden	1994	1974

Nguyen et al., 2012

Tobacco Control Policies Sweden

Introduction of any kind of smoking ban*

Member State	Year
Austria	1995
Finland	1977
France	1992
Germany	2002
Ireland	1995
Italy	1975
Netherlands	1990
Portugal	1983
Spain	1988
Sweden	1994

Nguyen et al., 2012

* in the workplace, in public closed spaces etc.

Harm Reduction Approaches in Sweden

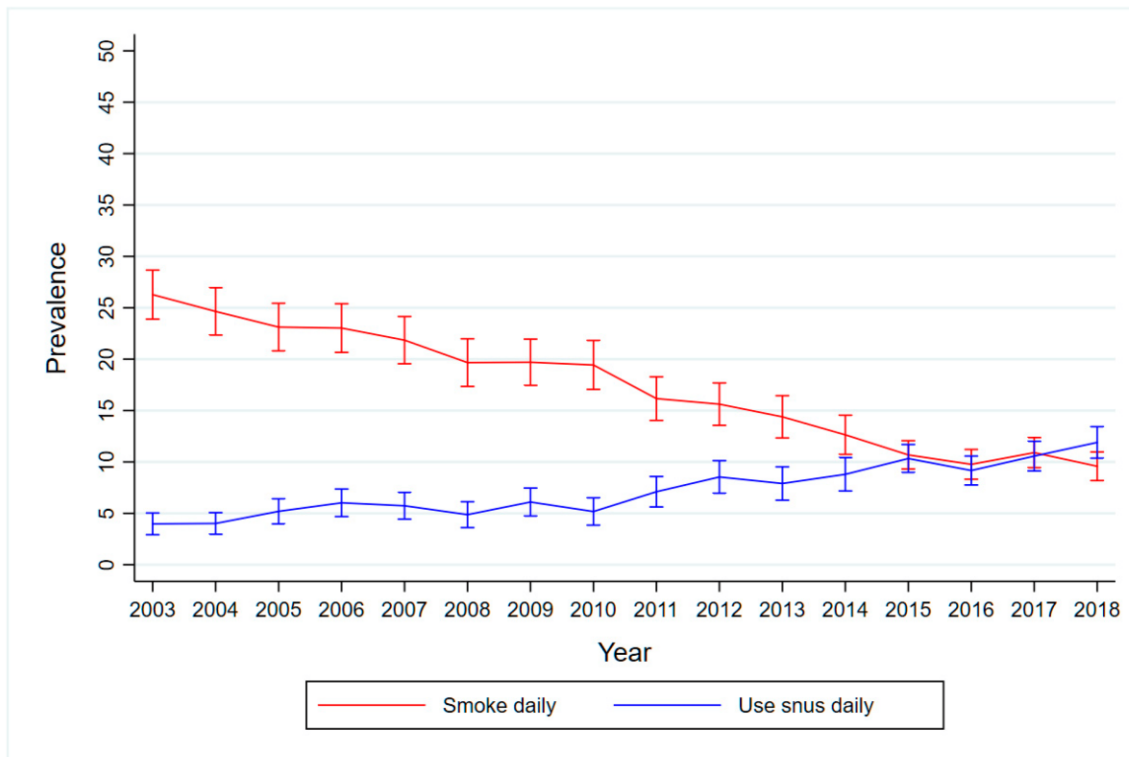
The case of snus



- Non-smoking tobacco product
- Used either loose or in pouches, usually placed behind the upper lip
- Sale currently prohibited in all EU countries except for Sweden

