



**ENSP**

European Network for  
Smoking and Tobacco Prevention

31 May 2010

**PRESS RELEASE**

**World No Tobacco Day 2010**

**Gender and tobacco with an emphasis on marketing to women**

World No Tobacco Day is an initiative launched by the World Health Organization to highlight aspects of tobacco use and its devastating consequences in our societies. This year's theme is protecting women from tobacco marketing and second-hand smoke.

We are all exposed to tobacco industry marketing, but women are particularly at risk, as the female market is considered by the tobacco industry as an expanding one. Tobacco marketing to women is highly skilful and extremely well targeted: entire brands are designed to appeal to women with their enticing imagery and subliminal messages of elegance, beauty, slimming effects.

ENSP is concerned that the tobacco industry is employing gender-sensitive mechanisms to target women and encourage tobacco consumption among women and girls. In addition, millions of women around the world are exposed to passive smoke at work, in public and in their homes. ENSP is particularly concerned by the effects of second-hand smoke during pregnancy, which is known to lead to low birth weight, respiratory complications and other illnesses in new-born infants, and calls for extensive education and information campaigns as a means of protecting the unborn child. Furthermore, we are concerned about smoking in the presence of minors.

ENSP's last network meeting held in Athens, Greece in October 2009 concluded in the adoption of the ENSP Athens 2009 Declaration. ENSP calls on all European countries to give priority to tobacco control and fulfil their obligations to honour the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and EU recommendations by introducing fully comprehensive smoke-free laws with no exceptions.

The FCTC specifically highlights the increase in smoking and other forms of tobacco consumption by women and girls and sets out the need for gender-specific tobacco control strategies. ENSP, which is the largest network of tobacco control and health professionals in Europe comprising more than 400 member organisations, likewise acknowledges the need for tobacco control policies to be gender-specific and supports gender-sensitive education and information programmes. Tobacco dependence can be tackled in a more meaningful way if the gender aspects of smoking and other forms of tobacco consumption are addressed.

*Professor Panagiotis Behrakis, President*