

IRELAND residents final comments to Nicotine Users Survey 2020

Do you have any additional remarks?

53 comments from Ireland residents:

- Up tank size from 2ml to 4ml+ Up mg/ml level. People will vape the same regardless.
- I tried multiple methods to quit smoking before trying vaping. Only vaping worked, and initially with 36mg liquid in high resistance coils (>2 ohm). The 20mg limit is too low for heavy smokers. Besides, 36mg can always be titrated down while 20mg cannot be titrated up. Flavours and pricing were very important. Flavours because it takes you away from the tobacco taste and this helps to break the psychological link to smoking. Pricing because cigarettes and tobacco taxes are intended to pay for the costs of medical consequences. As the health consequences of vaping are greatly reduced if not minimal the concept of taxation on the product is political and has nothing to do with health. The original TPD limit on 10ml bottles is ridiculous and unnecessary. It contributes massively to unnecessary use of plastics and pollutes the environment, as well as increasing costs to the consumer.
- I stopped smoking and started vaping about seven years ago and have noticed a huge improvement in my health.
- I would hope that any changes to the current TPD would be both science and evidence based .
- Leave vaping alone so much more people can access ecigarettes and move away from tobacco products and enjoy better health just like I have personally achieved.
- I was a heavy smoker for over 20 years and vaping helped me quit, I have tried alternative methods prior to vaping and nothing worked. Flavoured liquids played a major role in the process and help me stick to this habit instead of going back to smoking. I feel healthier and more energetic and for me this is the best method to quit.
- How is increasing the price with tax makes sense? Your driving people in to the black market where there is no quality control. In Ireland there is a 23% VAT charge on all products. Is that not enough? considering to the health benefits down the line.
- I smoked cigarettes for over 35 years, I tried several different ways to help quit, patches, books, nicotine tabs and hypnotism, none worked to get to quit, I tried vaping and I completely left cigarettes behind on day one of vaping. I can breath easily, I used to struggle climbing stairs when I was a smoker, now I go on daily walks and bike rides without any effort. I would honestly say vaping saved my life and it was through vaping, especially flavoured e liquid like sweet shop flavours, custard, cakes, fizzy drinks flavours, I could never stomach tabacco flavours they made me feel ill, which is a common thing most vapers say, the taste of tabacco vaping is just repulsive to most who quit cigarettes and take up vaping. Also I am in my 7th year cigarette free, vaping every day, I lost my smokers cough within a month of vaping, I have more energy, my doctor was very impressed at my lungs and how clear they sounded, when I was a smoker I had chest infection after chest infection especially after getting a cold or flu I was guaranteed to get a chest infection, in the past 7 years I think I have only gotten a cold or flu once.
- Would just like to point out the duality in Ireland, where sales of small packets of cigarettes (10s) was banned to reduce usage, yet the opposite approach was taken with vape liquid, apparently for the same reason. Makes no sense whatsoever.
- The TPD is harmful. It discouraged vaping, which is the most effective method for quitting cigarettes I have ever tried (will power, hypnotism, and nicotine replacement products did not work for me). Legislators should encourage small producers of e-liquids and resist attempts from large companies (owned by cigarette companies in summer cases) to over regulate the market. Measures like 10ml bottles

just make me source product from outside the EU which is less safe and more expensive, and with too much fiction, smoking becomes attractive.

- I DIY my own e-liquid already to reduce costs.

- Vaping probably has saved a HUGE hospital bill for the government. I was verging COPD when I decided to start vaping nearly 8 years ago, could barely walk up a slight hill without having to stop to catch my breath, that has all reversed and I am very happy and healthy to be on this vaping road.

