



## **Eurobarometer Qualitative Study**

# **TOBACCO PACKAGING HEALTH WARNING LABELS**

**Aggregate report**

**March 2012**

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The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

**Qualitative study – TNS Qual+**

**Eurobarometer Qualitative study**

## **Tobacco Packaging Health Warning Labels**

Conducted by TNS Qual + at the request of Directorate-General  
for Health and Consumers

Survey co-ordinated by Directorate-General for Communication

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## Country Abbreviations employed in this report

Country	Abbreviation
Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Cyprus	CY
Czech Republic	CZ
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	EL
Hungary	HU
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
The Netherlands	NL
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE
The United Kingdom	UK

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Qualitative Eurobarometer study investigating a second generation of tobacco packaging health warnings was commissioned by the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission. The study consisted of a programme of 270 in-depth interviews conducted amongst current, ex- and (amongst the 15-17 age group only) non-smokers across all twenty-seven Member States of the European Union.

The overall aim of the study was to evaluate 24 proposed new health warnings to establish which were likely to have the greatest impact, how the messages could be modified to enhance their impact and which fourteen messages would represent the best selection for adoption.

Overall, the fourteen health warnings we recommended adopting are:

- Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers (1)
- Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer (2)
- Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer (3)
- Smoking destroys your lungs (5)
- Smoking causes heart attacks (7)
- Smoking can kill your unborn child (12)
- Your smoke harms your children, family and friends (13)
- Quit now – stay alive for your children (15)
- Smoking makes it harder to have children (18)
- Smoking reduces your sexual performance (19)
- Smoking causes strokes and severe disability (8)
- Smoking causes leg amputations (9) OR Smoking causes leukaemia (4)
- Smoking causes blindness (10) OR Smokers die younger (22)
- If you smoke, your children will smoke (14)

## 1.1 Current health warnings

All respondents, whether current and ex- or non-smokers are aware, at least to some extent of the existing health warnings on cigarette and tobacco packaging. Whilst they are not always able to replay the exact wording they are able to recall many of the main messages. The warnings recalled most frequently were:

- Smoking can kill
- Smoking reduces male fertility / causes impotence
- Smoking causes cancers
- Smoking causes heart disease
- Do not smoke during pregnancy
- Smoking is harmful to those around you

Most respondents claimed they no longer register the current health warnings and there is a perception that people have become desensitised to them and that the warnings now 'blend into' the packaging. Although most respondents claimed that they would not be motivated by health warnings alone to give up smoking, they felt they were important and should continue to feature on tobacco packaging.

Respondents who had been exposed to pictorial health warnings (either in Europe or further afield) expressed the view that these were more impactful and memorable than text only warnings. Consequently, they felt that pictorial warnings should be more widely adopted, instead of or in combination with text.

Other spontaneous suggestions to make health warnings more impactful and memorable included:

- Changing the messages frequently to maintain 'freshness'
- Increasing the text size at the expense of manufacturer branding
- Printing each of the warnings in different fonts and or colours to reduce over-familiarity
- Including more statistics or evidence
- Tailoring messages to a younger audience
- Keeping messages short and concise
- Phrasing the messages to address the smoker directly (Smoking kills you!)
- Targeting smokers emotionally as well as rationally

Many smokers consistently find ways to deny that health warnings apply to them personally. Even if they accept the truth of the assertions the warnings make they often claim they are not ready to change their behaviour 'yet' or that they accept the risk as an integral part of their decision to smoke.

## 1.2 *New health warnings*

Reactions to the new health warnings were broadly in line with the views expressed regarding the existing health warnings. Many denied that some of the new or more strongly expressed warnings were true, downplayed the scale of the problem or chose to assume that the warnings did not apply to them. Nevertheless, amid the expressions of denial from respondents, it was clear that some of the warnings were more effective than others and that some were having a visible impact when first shown to respondents. The elements that people responded to most strongly in the various health warnings tested included:

- Any mention of 'cancer'
- Those which provide a clear, unequivocal connection with smoking
- Any reference to a life threatening condition
- Any reference to potential harm of children
- The inclusion of new information
- Messages with relevance to a broad audience
- The inclusion of statistics

Taking these factors into account we can develop a shortlist of warnings which are likely to have the greatest impact.

