Tobacco-free Stadia:

A case study at the 2016 UEFA European Championships in France

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# Acronyms

FCTC Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

FIFA Fédération Internationale de Football Association

FSR Football and Social Responsibility

LOC Local Organising Committee

UEFA Union of European Football Associations

WHO World Health Organization

# Abstract

Tobacco use is the leading global cause of preventable death, with around 890,000 deaths per year attributed to exposure of second-hand smoke (WHO 2013). There has, therefore, been increasing international emphasis on implementing measures to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use, including protecting people from exposure to tobacco smoke. The idea of utilising a ‘setting’ to promote health has seen success in several everyday contexts including schools, workplaces, hospitals and prisons. Over the last two decades, there has been increasing recognition that sports stadia, as sites for large gatherings of people, represent a unique opportunity to apply a settings-based approach to public health and health promotion (Parnell, Curran and Philpott 2016). This article discusses the rationale, development, implementation, delivery and outcomes of a complete tobacco-free stadia policy at the 2016 UEFA European Championships in France that exceeded national tobacco control legislation. The chapter closes with recommendations for future implementation of tobacco-free policies within similar settings.

# Introduction

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest, and most important, public health issues of our time. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable mortality worldwide and one of the main risk factors for several chronic diseases, including cancer, lung disease and cardiovascular disease (Carter et al. 2015). Despite this, tobacco use is common throughout the world. The World Health Organization ((WHO) 2018) reports that tobacco kills more than 7 million people each year. More than 6 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use, while around 890,000 deaths are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

Second-hand smoke is the smoke that fills restaurants, offices or other enclosed spaces when people burn and consume tobacco products such as cigarettes, bidisand water-pipes. In adults, second-hand smoke causes serious cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, including coronary heart disease and lung cancer. In infants, it causes sudden death and in pregnant women, it causes low birth weight. Almost half of children regularly breathe air polluted by tobacco smoke in public places (WHO 2018). Indeed, implementing effective strategies to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use and second-hand smoke is of paramount concern for international public health agencies, national governments, and health insurance companies.

To address the tobacco epidemic, several countries have implemented legislation restricting tobacco advertising, regulating who can buy and use tobacco products, and where people can smoke (WHO 2018). Currently, over 1.4 billion people, or 20% of the world's population, are protected by comprehensive national smoke-free laws (WHO 2018). National smoke-free laws make it illegal for anyone to smoke in an enclosed public place and within the workplace. Smoke-free legislation has already served to improve the health of those previously at risk from second hand smoke as well as smokers themselves who may have cut down or quit smoking altogether following the ban (Department of Health and Social Care 2011).

However, across the world, not all enclosed and semi-enclosed public spaces are protected by national smoke-free laws. It is therefore important that we consider how tobacco use, and harm caused by tobacco, can be reduced by implementing innovative public health initiatives in a variety of different settings.

In countries without comprehensive smoke-free legislation, football supporters are often exposed to second-hand smoke inside sports stadiums. In seated areas, on concourses, around concessions, on stairwells and in toilets there is often ample opportunity for smoke to accumulate, elevating the risks of acute adverse health events. This chapter provides a detailed account of the rationale, development, implementation, delivery and outcomes of a tobacco-free sport stadia policy at the 2016 UEFA European Championships in France. The chapter closes with recommendations for future implementation of tobacco-free policies within similar settings.

## Healthy Settings

Settings-based health promotion has become a prominent feature in efforts to tackle the burden of non-communicable diseases and reduce health inequalities. The ‘healthy settings’ approach, developed following the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Ottawa Charter, and is based on the notion that investment in and modification of social environments is more effective than placing emphasis on the individual to change their behaviour (WHO 1986). Action to promote health through a settings-based approach can include, but is not limited to, considering the implications of the physical environment; changing organisational structures, administration and management; analysing the impact, or lack of policy or national legislation; and, targeting hard-to-reach populations.

The idea of utilising a ‘setting’ to promote health has seen success in several everyday contexts including schools, workplaces, hospitals and prisons. Indeed, over the last two decades, there has been increasing recognition that sports stadia, as sites for large gatherings of people, represent a unique opportunity to apply a settings-based approach to public health and health promotion (Parnell, Curran and Philpott 2016).