- The amount of plastic waste that has been unnecessarily caused by the EU by limiting the size to 10ml is a disgrace. Those plastic bottles do not get re-used, they go directly to the waste bin. It was sheer stupidity to put such a small limit on the size of nicotine liquids. With regard to flavours for liquids, it is nanny statism to start intervening in the availability of flavours for them. Many people who used to smoke cigarettes have moved to vaping long before the TPD and my own health improved greatly when I did, as did my partner's. As far as I am concerned, vaping should never have been included in the TPD legislation, as there is no tobacco used. Stop usurping my rights. Vaping is fundamental to reducing the harm from smoking and if I cannot vape, the most likely outcome for me is that I will end up smoking again, something that I do not want to do.

- Finally we have something good and healthier in this world, why you are trying to destroy this? Because of tobacco lobby and tax money? You don't care about people! Everything is about money, greed and politics!

- Vaping proves effective for smokers to quit smoking far more effective than any other nicotine delivery devices out in the market. If the government really care about their people I'd suggest let Vaping as it is now or regulate it with minimum restriction. Educate people that are wanting to try vaping for battery safety, ohm's law, proper waste disposal and how to properly get started with vaping, what strength of nicotine to use 1st and gradually taper down.

- Have been a pipe smoker for 50+ years and not only have no desire to quit but resent being punished/penalised for my simple pleasures

- I switched to vaping after my mother developed COPD and breathing difficulties from a lifetime of smoking. Vaping has allowed me to slowly lower my nicotine levels while still maintaining a less harmful alternative to smoking.

- FOR THE EU TO BE THIS STRICT ON CIGS

- Ban smoking. Get rid of the biggest cause of preventable death in the world. Vaping is the easiest way to stop smoking that I've tried but there needs to be more research done into the long term health effects. We also need to stop presenting vaping as anything more or less than an effective tool to quit smoking and make sure that there is universal acknowledgement that it is far less harmful than smoking. Flavours do play a key role in quitting for a lot of people that vape. Keep the industry alive but regulate it thoroughly to make sure everything is as safe as it possibly can be for the consumer. Give vape shop staff info to help them help customers quit smoking.

- Vaping has been overwhelmingly positive for me, and I find the health benefits significant. I primarily mix my own juices using quality suppliers so I know what ingredients are used. This is very important to me.

- Leave vaping be. This has saved my life. Ban tobacco sales!

- Vaping for me was an aid to giving up smoking. Which I found extremely helpful

- VAT is already applicable to all vaping products, liquids, hardware, consumables, double taxation is a bad idea, will drive black market, unsafe, cheaper alternatives.

- I was only successful in quitting smoking because the brick & mortar Vape shop guided & supported me through the switch. I don't think vaping hardware should be sold in places like petrol stations and supermarkets because of this.

- Adding TAX to Vaping products seems to be at odds with the Public Health mission to reduce smoking levels. The Tobacco lobby is obviously leaning hard on politicians to take action against Vaping as it is destroying their sales. It would be a betrayal if EU Governments were to give in, it would smell of corruption.

- The 20ml bottles cost more money and produce more waste. If I could buy large bottles I would refill a smaller bottle. Premixed nicotine products should not be increased above 20mg nicotine. This will stop the abuse of the products. Separate higher nicotine should be available and only from a registered vape shop. Kiosks should be limited to what they can sell in flavours and no more than the max 20mg nicotine.

- I hate smoking. I just don't think there enough support out there to quit. So more supports are needed other than the vape which there is no long term research of side affects

- The rules around vaping at the moment are very sufficient and more red tape will only lead to black and grey markets, its quite easy to get anything you want shipped from outside the EU into the EU, so leave it alone, I have had nothing but a great experience using vaping to get me away from tobacco cigarettes and my overall health has never been better since moving to vaping, it's a fantastic tool vaping that without it I would still be smoking and my health would have deteriorated.

- High nicotine small (10ml) bottles are legal, whereas low nicotine (3mg/ml), larger bottles are illegal. Illogical law that measures bottle size instead of nicotine percentage. All this does is make smoking easier than vaping.