We start by including a number of warnings which include any mention of cancer or a link to another generally acknowledged severe or life threatening condition:

- Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers (1)
- Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer (2)
- Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer (3)
- Smoking destroys your lungs (5)
- Smoking causes heart attacks (7)
- Smoking causes strokes and severe disability (8)

These six warnings also include examples of three of the other themes: relevance to a broad audience; the inclusion of 'statistics'; an 'obvious' direct connection with smoking.

Taking the theme of harm to or impact on children a further four warnings can be added to the recommended shortlist:

- Smoking can kill your unborn child (12)
- Your smoke harms your children, family and friends (13)
- Quit now – stay alive for your children (15)
- If you smoke, your children will smoke (14)

Some warnings **contain new or previously unknown information** about the risks of smoking and derive their effectiveness from this. On this basis we add:

- Smoking causes leg amputations (9)
- Smoking causes blindness (10)

The final two warnings in the shortlist are included primarily because they are likely to be **disproportionately effective amongst younger respondents** although they also meet some of the other criteria already discussed:

- Smoking makes it harder to have children (18)
- Smoking reduces your sexual performance (19)

Eleven of the proposed shortlist of warnings were among the fourteen statements identified as being most likely to have an impact on smoking behaviour by respondents and / or local researchers. On the other hand, three of the shortlisted warnings (9, 10 and 14) tended to receive 'denial' reactions from many respondents.

Since two thirds of those interviewed in the study were current smokers we need to be aware that their responses will have been coloured by their current behaviour. In some cases we believe that strong rejection of certain health warnings was informed by respondents 'not wanting' them to be true.

Statements 9, 10 and 14 contained warning information new to many respondents. This and the nature of the risks described tended to give these warnings a greater 'shock value' than some of those referring to well known smoking related risks. When confronted with these warnings some respondents winced, looked away or gave other indications of discomfort with the messages conveyed.

In addition to their initial 'shock value' it was clear that many respondents wanted to deny or dismiss these warnings. It seemed, in many cases, they would have preferred the warning to be untrue. Despite this (indeed, to some extent because of it) we feel there is a clear argument for including these warnings in the final list.

However, if these statements are to be included we would also recommend that their inclusion is accompanied by a wider programme of information and education to raise awareness of the issues and to reduce the possibility of denial by smokers, particularly in the case of the warnings relating to amputations (9) and blindness (10).

We recognise that providing the educational and informational programmes we recommend in support of warnings (9) and (10) in particular would be a significant and costly exercise and one which may not be immediately feasible. Should this prove to be the case we would recommend replacing these with two other warnings, neither of which would require the same level of immediate educational and informational support:

- Smoking causes leukaemia (4)
- Smokers die younger (22)

Specific suggestions for improvements were made for each of the statements (detailed in the body of the report). However, across all of the tested health warnings the following suggested improvements were universal (where they were not already part of the warning in question):

- Include photographs or pictorial representations to increase the impact
- Include statistics or evidence to add impetus to the warning
- If the connection with smoking is unclear or 'new', the inclusion of a link to a website or other information source

## 2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Background and objectives

This Qualitative Eurobarometer study investigating a second generation of tobacco packaging health warnings was commissioned by the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission. The study consisted of a programme of 270 in-depth interviews conducted amongst selected European citizens in all twenty-seven Member States of the European Union.

The overall aim of the study was to evaluate 24 proposed new health warnings to establish:

- Which were likely to have the greatest impact
- How the messages could be modified to enhance their impact.
- Which fourteen would represent the best selection for adoption

### 2.2 Methodology and sampling

The study consisted of ten in-depth interviews in each Member State with three different types of individual:

- Established smokers: those who smoke at least one cigarette / cigar / pipe per day
- Ambivalent smokers: those who do not smoke every day and do not buy cigarettes, tobacco or cigars regularly
- Ex-smokers: those who used to smoke regularly but do not currently smoke (or, in some instances amongst 15-17 year olds only, those who have never smoked or have tried but did not take up the habit<sup>1</sup>)

In addition, quotas were set for gender, age and socio-economic situation.