## Healthy Stadia

During the mid-2000s, a cluster of sports clubs and venues in the North West region of the United Kingdom began implementing a range of policies, practices and programmes in support of health to a cross-section of population groups, including fans, visitors, players, local communities and stadium staff. This nascent ‘healthy stadia’ movement, coordinated by cardiovascular disease prevention charity Heart of Mersey, supported sports clubs and venues to trial new schemes using the following definition of ‘healthy stadia’:

*Healthy Stadia are … those which promote the health of visitors, fans, players, employees and the surrounding community … places where people can go to have a positive healthy experience playing or watching sport.* (Crabb and Ratinckx 2005).

Following a 30-month project funded by the EU’s Public Health Programme, the healthy stadia movement developed a European footprint and, owing to the success of the project, a social enterprise was formally established: the European Healthy Stadia Network (hereon Healthy Stadia). The overarching role of Healthy Stadia is to advocate for sports stadia to become health promoting environments and has three primary areas of concern:

1. Stadium-based policies and practices
2. Community and fan health
3. Health and wellbeing policies and practices for stadium and club workers

Within these three priority areas, Healthy Stadia has since developed dozens of projects helping to tackle physical inactivity, sedentary behaviour, alcohol and drug misuse, poor diets and consumption of tobacco; the latter most notably through advocating for tobacco-free sports stadia in Europe.

## Smoke-free and Tobacco-free Sports Stadia

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco use is the leading global cause of preventable death (WHO 2013).There has, therefore, been increasing international emphasis on implementing measures to reduce the harm caused by tobacco use, including protecting people from exposure to tobacco smoke. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is the key policy driver for smoke-free sports stadia (WHO 2005).

The FCTC Article 8 obligates parties to enforce ‘Protection from Exposure to Tobacco Smoke’. This article commits signatories to adopt and implement “*effective legislative, executive, administrative and/or other measures, providing for protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces*, *indoor public places*, *public transport* and *as appropriate, other public places*”(p. 8). The World Health Organization have developed the definition of ‘other public places’, describing them as ‘*outdoor or quasi-outdoor places such as patios, entryways or crowded outdoor venues such as sports stadia’* (WHO 2007, 2011).

Since the FCTC came into force, sporting mega-events have been increasingly viewed as presenting key opportunities to influence public opinion and shift social norms towards tobacco-free environments. The ‘WHO guide to Tobacco-Free Mega Events’ (WHO 2010) defined such an event as: “*an organised planned event normally hosted by a city, governed by a parent organisation, and involving or influencing large numbers of people...they can be social, sporting, cultural, religious* *and political”.* The guide included a sample tobacco-free venue policy using sports venues as the working example. This focus on sports stadia is consistent with the WHO’s ‘healthy settings’ approach (WHO 2014). In this context, the healthy settings are sports stadia.

This development of smoke-free sports stadia has been assisted by WHO’s increasing focus on the implementation of smoke-free policies at national level. The WHO established and now monitors national performance against six MPOWER measures, a package of the most effective tobacco control policies, of which the ‘P’ measure is ‘***P****rotect people from tobacco smoke’* (WHO 2008). In the WHO’s 2013 progress report on global implementation of the MPOWER measures, the key findings included that: “*the creation of smoke-free public places and workplaces continues to be the most commonly established measure at the highest level of achievement*” (WHO 2013, 45). However, although progress has been made in the national adoption of such policies, how legislation is constructed affects where the regulations apply.

Smoke-free or tobacco-free policies have been adopted at several recent major football tournaments. In 2012 for example, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) adopted a tobacco-free policy at the 2012 UEFA European Championships held in Poland and Ukraine (UEFA 2011). In the years following, the 2013 FIFA Confederations Cup and 2014 FIFA World Cup, both hosted by Brazil, were smoke-free (FIFA 2013). However, there is known to be variation in the definition and implementation in practice of such policies, both at national, regional and tournament / competitions level. For example, there are examples of sports stadia which allow smoking in open stands without a roof, or in designated smoking areas within the stadium complex. Therefore, even where smoke-free policies are in place, there is considerable variation in how they operate in practice.

# UEFA and Tournament Context

The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) is the governing body for association football in Europe, consisting of 55 national association members. UEFA represents the national football associations of Europe, runs nation and club competitions including the men’s and women’s UEFA European Championship and UEFA Champions League and controls the prize money, regulations and media rights to these competitions.

At a time when professional sport is coming under increasing pressure from government, fans and other stakeholders to contribute to social agendas (Anagnostopoulos and Shilbury 2013; Parnell et al. 2013), UEFA continues to develop an innovative and pragmatic approach to social responsibility and sustainability at all their tournaments. UEFA cooperates with several expert non-governmental organisations on a range of social, environmental and humanitarian issues as part of their Football and Social Responsibility (FSR) portfolio under the banner of ‘Respect’.