- Before I started vaping, I was a literal chain smoker. This is incredibly common for people with anxiety. I felt terrible, couldn't taste anything, coughed constantly, and had breathing difficulties. When I switched to vaping, my cigarette consumption dropped dramatically. My lungs cleared up, I could actually start running, and after getting used to the pleasant taste, the occasional cigarette tasted foul to the extent that I stopped buying them. I have slipped back into smoking during Covid, simply because of the difficulty in getting access to vape liquid. I would strongly oppose any measures which would make vaping more difficult - increase in price, decrease in range etc. For many of us, vaping is the only way we can significantly reduce our habit. Additionally, I have found that the ability to add your own nicotine allows one to gradually reduce the amount one is consuming at one's own pace. It is the best tool I have found to help quit as, unlike every other replacement which I find as terrible substitutes, vaping appears to me as a nicer alternative to smoking. Psychologically speaking, this subtle difference make reduction and quitting of smoking simply easier.

- Ja, lassen Sie die Raucher durch eine vernünftige Regelung der TPD endlich aufs Dampfen umsteigen. Ich hätte es schon eher geschafft, wenn Sie nicht den Nikotingehalt so rapide abgesenkt hätten. Je mehr Sie verbieten um so höher wird die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass Sie die Menschen in die Grauzonen treiben und so mehr schädigen als helfen. Ich war starke Raucherin seit über 40 Jahren mit rund 35 Zigaretten täglich. Hatte damals eine sehr stressige Zeit, die TPD kam und ich war wieder Raucherin, da viele Liquids nicht mehr erhältlich waren weil Sie so schwere Hürden erstellten, die für kleine Hersteller nicht umsetzbar waren. Bitte machen Sie diesen Fehler nicht erneut, danke.

- Doing away with flavours is ridiculous as it's a huge part if the appeal. Vaping is saving lives, let's not ruin that.

- I was smoking 20 a day by the age of 18 and 40+ a day by the age of 19. Starting vaping in September 2013 with the intention of reducing the amount I smoked. I haven't touched a cigarette in 4 years and feel better for doing so. The ability to try new and unusual flavours keeps vaping interesting to me. Being limited to just a few flavours would only discourage the use of e cigs and eventually bring me back to a €100 a week habit of smoking.

- Increasing price reasonably in order to spend more money into erradicating cigarettes and creating more health awareness with vaping is justifiable Increasing price in order to force people quit does not - 90% of vaping community I know would start smoking again - me included

- Please keep open communication with with the vaping community. I understand the potential public health benefits that bans/tariffs are probably significant. But please don't forget to look not just at the statistics, and analytics. Consider that on an individual level, many people including myself consider vaping as a legitimate life saver. Really hope this survey can help illustrate some of this. Thanks.

- increasing the price of vaping will push me back to smoking; tabacco flavours taste NOTHING like cigarettes so maing it the only available flavour is beyond idiotic

- Judging by the "effectiveness" and "benefits" of previously introduced EU regulations (like decreasing the allowed tank volume or introducing 10ml only bottles "to prevent children from consuming nicotine", when children are not able to open the protective caps used on vape products, similarly to how other household chemistry items are protected) there will be no benefits for smokers (hello spending time mixing bottles together or having to carry multiple 10ml bottles increasing the volume of plastic waste) - just some extra dough for tobacco companies or other concerned parties. Absolutely no concern for public health from EU side - just a question of budgeting. Pathetic. Have no trust in EU regulations benefits.

- Make hemp legal to smoke throughout the EU, especially in Ireland where it's more restrictive, and you'll see a major decrease in smoking of nicotine products. I mean hemp not marijuana (even though that should be legal too). I know hundreds of people who have successfully quit smoking by using hemp to replace their nicotine tobacco.