Experienced qualitative social researchers conducted the in-depth interviews and were briefed to look for body language and other non-verbal cues when showing respondents the new health warnings. This information was recorded alongside verbal responses and has been included in the analysis. For example, a respondent may verbalise one view whilst his or her body language is indicating a response either additional or counter to the expressed view.

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<sup>1</sup> In some countries we were able to recruit respondents in this age group who were ex-smokers (i.e. had been regular smokers when younger and had given up). Where this was not possible non-smokers, as described above were recruited. Where verbatim quotes from such respondents are included in the report, it is indicated in the attribution whether the respondent is an ex- or a non-smoker.

## 2.3 Sample design

The final sample was designed to ensure good coverage of interviews across the whole programme, with an appropriate spread of demographic variables (age, gender, smoking status and economic situation).

In order to achieve this coverage, eight slightly different designs were used with each being employed in 3 or 4 Member States. This ensured a good spread within demographic groups. So, for example, not all 15-17 year old male ambivalent smokers were from a high economic background. In all countries there was the same balance of ages and an equal split of men and women. Inevitably, there were some slight variations in the mix of smoking status and economic situation but these were balanced out across the whole programme.

The eight designs and the Member States in which they were used were as follows:

### Version 1 - AT, FR, LU, ES

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Male	Ambivalent	High
2	15-17	Female	Established	Low
3	15-17	Male	Ex/non-smoker	Medium
4	18-29	Female	Ambivalent	Medium
5	18-29	Male	Established	High
6	18-29	Female	Ex-smoker	Low
7	30-44	Male	Ambivalent	Low
8	30-44	Female	Established	Medium
9	45+	Male	Ex-smoker	High
10	45+	Female	Ambivalent	Medium

**Version 2 – BE, DE, MT, SE**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Female	Ambivalent	Low
2	15-17	Male	Established	Medium
3	15-17	Female	Ex/non-smoker	High
4	18-29	Male	Ambivalent	Low
5	18-29	Female	Established	High
6	18-29	Male	Ex-smoker	Medium
7	30-44	Female	Ambivalent	Low
8	30-44	Male	Ex-smoker	High
9	45+	Female	Ex-smoker	Medium
10	45+	Male	Established	High

**Version 3 - BG, EL, NL, UK**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Male	Established	Medium
2	15-17	Female	Ex/non-smoker	Low
3	15-17	Male	Ambivalent	High
4	18-29	Female	Established	High
5	18-29	Male	Ex-smoker	Medium
6	18-29	Female	Ambivalent	Low
7	30-44	Male	Ambivalent	Medium
8	30-44	Female	Ex-smoker	High
9	45+	Male	Ex-smoker	Medium
10	45+	Female	Established	Low

**Version 4 - CY, HU, PL**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Female	Ambivalent	Medium
2	15-17	Male	Ex/non-smoker	High
3	15-17	Female	Established	Low
4	18-29	Male	Ambivalent	Medium
5	18-29	Female	Ex-smoker	Low
6	18-29	Male	Established	High
7	30-44	Female	Ambivalent	High
8	30-44	Male	Established	Medium
9	45+	Female	Established	Low
10	45+	Male	Ambivalent	Medium

**Version 5 - CZ, IE, PT**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Male	Ambivalent	Medium
2	15-17	Female	Established	High
3	15-17	Male	Ex/non-smoker	Low
4	18-29	Female	Ambivalent	Low
5	18-29	Male	Established	Medium
6	18-29	Female	Ex-smoker	High
7	30-44	Male	Ambivalent	Medium
8	30-44	Female	Established	Low
9	45+	Male	Ex-smoker	Medium
10	45+	Female	Ambivalent	High

**Version 6 –DK, IT, RO**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Female	Ambivalent	High
2	15-17	Male	Established	Low
3	15-17	Female	Ex/non-smoker	Medium
4	18-29	Male	Ambivalent	Medium
5	18-29	Female	Established	Low
6	18-29	Male	Ex-smoker	High
7	30-44	Female	Ambivalent	High
8	30-44	Male	Ex-smoker	Low
9	45+	Female	Ex-smoker	High
10	45+	Male	Established	Medium