## Social Responsibility and Health

As part of their commitment to social responsibility, UEFA has consulted with both Healthy Stadia and World Heart Federation on how best to leverage the power of football and the reach of their member associations to promote health to football fans.

Alongside their commitment to implement tobacco-free stadia policies at its club competition finals and national tournaments, UEFA is also committed to taking a holistic approach to healthier stadium environments. As such, UEFA currently partners with Healthy Stadia in order to maximise provision of active travel (walking and cycling) to stadia, encourage stadium operators to provide healthier catering options from concessions and support UEFA Member Associations to implement grassroots and community-orientated programmes in support of the health of various population groups.

## UEFA EURO 2016

The 2016 UEFA European Championship, commonly referred to as UEFA EURO 2016, is the premier football competition contested by the senior men’s national teams affiliated with UEFA. Held every four years since 1960, the tournament determines the continental champions of Europe. The tournament was hosted in France from 10 June to 10 July and was contested by 24 teams for the first time in 2016. The Respect Your Health project, coordinated by Healthy Stadia, was one of UEFA’s eight priority areas under the banner of social responsibility and sustainability at UEFA EURO 2016.

Building upon policy work implemented at previous editions of the UEFA European Football Championships (UEFA EURO) and UEFA’s club competition finals, in 2015 UEFA announced that a ‘Tobacco-Free Policy’ prohibiting the use, sale and promotion of tobacco and e-cigarette products would operate across all internal and external areas of the ten French stadiums staging UEFA EURO 2016 – the most ambitious tournament policy to date. This chapter outlines the reasons why this policy was implemented at UEFA EURO 2016, the role Healthy Stadia played in the delivery of the project, the primary communications and enforcement mechanisms used, and the main results, learning and recommendations to be taken from this project.

## Smoke-free Legislation and Legal Context in France

France formally ratified the WHO’s FCTC on 19 October 2004 and is one of a growing number of countries that have introduced comprehensive smoke-free regulations that cover most indoor workplaces and public spaces. Subnational jurisdictions do not have the authority to implement smoke-free laws leaving national government to effect such changes. National smoke-free laws were implemented in two phases (Fong et al. 2013):

* Phase 1 was realised in February 2007 prohibiting the use of tobacco products in workplaces, shopping centres, airports, train stations, hospitals and schools;
* Phase 2 was completed in January 2008 and extended the smoke-free ban to hospitality venues including cafés, bars, restaurants, hotels, casinos and nightclubs.

Prior to the launch of each phase of smoke-free legislation, media campaigns were coordinated in order to inform the public of the incoming policies and in order to raise awareness of the health harms of second-hand smoke.

Despite the relatively comprehensive legislature, smoking is still permitted in recreational spaces such as cafes, restaurants and indeed sports stadia in France if they are not covered, or the main façade is open; i.e. they are considered only semi-enclosed spaces (Article L. 3511-7 of the Code of Public Health). Therefore, use of lit tobacco products is permissible in many aspects of French sports stadia, including seated areas. Current legislation only prohibits the use of lit tobacco products in indoor sports arenas (Article L. 3511-7 of the Code of Public Health). This seemingly minor discrepancy contrasts strongly with national legislation in many parts of northern and eastern Europe including the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Sweden and Russia, which prohibits smoking even in semi-enclosed spaces, making it illegal to smoke in seated areas of sports stadia.

## Tobacco Use and Smoking Behaviour

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in France and is responsible for 73,000 premature deaths annually which corresponds to about 13% of recorded deaths in Metropolitan France every year (Bonaldi et al. 2016). Between 2000 and 2013, while the number of deaths attributable to tobacco decreased slightly for men, it more than doubled for women, from approximately 8,000 deaths in 2000 to more than 17,000 deaths in 2013 (Bonaldi et al. 2016).

Survey data from 2016 suggests that smoking prevalence in France remains high with 38.1% of men and 31.2% of women aged between 15-75 currently classified as either an occasional or daily smoker (Pasquereau et al. 2017). A total of 32.1% of men and 25.5% of women in 2016 were estimated to smoke daily. E-cigarette usage was much lower with 3.3% of all adults using a device occasionally or daily (Pasquereau et al. 2017).