Harm Reduction Approaches in Sweden

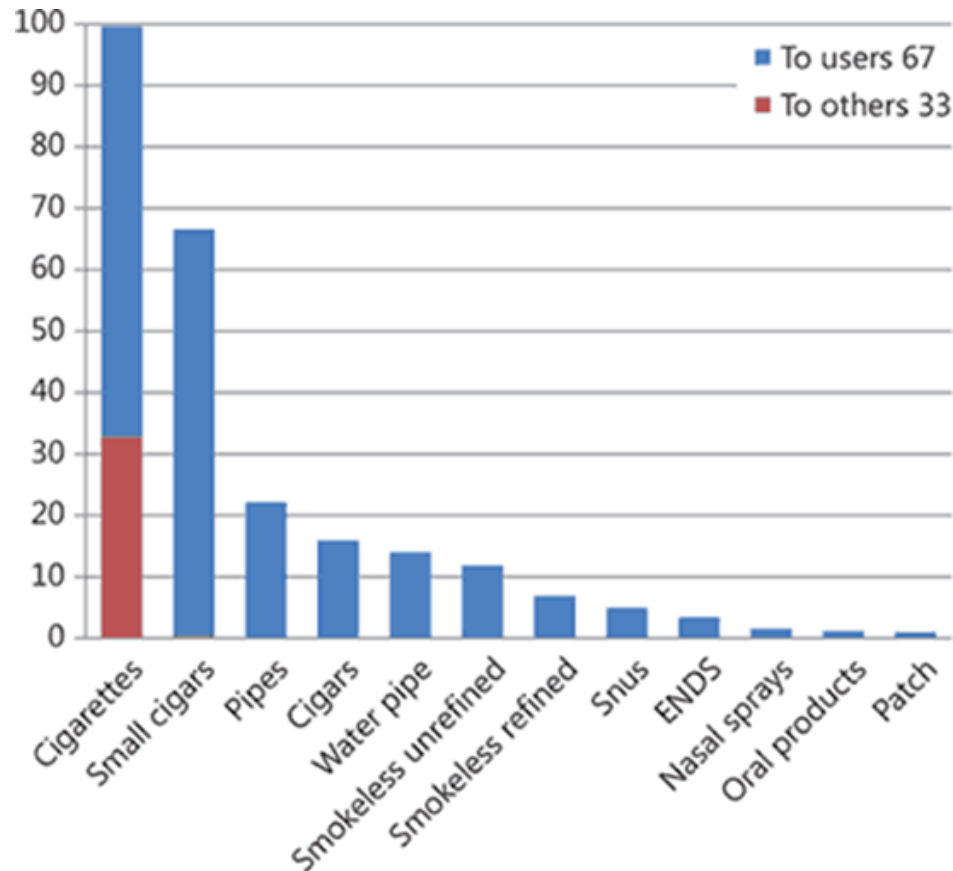
The case of snus



Lund & Vedoy, 2019. Relative Risk Perceptions between Snus and Cigarettes in a Snus-Prevalent Society—An Observational Study over a 16 Year Period

- Snus has a long-standing tradition in Sweden
- The increase of use of Snus is paralleled by a decrease of the use of combustible cigarettes

Nicotine harms? – it's all relative



- “Smokers smoke for the nicotine but they die from the tar”
- The relative harm of SNUS is considered low
- This is supported by the decrease in smoking related disease we see in Sweden

Nutt et al, 2014. Estimating the Harms of Nicotine-Containing Products Using the MCDA Approach

Nicotine harms – where do we go from here?

- Sweden is the first country in the EU to become Smoke Free
- While Sweden has adopted many tobacco control approaches it has not done so to a greater degree than other European countries
- The fact that a non-smoking nicotine delivery system was readily available and widely used seems to be the most likely explanation for Sweden's great success in reducing smoking rates and smoking related disease

Nicotine harms? Where do we go from here?

- In the light of rapid changes to the nicotine market with the introduction of e-cigarettes and heat not burn products we need policies that take the relative harms of nicotine into account
- The example of Sweden shows that accepting less risky nicotine administration saves lives
- More research into the relative risks of the products is needed as well as a switch to a more harm reduction focussed approach

Thank you!

Email: hstoever@fb4.fra-uas.de



Fachbereich 4 Soziale Arbeit und Gesundheit