**Version 7 - EE, LV, SK**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Male	Established	High
2	15-17	Female	Ex/non-smoker	Medium
3	15-17	Male	Ambivalent	Low
4	18-29	Female	Established	Low
5	18-29	Male	Ex-smoker	High
6	18-29	Female	Ambivalent	Medium
7	30-44	Male	Ambivalent	High
8	30-44	Female	Ex-smoker	Medium
9	45+	Male	Ex-smoker	Low
10	45+	Female	Established	Medium

**Version 8 – FI, LT, SI**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Smoking Status</b>	<b>Economic Situation</b>
1	15-17	Female	Ambivalent	Low
2	15-17	Male	Ex/non-smoker	Medium
3	15-17	Female	Established	High
4	18-29	Male	Ambivalent	High
5	18-29	Female	Ex-smoker	Medium
6	18-29	Male	Established	Low
7	30-44	Female	Ambivalent	Medium
8	30-44	Male	Established	High
9	45+	Female	Established	Medium
10	45+	Male	Ambivalent	Low

### 3 CURRENT HEALTH WARNINGS

Before introducing the proposed new health warnings we discussed the current health warnings with respondents to establish how aware they were of them and their attitudes towards them.

#### 3.1 Recall of health warnings

All respondents were aware of at least some of the health warning messages currently carried on cigarette and other tobacco packaging. However, levels of specific recall varied considerably.

The table below summarises the main messages recalled by respondents, listing all the Member States in which each message was mentioned.

<b>Health warning (message):</b>	<b>Recalled by respondents from:</b>
Smoking kills / smoking can kill	PT, DK, LU, CZ, SK, NL, CY, LT, FR, MT, DE, FI, ES, UK, LV, HU, IT, SE, EE, RO, IE
Fertility / smoking is bad for the quality of your sperm / smoking causes infertility / smoking causes impotence	PT, DK, CZ, SK, NL, CY, LT, FR, PL, DE, FI, ES, UK, LV, BE, HU, SI, EE, BG, EL, RO
Smoking harms those around you / smoking causes damage to those around you / passive smoking is dangerous for your health / smoke is harmful to your family and people around you	PT, LU, CZ, SK, NL, CY, LT, FR, PL, FI, ES, UK, BE, IT, AT, BG, IE
Pregnancy / smoking is damaging your child if you're pregnant / smoking harms your unborn child	PT, DK, NL, CY, LT, MT, DE, FI, ES, UK, LV, BE, HU, IT, IE
Smoking can create lung cancer / smoking causes lung cancer	DK, NL, CY, LT, MT, PL, DE, FI, ES, LV, HU, SE, EE, BG, IE
Smoking can create heart illnesses / smoking causes heart problems / heart attacks / smoking is bad for your heart and veins / heart and artery problems	DK, NL, CY, MT, LT, PL, ES, UK, LV, BE, IT, EE, IE
Smoking causes cancer	CZ, SK, CY, PL, ES, UK, SI, IT, SE, RO, IE
Smoking is damaging for your health / smoking harms health / smoking or health – the choice is yours / smoking seriously damages your health	DK, LU, SK, CY, LT, PL, FI, SI, IT, RO, IE
Smokers die younger / smoking reduces your life expectancy	PT, DK, NL, LT, LV, SI, AT, RO, IE
Children have the right to choose themselves / do not smoke around children / don't make children smell tobacco smoke	DK, CY, LT, FR, PL, FI, LV, BE, EL
Smoking makes the skin looks older / smoking is bad for your skin / smoking causes premature ageing / damages the skin	DK, NL, LT, BE, HU, EE, BG, RO
Smoking can cause slow and painful death / cigarettes cause a slow death	CY, DK, SI, AT, BG, RO
Smoking causes lung damage / lung disease	MT, PL, ES, LV