Compliance with the introduction of smoke-free national legislation in France is high. An evaluation by Fong et al. (2013) of the effectiveness of France’s smoke-free law reported decreases in observed smoking from almost 100% of bars and approximately 60–71% for restaurants to about 4% of bars and 2-3% of restaurants one year after phase 2 of the legislation was introduced. Five years after implementation, smoking was recorded at 6-8% for bars and 1-2% for restaurants – a significant success story.

Fong et al. (2013) also reported increased support for indoor smoke-free legislation post-introduction amongst smokers and non-smokers in restaurants, bars and workplaces. Interestingly, support fell from 56% to 50.6% amongst smokers for the introduction of smoke-free football stands after national legislation was introduced, perhaps suggesting that football fans would be reluctant to relinquish an age-old custom of smoking at the football. However, amongst non-smokers, there was a small increase in support.

# Development of No Tobacco Policy for UEFA EURO 2016

UEFA’s ambition to implement a complete tobacco-free tournament at UEFA EURO 2016 was somewhat undermined by France’s national smoke-free legislation which does not explicitly prohibit smoking in semi-enclosed spaces. Therefore, the No Tobacco Policy for UEFA EURO 2016 would need to *exceed* existing national legislation. This led to the creation of a partnership between UEFA, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and Healthy Stadia to develop a No Tobacco project that would protect all stadium users, including fans, staff, volunteers and contract workers, against the health and safety dangers presented by tobacco use. Of upmost concern was protecting all stadium users from the health harms of second-hand smoke, in all aspects of host stadia, including areas not currently covered by national smoke-free legislation. Therefore, the policy would operate as follows:

* The no smoking regulation would apply without exception to all spaces within a designated ‘No Tobacco’ perimeter at each stadium, including all internal and external aspects of host venues.
* The policy would apply to all stadium users, including fans, very important persons (VIPs), staff, volunteers, media personnel and contractors.
* Any individuals using tobacco or e-cigarette products beyond the No Tobacco perimeter would be asked to extinguish their product or cease usage.
* Designated smoking areas would not be made available for fans or staff, with staff asked to move off-site if they wished to smoke.
* The policy would come into effect at host stadia at 08.00 the day before matchday and would cease 4 hours after completion of each match.

In addition to regulations on smoking inside stadium environments, the policy would also prohibit the sale of tobacco and e-cigarette products, including sale through cigarette vending machines, and the promotion and advertising of tobacco or e-cigarette products within the perimeter of host stadia, which is forbidden as part of the France’s commitment and ratification of the WHO’s FCTC. All ashtrays and smoking-related paraphernalia would need to be removed from all areas of host venues include general access, VIP and media areas. Research suggests that the presence of ashtrays if often regarded as tacit approval of smoking and could therefore hinder enforcement of the smoke-free regulation (Moore et al. 2006, 2009).

## Key Challenges

The lack of legislation covering semi-enclosed spaces inside host stadia presented several specific obstacles to the successful implementation of a complete tobacco-free stadia policy, including:

* Low levels of awareness and poor compliance with smoke-free stadia policies amongst host nation fans
* Inability to use penalty fines as a key enforcement tool
* A lack of prior training amongst stadium stewards and security staff on how to enforce such a wide-reaching policy without recourse to ‘hard’ penalties enshrined in national law
* Minimal pre-existing No Smoking signage at host stadia (only internal office spaces had no smoking signage)
* How to adequately communicate such a policy to fans travelling from 24 nations, many of whom would not be used to smoke-free policies applying to public spaces

Taking the above considerations into account in advance of the tournament, it was apparent that taking a ‘hard approach’ to enforcement would be extremely difficult to achieve, with such an approach likely leading to heightened tensions amongst fans and the possibility of crowd control issues. As such, UEFA took the strategic decision to maximise communication of the policy to fans both pre-tournament and at host venues on matchdays, whilst taking a ‘soft approach’ to enforcement of the policy at matches through a cohort of specially trained volunteers and basic training for stewards. It should be noted that taking a soft approach did not compromise the protective value of the No Tobacco policy but was simply a pragmatic and effective strategy for implementing such an ambitious policy for a mega event of this scale that had no grounding in tobacco control legislation.

# Implementation of No Tobacco Policy on Matchdays

UEFA recruited a team of volunteers that would help to communicate the policy to fans and intervene in instances of non-compliance. Volunteers were recruited based on having a background in a health-related discipline, were non-smokers and were fluent in both French and English language. The volunteers received specialist training and were equipped with yellow and red information/enforcement cards, with a team of 11 volunteers operating at each host venue. A dedicated team of Sustainability Managers coordinated all social responsibility and sustainability activities and were in regular contact with Healthy Stadia throughout the tournament.

