

# Tackling inequalities in smoking: past achievements and future challenges to tobacco control in European countries

## *Conference Announcement*

A project co-funded by the European Commission in the frame of the FP7 Research Programme

**Monday 8 December 2014**  
**11 :15 – 17 :30**



**Room (to be confirmed)**  
**European Parliament**  
**Rue Wiertz 60, B-1000 Brussels**

SILNE is a three-year European project co-ordinated by the University of Amsterdam, Department of Public Health, Academic Medical Centre, the Netherlands, and receiving financial support from the European Commission in the scope of Seventh Framework Programme (grant agreement no. 278273).

**You are cordially welcomed to participate in the final SILNE project conference which will take place on 8 December 2014 in the Brussels European Parliament premises.**

**You will be presented empirical evidence obtained in SILNE and similar projects on socioeconomic inequalities in smoking and in the impact of tobacco control, and you will discuss the implications for future tobacco control at European, national and local levels.**

Access to the conference is free of charge.

The conference will be held in English. Interpretation will not be provided.

The conference is not open to persons or organisations working for or associated with the tobacco industry, its liaison groups or subsidiaries.

During the provided lunch, you will have a chance to network with the project group.

Further logistical details will be provided upon registration.

**Online registration is open at**  
**<http://www.ensp.org/node/1112>**

A network of European experts focused their activities on analyzing “natural policy experiments” to assess the effects of real-world tobacco control measures on socioeconomic inequalities in smoking :

- ✓ University of Amsterdam, Department of Public Health, Academic Medical Centre, the Netherlands
- ✓ Maastricht University, Department of Health Promotion
- ✓ Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Institute of Medical Sociology, Medical Faculty, Germany
- ✓ Université Catholique de Louvain, The Institute of Health and Society, Belgium
- ✓ University of Edinburgh, Centre for Population Health Sciences, Medical School, UK
- ✓ ENSP - European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention, Belgium
- ✓ Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health
- ✓ University of Cassino and Southern Lazio, Department of Human Sciences, Society and Health., Italy
- ✓ Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Department of Preventive Medicine, Public Health Faculty
- ✓ Södertörn University, Stockholm Centre on Health of Societies in Transition, Sweden
- ✓ University of Tampere, School of Health Sciences, Finland
- ✓ Universidade Nova de Lisboa, National School of Public Health, Portugal

Key findings :

<p>Inequalities in smoking are substantial almost everywhere in Europe. They already start at adolescence. They tended to increase since 2000. Despite their omnipresence, inequalities in smoking are much larger in some European countries than in others. Various characteristics of countries were found to play a role, including the level of national tobacco control policies.</p>	<p>A literature review showed that, where the equity impact of tobacco control policies have been assessed, most did not clearly diminish or widen inequalities in smoking. Inequalities were found to diminish under a few specific policies (e.g. price) or actions (e.g. a British school program). Thus, some policies have a demonstrated potential to reduce inequalities in smoking.</p>
<p>SILNE has started a new international survey. In many schools, smoking is concentrated among young people with poor socioeconomic position and particular social networks. School policies can prevent smoking of these young people at school premises. Further analysis of such surveys can uncover how avoidable inequalities already start in adolescence.</p>	<p>Case studies of ‘best practices’ show that specific policies or actions can be made more effective under lower socioeconomic groups through various means. Examples include information campaigns, school programs, and smoking cessation support. Thus, programs and actions can be made more effective among lower groups by a stronger equity-focus during implementation</p>
<p>Some of the new tobacco control policies that were introduced in European countries since 2000 were associated with higher smoking cessation rates. Generally, both lower and higher socioeconomic group benefitted. Relative inequalities in smoking rarely diminished. Thus, policies are not going to decrease inequalities by accident, but need to be designed for this specifically</p>	<p>Future policies need to be designed to be especially effective in lower socioeconomic groups. There is evidence to support the development of equity-oriented strategies at both European, national and local levels, and to implement such policies at these different levels. Concerns for equity should inform discussions on different issues, including ENDS and ‘end-game’ strategies.</p>

Full details on the SILNE project, including information releases and specific reports are available at <http://silne.ensp.org>