Your doctor or pharmacist can help you stop smoking / doctors can help you quit	DK, PL, ES, LT
If you want to stop smoking call 0900...	NL, LV, HU, SI
Cigarettes contain cyanide and benzene / cigarettes contain...	BE, HU, BG
Smoking is harmful for the throat / cancer of the throat and mouth	BE, RO
Smoking is harmful for you and the people around you	EE, EL
Smoking is damaging for your surroundings	DK, HU
Dental harm / smoking causes rotten teeth and gums	LT, SE
Smoking reduces sexual drive	ES
Smoking harms your lungs	EL
Cervical cancer	CY
Smoking increases the chance of stroke	HU
Smoking can create difficulties breathing	DK
Smoking is addictive	HU
Smoking reduces your health and is habit forming	SE
Smoking causes damage to your prostate	NL
Brain damage	BG

Despite such widespread recall of health warnings the majority of respondents from right across the EU also claim that they tend not to pay attention to the health warnings, even had they done so in the past. For many they have become like 'wallpaper'.

*"I know they are there, but I never pay any attention to them, they just became a part of the package and you don't really notice them. The eye doesn't pay attention to them I guess." (Denmark, ambivalent, 35, female)*

Only a few respondents said that they read the health warnings but they maintained that this was from curiosity as opposed to either a desire to be better informed or to be influenced / helped to give up smoking (LT, MT).

*"I always notice it, I am even interested in reading it, because it is a different label every time. I look at what's new." (Lithuania, ambivalent, 45, male)*

Some respondents commented that the health warnings had made a greater impact on them when they were first launched but with time the health warnings seems to have become just 'part of the packaging' (PT, LU, FR, BE, IT, AT, IE).

*"At the beginning I noticed the warnings; they were a novelty and had such a strong tone of voice." (Italy, established, 48, male)*

Some respondents claim that they only read the health warning on a pack when they are bored (LU, SK) or at the time of purchase (PL, LV).

It seems that from respondents comments that the messages are more impactful to people when they first start smoking but the longer a person smokes the more immune they become to the message (LV, SK, ES).

Although respondents claim not to notice the health warnings most of the time, they describe a range of reactions when they do notice them. Claimed reactions and behaviours include:

- Being emotionally unmoved by the health warnings (LV, NL)
- Laughing at and sometimes ridiculing them (LV, CZ, NL, BE, EE)
- Being made to think about the harmful effects of smoking (BE)
- Avoiding looking at the warnings or turning the pack over (ES, SI)
- Putting the pack in a case or bag in order to cover up the warning (ES, SI)

Some ex-smokers explained that they read health warnings to provide themselves with 'ammunition' for use in discussions with smokers to encourage them to give up (DK). One ex-smoker believed that she had been successful in motivating some of her friends to give up as a result (DK).

In addition to recalling the text warnings, a number of respondents referred to pictorial health warnings, which appear to have a greater impact than text only warnings. In those countries where pictures are currently included in the warnings the respondents recalled the images and expressed the shock they experience when seeing them.

*"[It is] the most horrible picture, it looks almost like the grim reaper, but it's a dead bloke lying on a slab, and the one with the rotten teeth." (UK, ambivalent, 43, male)*

*"The text is not so powerful without the image." (Latvia, established, 22, female)*

*"The picture warnings are a bit unnerving. My friends brought some back from Spain with pictures on them and I just didn't use theirs." (Ireland, ambivalent, 21, female)*

The specific images recalled and the countries in which they were mentioned are summarised in the table below:

Health warning (image):	Recalled by respondents from:
Rotten teeth and gums / picture with teeth	UK, LV, RO
Black lungs / damaged lungs	LV, RO, IE*
Man in a mortuary	UK, LV
Tumour on mouth and throat	UK, LV
Deformed teeth / rotting teeth	LV, IE*
Baby who appeared to be dead	UK
Baby inhaling cigarette smoke	UK
Don't make children breathe smoke and child image	LV
Incubators	LV
Man with an abscess	LV
Man sleeping in an operating room	LV
Hands – aging	LV
Tracheotomy patients	IE
Bent cigarette with impotence message	LV
Man sleeping and face covered with towel	LV
Child photo – message about passing on to children	LV
A prison-like picture	RO

\* Although picture warnings have never featured on packs in Ireland, the respondents spontaneously recalled images they had seen on packs abroad

If there is a picture on the pack, some respondents talked about turning the pack over to avoid seeing the 'shocking' image (LV, UK).