## Training for Stewards and Volunteers

To help volunteers communicate the policy, in particular its protective health benefits, to fans and members of the tournament workforce, Healthy Stadia developed content for a detailed online training programme. The training programme covered the following key areas:

* Health and safety dangers of tobacco use in stadium environments and acute dangers to health from second-hand smoke
* Restricted products and behaviours covered by the policy
* Primary communications tools used pre-tournament and at host venues
* Use of yellow and red information/enforcement cards and how to engage fans
* Understanding likely areas of non-compliance and protocol for graduated enforcement plan
* Monitoring, reporting and staying safe

Healthy Stadia also delivered a ‘train the trainer’ programme for the tournament’s Sustainability Managers. This training module was delivered prior to the tournament and equipped managers with the skills and materials to deliver face to face training sessions with their volunteers, with a focus on role-play, the enforcement process and conflict resolution. Stadium stewards also received situational briefings from operations staff at each venue to support volunteers on matchday. Furthermore, the entire tournament workforce received a short online module briefing staff on all of UEFA’s sustainability projects, including the No Smoking policy.

## No Smoking Signage

Owing to a lack of pre-existing No Smoking signage at host stadia, a signage placement strategy was developed to: 1) sensitise fans to the No Tobacco policy at key stages of a supporter’s journey from the first security cordon to their seat; and, 2) cover likely ‘hotspot’ areas such as entrances to toilets, concourses, catering areas, stairways and entrances/exits to seating areas where smokers were likely to gather, particularly at half-time.

All tournament stadia used A2 size signage boards incorporating an internationally recognised No Smoking and No E-cigarette pictogram with the following wording in both English and French:

* ‘No Smoking: Use of tobacco and e-cigarette products are prohibited in any part of this stadium’
* ‘Interdiction de Fumer: Le tabac et les cigarettes électroniques sont interdits dans l’enceinte du stade.”

Supplementary No Smoking, No E-cigarette stickers were also used to bolster communication of the policy in areas such as toilet facilities and placed on fixed ashtrays in VIP areas. The stadium regulations that were placed along the perimeter of all host venues, also provided information about the policy.

## Pre-tournament and Matchday Fan Communications

In keeping with their commitment to a ‘soft approach’ to enforcement, UEFA took advantage of several key communications channels to sensitise fans to the No Tobacco regulation in operation at the tournament. In addition to signage, the No Tobacco policy was communicated to fans through the following mechanisms:

* UEFA media releases were distributed to major news outlets, participating UEFA Member Associations and fan groups ahead of the tournament
* UEFA published an article on their website detailing the policy (UEFA 2015) and communicated the regulation via multiple UEFA-affiliated social media channels
* Public address announcements outside and inside of host stadia at key intervals
* ‘Big Screen’ and concourse screen messaging (where available) at host stadia prior to kick-off and during half-time
* The dual No Smoking, No E-cigarettes pictogram appeared on all match tickets with accompanying wording
* Notice of the policy appeared in official programmes for each tournament fixture
* Yellow and red information/enforcement cards distributed by volunteers

## Enforcement of Policy

Volunteers were equipped with a set of yellow and red cards which contained basic information on the No Tobacco policy including where it operated and its overarching objectives. The yellow cards where primarily deployed as an ‘icebreaker’ in order to help initiate conversations with fans in breach of the policy. This allowed volunteers and stadium stewards to set a non-confrontational tone, in keeping with UEFA’s soft approach to enforcement. With repeat offenders, volunteers could the issue a red card with additional information. If any given fan continued to disregard the policy, volunteers would refer the incident to stadium stewards or security personnel that would then take appropriate action.

# Matchday Monitoring

Whilst the yellow and red cards were primarily used as an information/enforcement tool, they simultaneously acted as a monitoring mechanism. Volunteers documented instances of non-compliance in a bespoke diary, recording the type of card issued (yellow or red), what product the card related to (tobacco or e-cigarette), and where each card was issued (e.g. seated areas, toilets, concourses, etc.).

After each match a designated team leader aggregated the data collected by volunteers and delivered a monitoring report via e-mail to Healthy Stadia. Sustainability Managers and personnel from Healthy Stadia could then provide timely feedback on hot spot areas at host venues and reprioritise volunteer positioning before the venue’s next fixture.