- Vaping has kept me from smoking cigarettes, I believe if I was still smoking my chances of recovering from covid 19 would have been far worse. vaping has increased my lung capacity with less side effects. Placing extra taxes and removing flavours from e-liquids will make me think more how I view the EU and there control they place on peoples freedom to choose what flavours they vape, well shame on them. draconian control of peoples choice on how they quit smoking

- Vaping has been a godsend for me personally in quitting smoking cigarettes, having tried to quit multiple times I finally stumbled on vaping and after thorough research and consideration I decided it was a lot less harmful than cigarettes. I originally started in November of 2018 on a high strength liquid and have gradually dropped down to my current 3mg/ml, sometimes halving that to ween myself down more, with my end goal of quitting altogether. I feel much better, breath easier and am in the best shape of my life all thanks to vaping helping me quit an awful addiction to cigarettes of almost 20 years. I think stronger age control makes more sense than prohibition, over taxing, flavour limitations etc. We are adults trying to better ourselves, please don't take away what is helping thousands live longer, healthier lives.

- No

- Vaping saved my life I use non tobacco flavors leave the industry alone and do something productive like getting cigarettes out of production stop child labor in the production of cigarettes.

- Vaping Blueberry & Peach saved my life.

- I've found using vaping as the most successful way to quit smoking so far. As the flavours are so much nicer, it meant that it was also nicer to smoke flavoured cigarettes in the past. Since flavoured cigarettes were banned, I have completely stopped smoking. I previously vaped when I lived abroad, but technology was worse and cigarettes were very cheap, so I went back to smoking then. When I restarted vaping, I had much more success.

- no

- no

- Base your decisions on science and public health, not the interests of any set of lobbyists on either side of vaping. Vaping is the third option, it does not fit into the Tobacco hole, it does not fit into the Pharma hole. Before governments got involved it was a cottage industry largely grown grassroots by small suppliers, with the TPD and the US equivalent you've destroyed livelihoods and perniciously handed segments of the market to tobacco companies. Anybody could tell it was about to happen and yet they still went ahead with it, so anybody with a hand in those decisions should feel desperately ashamed.

- vaping helps me to stop smoking! it works

- I am a vaper(e-cig user) for the last nearly 10yrs and I have noticed a massive improvement in my health since I switched from being a 20+ a day smoker. My doctor has also noticed the difference in my health too. I sleep better, I don't wheeze when I breath, my snoring has greatly improved, I have lost weight, I don't feel constantly tired, I don't get sinus infections anymore. I have absolutely no doubt whatsoever and my doctor agrees that this is because I switched to using vape products. I would never recommend a non-smoker to start using vaping products. E-Cigarettes/Vaping is a much better alternative to smoking and is a harm reducing product. I believe it is much less harmful than smoking. Is it completely harmless and should be recommended to non smokers, absolutely not, but as an adult and EU citizen I should have the right to buy/use a product that I know to be less harmful to me than traditional cigarettes. I am all for regulation and strict laws on selling/advertising of vape products. It is an adult product for adults, not for anyone underage. I also believe in treating vaping as we do traditional cigarettes, ie not to use them in smoke free areas(bars, restaurants, indoor public spaces etc). Placing a ban on flavours, placing massive tax or restrictions on the availability of e-cig products WILL have a detrimental effect on my health, other vapers health and current smokers who currently have an opportunity to switch to a much less harmful alternative. I would like to see an increase in the strength of nicotine currently available. I quit smoking using 24mg strength e-liquid. I think this should be the introduced or maybe even up to 30mg. I quit smoking using 24mg and currently use 3mg but for someone who is a fairly heavy smoker, 24mg(or higher) is the preferred starting strength. On flavours, personally I have NEVER used tobacco flavoured e-liquid for one simple reason. When you quit smoking, you quickly realise that cigarettes actually taste disgusting. I wanted to dissociate my brain from the taste of tobacco, to break the chain and lesson my chances of relapsing back to cigarettes. Flavoured E-Liquids(Fruits, Sweets, Drinks, Bakery etc) are not aimed at underage, adults enjoy them too. I used fruit/sweet flavoured e-liquid to quit smoking. I am a 43yr old man who likes blueberry, strawberry, lemon tart, mixed Berry, vanilla cupcake, honey cereal and many more flavoured e-liquid. I am also part of many online vape community websites and out of hundreds of fellow vapers, I honestly know of maybe 5 or 6 who actually vape tobacco flavoured e-liquids. On these community websites there have been many discussions about the prospect of ridiculous laws which could see the reduction or even total ban of flavoured e-liquids. This will only drive people into the hands of the black markets where there is zero regulation, which is never a good thing. Again I am all for regulation and also research into ecig use but it has to fair and honest research with no hidden agendas and certainly not funded by tobacco or pharmaceutical companies who may have a vested interest. I tried many different smoking cessation products and although they may work for some, they didn't work for me and many others. For a lot of those many, e-cigs/vaping has worked. Please don't restrict or take away the product that has most likely saved mine but hundreds of thousands of EU citizens lives. Thanks.