As smoking rates and indeed national tobacco legislation varies from country to country, Healthy Stadia identified ‘high priority’ group stage fixtures where compliance and enforcement could be an issue. Staff from Healthy Stadia attended several of these fixtures, providing on-the-ground support to Sustainability Managers and volunteers on signage placement, likely hotspot smoking areas and deployment of volunteers.

# Impact and Key Results

The No Tobacco policy was well received and well observed by fans across all host stadia. Volunteers reported that most fans cooperated with requests to extinguish lit tobacco products or cease use of their e-cigarettes, often in an apologetic manner. Volunteers stated that smokers were in the vast minority amongst supporters and a combination of the communications campaign, stadium signage and interventions by volunteers themselves discouraged the use of tobacco products, thereby protecting all stadium users against exposure to second-hand smoke. Fans from individual nations were not singled out for enquiry, however, volunteers did report that French fans, who likely attended host stadia on a regular basis for domestic fixtures, were among the more difficult supporters to convince of the benefits of the No Tobacco policy.

The monitoring data reveals there was a total of 13,964 recorded interventions by volunteers over the course of the 51-match tournament, captured through the distribution of yellow and red cards. In total, 12,805 yellow cards and 1,159 red cards were issued, indicating that 0.57% of the total tournament attendance (n= 2,427,303) received a direct intervention from volunteers.

The monitoring data also suggests that once a volunteer had intervened in an instance of non-compliance, most fans were then happy to observe the No Tobacco policy, as detailed by comparably few red cards being issued for both tobacco and e-cigarette products. The relatively few interventions concerning use of e-cigarettes is reflective of the prevalence of e-cigarette usage in France and many European countries.

## Table 1. Aggregated monitoring data collected through the recording of yellow and red card interventions by volunteers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Smoking Hotspot Area** | **Yellow Cards distributed for Tobacco Usage** | **Red Cards distributed for Tobacco Usage** | **Yellow Cards distributed for E-cigarette Usage** | **Yellow Cards distributed for E-cigarette Usage** | **Total** |
| Seated Areas | 2251 | 223 | 156 | 9 | 2639 |
| Toilets | 459 | 112 | 19 | 2 | 592 |
| Concourse / Stairs | 6711 | 616 | 270 | 17 | 7614 |
| Catering Areas | 2430 | 130 | 70 | 25 | 2655 |
| VIP Areas | 205 | 18 | 8 | 0 | 231 |
| Media / Offices | 212 | 6 | 14 | 1 | 233 |
| **Total** | **12268** | **1105** | **537** | **54** | **13964** |

Less than a fifth (18.9%) of yellow and red cards were issued in seated areas in view of the pitch and over half of interventions (54%) occurred on concourses or in stairwells. Volunteers indicated that those wishing to smoke or use an e-cigarette product, often wanted to do so at half-time, and would leave their seats to enter the concourse, often via a stairwell after the first 45 minutes. This correlates with the quantitative data captured and although volunteers and stadium stewards were made aware of this during the tournament, the task of discouraging smoking behaviour at half-time was a constant issue throughout the UEFA EURO 2016.

# Limitations

* At key points during fixtures, particularly half-time, volunteers were unable to record all interventions due to the volume of fans on concourses and therefore they took the pragmatic decision to prioritise intervening over recording data. Therefore, the data here likely underestimates the true number of interventions and fans using tobacco and e-cigarette products.
* At certain stadia, volunteers could not access VIP and media areas and therefore occurrences of smoking in these areas were not recorded.
* Host stadia varied massively in terms of their capacity and physical structure. For volunteers working at larger stadia, such as Stade de France, the burden of responsibility was much greater which could have impacted their effectiveness on the ground.
* Whilst there were several instances were individual stadium stewards had taken ownership of and responsibility for the policy, others remained unconvinced and were largely disinterested in its enforcement. This undermined the authority of volunteers and could have led to supporters disregarding the policy.

# Discussion

The tobacco-free policy developed and operated for UEFA EURO 2016 is significant in that the operator of a major international football tournament implemented a no smoking policy at host stadia in a country where there was no national legislation to assist in the enforcement of such a policy. In addition to this positive outcome, there are wider public health benefits that can be taken from this and previous implementation of tobacco-free policies at UEFA tournaments.

Whilst UEFA had previously implemented a no smoking policy at its 2012 edition of the EURO in Poland and Ukraine, both host countries had adopted smoke-free legislation ahead of the tournament, a political act that the French Government was not willing to follow in advance of hosting UEFA EURO 2016. It is also worth reflecting on the 2008 edition of the EURO that was jointly hosted by Austria and Switzerland, where the LOCs of both host countries pushed back on a *request* from UEFA to operate no smoking policies at host venues for the tournament. Consequently, UEFA took the unprecedented step of inserting new requirements for countries bidding to host future editions of the EURO to operate tobacco-free stadia, a step that also now features as part of the bidding requirements for UEFA’s club competition finals.

There are several learning and discussion points that can be taken from this historical arc on policy development. Firstly, in addition to the obvious public health benefits of host stadia being declared tobacco-free, the hosting of such mega events can (in some cases at least) be used to influence wider tobacco-free policy changes at national level in host countries. This is evidenced in the example of UEFA EURO 2012 illustrated above, but also from the 2018 hosting of the FIFA World Cup in Russia (FIFA 2017). Hosting of such high-profile competitions should be noted by public health advocacy organisations working in the area of tobacco control as a significant point of leverage. In the cases of Poland, Ukraine and Russia, the strengthening of tobacco-free legislation in public spaces had far greater reach than simply sports stadia, with public transport, hotels, restaurants and bars also covered.

Secondly, in order to ensure that international sports events operate tobacco-free stadia, it is imperative that this is clearly set out as a mandatory requirement in the bidding criteria for host countries. Outside of football, there is also an opportunity for public health advocacy organisations to work with governing bodies of sport and operators of events to ensure this requirement is included in bidding criteria to host the competition (UEFA 2016).

Finally, in cases such as UEFA EURO 2016 where the French government did not adopt a more rigorous form of tobacco-free legislation covering stadium environments, the operation of a tobacco-free policy at the tournament has already acted as a strong example of good practice that has inspired some of the host venues in France to adopt similar protective policies at domestic level. Healthy Stadia has used a combination of good practices from UEFA EURO 2016, and Tobacco-Free Stadia Guidelines published in 2016 to work with stadium operators, football clubs and wider stakeholders in France to help further this objective. This can be evidenced by la Ligue de Football Professionnel and French professional clubs supporting the Mois Sans Tabac (month without tobacco) campaign in 2017 and 2018 where stadia operated as tobacco-free environments for the month of November (Ligue de Football Professionnel 2016).

# Learning and Recommendations

The soft approach to enforcement combined with a comprehensive communications plan proved highly effective in protecting fans from the dangers of second-hand smoke, particularly in the internal aspects of host stadia. However, there are several areas where significant learning can be taken. We present a set of recommendations that will further assist the implementation of pragmatic tobacco-free policies at future UEFA events and indeed other sporting events including major international tournaments hosted in countries with relatively weak tobacco control legislation.

## Recommendations for LOCs and UEFA Events

### Communications

Yellow and red information cards should be used as a soft enforcement tool at all of UEFA’s signature events including club competitions finals and national competitions such as the EURO. In-stadia infrastructure such as advertising hoardings and concourse television screens should also be used to communicate the policy to fans. Big screen announcements would benefit from a ‘human element’ to compel fans to observe the policy.

UEFA should commit to producing non-branded No Smoking signage for all major events. The donation of this signage post-event could then act as a stimulus to encourage tenant club(s) and stadium operations teams to implement comprehensive tobacco-free policies for domestic fixtures where no national legislation does not already exist.

### No Tobacco Perimeter

For UEFA EURO 2016, it was decided that all internal and external aspects of host stadia would be declared smoke-free. For stadia with large external concourses beyond the turnstiles, enforcing this aspect of the policy became problematic given the relatively small volunteer base. Therefore, we recommend that No Smoking policies should only apply within the main stadium structure.

### Designated Smoking Areas

We recommend that UEFA consider the operation of designated smoking areas in completely open-air spaces external to the main stadium structure. The operation of designated smoking areas is dependent on a number of legal and practical factors including, but not limited to: the legality of their operation in the country in which the event is taking place; the amount of open-air space immediately outside of the main stadium structure; the likelihood of second-hand smoke accumulating; the presence/absence of outer perimeter fencing that would prevent non-ticketed individuals from entering the complex; and the additional capacity required in terms of stewarding to maintain the safety and security of the event.

### Additional Steward Training and Enforcement

The No Tobacco policy would have gained much greater traction through uniform enforcement by stewards and security staff. For future tournaments, UEFA stewarding and security should be engaged at a much earlier stage of planning with the aim of achieving binding agreements on enforcement protocol and greater support for volunteers.