- I started smoking at 15 i quit using vaping at 23 after trying every other method available. Vaping has saved my life, improved my health and Flavoured products have been instrumental in my quitting smoking. Tobacco flavours make me want to smoke again because they cannot replicate the taste or sensation of combustible Tobacco.

- Vaping has given me a less harmful alternative to a habit that would have most certainly killed me. I have noticed a dramatic decrease in my nicotine dependence since I switched to vaping. I am very passionate about the industry and about the technology as it also helped many of my friends and family to quit including my mother, who had a very strong addiction to cigarettes. I worked in a Vape shop here in Ireland as well during the time the TPD was first introduced and I must say that it made a less harmful alternative to deadly combustible tobacco products less accessible to many eg. Some of the elderly customers that could no longer buy bigger bottles had to buy many small bottles that are harder to

squeeze and include a lot of fiddling around with nicotine shots and bottle caps and spilling liquid. Not easy things to do for an elderly woman with arthritis, of course working in the shop I would always help the elderly customers and do it for them. It actually made it more likely for people to absorb nicotine through their skin during the preparation, and generated so much plastic waste in the industry. The cap on nicotine to a 20mg max in a finished product I found to be a positive step as it decreased the likelihood of Nicotine overdose through accidental ingestion. Flavours play a pivotal role in helping people to quit. For me when I first quit cigarettes and moved to vaping I would vape a watermelon flavour. This I found really helped me to dissociate my nicotine cravings from cigarettes and I began to find my cravings were always accompanied with a need to taste that watermelon flavour, which made me more likely to vape instead of to smoke a cigarette. I think the range of flavours offer some sort of incentive to a current smoker to take up the less harmful alternative despite the fact that vaping does not "hit" the same way a cigarette does which is the biggest barrier for people looking to make the switch. Making the switch to vaping is not by any stretch of the imagination an easy thing to do either. Swapping out that strong physiological effect that cigarettes instantly have on your body for something that does fill your craving but doesn't really "satisfy" the craving is not easy to do. They are two completely different things. Overall I think vaping is a huge positive for public health, and I am proud to have worked in a vape shop and been that first point of contact for someone looking to make a drastic improvement to their health by deciding to make the switch. We see so much trouble in the U.S market at the moment and I would at any cost like to prevent that attitude from leaking in to the E.U market. Since quitting cigarettes my life has improved drastically, my lung function is much better and my Doctor said he wouldn't have even noticed I used to smoke despite being a smoker for 10 years. The industry gave me a job, it saved my mother from an early grave, it helped my sister and many of my friends to quit. I am glad the industry is being regulated, instead of the wild west it was when it first popped up. I just hope it is continued to be regulated fairly and with public health and the consumer in mind. I would like to see a more open dialogue with the industry and our policy makers as I feel the first TPD was a shot in the dark at regulation and didn't have much actual beneficial impact. For that reason I would like to leave my contact information below, and would love to hear from someone in relation to this, just as a passionate vaper who wants the best for the industry and for public health. I have no financial ties to the industry, I am just concerned. Thank you!

- Vaping basically saved my life after trying numerous different types of harm reduction products that didn't work now I can jog or run and haven't had the annual winter chest infection. Next year I will drop to 1mg of nicotine then zero and completely quit.

- I feel it was much easier when we could buy 30ml or larger bottles of vape liquid. I would never have stopped smoking without the vapes!