However, regarding the Tobacco-free policy at UEFA EURO 2016, we would include the caveat that the tournament took place during a period of great upheaval in France with heightened tensions due to the threat of terrorism, and this was rightly prioritised by UEFA, the local organising committee and security forces.

### Extending the Volunteer Base

It became apparent very early on in the tournament that the volunteers dedicated to enforcing the No Smoking policy were insufficient, and indeed for larger venues such as Stade de France, the volunteers struggled to cover all tiers and concourses effectively, particularly at half-time. At future events the wider volunteer workforce should receive online and situational No Tobacco training and be equipped with yellow and red cards to aid enforcement and boost compliance.

### Enforcement of Policy in VIP and Media Areas

There was clear evidence of non-compliance with the No Smoking policy in some VIP and media areas. At future events, UEFA should endeavour to remove all loose and fixed ashtrays, which could be regarded as tacit approval to smoke, and provide specific briefing and training for stewards and other staff operating in these areas.

## Recommendations for other sporting bodies

### Bidding Criteria

Include a commitment to implementing a tobacco-free policy at all host venues, training facilities and athlete accommodation as part of the bidding criteria for all tournaments irrespective of existing national legislation.

### Political Support

Sporting bodies and LOCs should endeavour to engage with both local municipalities (who may hold subnational or regional powers) and national government to sensitise them of their aspiration to provide smoke-free environments with a view to encouraging them to adopt smoke-free legislation covering stadia.

### Partnership Working

Information and support from charitable and other civil society organisations tackling the tobacco issue will be able to add a much-needed local perspective on barriers and facilitators to implementing such a policy. These organisations may also be able to help galvanise political support.

### Stadia Assessments

No two stadiums or sports venues are alike, and every facility has its own quirks. It is essential that venues are assessed prior to an event to provide an initial insight into existing policies and practices, signage placement, likely hotspot areas and their potential to operate designated smoking areas.

# Conclusion and Legacy

It is particularly pleasing to report the effectiveness of the tobacco-free policy at UEFA EURO 2016 that was implemented through a ‘soft approach’ surpassing tobacco control legislation applying to sports stadia in France. One should also consider that the policy operated at a tournament with heightened security concerns, and with fans from 24 different nations, the majority of which do not have tobacco-free stadium policies. As such, the No Tobacco policy at UEFA EURO 2016 should be held up as a significant success story and provides a strong case study for future mega-events, particularly those hosted in countries with tobacco legislation that does not cover stadium environments.

It is anticipated that the operation of a tobacco-free policy at the tournament will act as a strong example of good practice which will inspire host venues in France and beyond to adopt similar protective policies. In follow up to the tournament, Healthy Stadia will use a combination of good practices from UEFA EURO 2016, and its recently published Tobacco-Free Stadia Guidelines, to work with stadium operators, football clubs and wider stakeholders in France to advocate for tobacco-free policies to be adopted at domestic matches. Indeed, the opportunity presented by the Respect Your Health: No Tobacco project for spreading smoke-free and broader tobacco control measures should not be underestimated, not least through exposing hundreds of thousands of travelling fans from all over Europe to tobacco-free football environments.

Healthy Stadia recognises that whilst the No Tobacco policy at UEFA EURO 2016 should be regarded a success, it will still take many years of sensitisation amongst fans, staff and even national associations to embed comprehensive levels of compliance with smoking restrictions at UEFA’s flagship tournament. It is hoped that the learning from Respect Your Health: No Tobacco in France, and the recommendations detailed, will further enhance implementation of a tobacco-free policy at future editions of UEFA’s European Championships, protecting the health of all stadium users against second-hand smoke, and disassociating all links between football and tobacco.

Indeed, Healthy Stadia has been engaged by a number of UEFA’s Member Associations and league operators in the months since UEFA EURO 2016 including the Portuguese Football Federation, the Belgian Pro League and the Dutch Eredivise for support in advocating and adopting tobacco-free stadia policies that exceed national legislation. We will continue to work with a broad mix of sporting and public health bodies to secure a tobacco-free footballing future in Europe.

# Statement of Intellectual Property

The Healthy Stadia word mark and logo mark are registered as official trademarks to the European Healthy Stadia Network CIC Ltd at EU level.

# Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank UEFA for their progressive and open approach to partnership working, for their commitment to operating tobacco-free football environments and for helping to eradicate any lingering association between football and tobacco.

# Disclosure Statement

European Healthy Stadia Network CIC received funding from UEFA for development and implementation of the Respect Your Health programme delivered at EURO 2016.

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