*"At that moment when the pack of cigarettes is placed on the counter and I see that man having a huge throat cancer or something like that, then I feel like automatically turning the pack the other side up." (Latvia, established, 22, female)*

Interestingly, one Romanian respondent who claimed not to be affected by the pictorial health warnings then went on to explain that, if she is given a pack that has the 'teeth' picture on it, she always exchanges it for another one as she finds this picture too disturbing.

### 3.2 Attitudes to health warnings

As already noted, many respondents maintained that they no longer noticed tobacco packaging health warnings. Many went on to say that they felt the health warnings were not effective in encouraging people to give up smoking (PT, LV, DK, LU, SK, NL, CY, FR, MT, PL, DE, FI, HU, SI, IT, AT, EE, IE).

*"Maybe I stop for a second and think about them but then they are forgotten again. The warnings in themselves would never make me stop, a lot other things need to be done." (Denmark, established, 35, female).*

*"It's a drug; when you're hooked, you're hooked." (France, established, 35, female)*

*"They [the warning labels] do not have any effect on me. It is self-evident information and has no novelty value for me." (Finland, established, 29, male)*

An exception to this overall pattern was the view expressed by a few respondents in Latvia that health warnings could become thought provoking over time.

It was suggested by some that the impact of the health warnings could be improved if they were reinforced through other media such as television advertising or communication from medical professionals (UK, BG).

The health warnings are thought to be least impactful on established or 'hardened' smokers (LT, DE, UK, SI, IT, AT, EE, EL, IE), although some felt that they were probably aimed at these people (BE).

*"I am not affected by these labels. I am a realist. Whatever fate a person has, that is what is going to happen. As they say, why even live if can't smoke, drink and have sex." (Lithuania, established, 22, male)*

Although respondents claim they are unmoved by the warnings, most felt they were important and believed that should continue to be used (PT, LV, DK, LU, CZ, SK, NL, LT, FR, MT, DE, ES, UK, BE, EL). They felt it was important to maintain awareness of the damage that smoking does to the individual's health and that of those around them, particularly for the young and those who have not started smoking.

*"I think that they show the risks, that it's not good to smoke, so they're necessary." (France, ex-smoker, 61, male)*

Despite finding them unpleasant, some felt that the current health warnings were not shocking enough to make people change their behaviour. There were a number of suggestions made of ways in which the messages could be made more impactful, including:

- Change the messages more often; the messages need to provide new information to catch people's attention (FI, EE)
- Increase the size of the text to undermine the branding (CZ, BG)
- Make the warnings different from each other, for example, printing the warnings in different coloured fonts or 'making them luminous' to grab people's attention (MT, BG, IE)

*"The warnings are all printed in identical font on all the packets of cigarettes. If they are printed, for example, in different colours, such as yellow because this grabs your attention... If you see the warnings now, you'll see them printed all the same and you'll say that the message is also the same. There needs to be something to distinguish one message from another." (Malta, ambivalent, 30, female)*

- Include photos or pictures, either alone or in combination with the text, as they are more memorable, shocking and unpleasant than text warnings (LV, CZ, DK, SK, CY, FR, PL, DE, FI, UK, BE, IT, AT, BG). However, some respondents suspect that over time people will become 'resistant' to the pictures as well (SK, RO).

*"I saw a picture of destroyed lungs on a cigarette pack in Thailand. It was very emotive." (Finland, ambivalent, 17, female)*

*"I don't believe anything until I see it... the image is strength. I remember when they implemented those horrible pictures... I developed some strategies; I used to keep the packs with more neutral pictures and when I got a pack with the horrible pictures I replaced it with the one I'd kept. But now, after almost two years, I am not scared at all... Every time I read them, I smile." (Romania, established smoker, 29, female)*

- Include evidence or statistics to give the messages increased impact and credibility (UK, RO)

*"It makes it more real... if they say 'so many people die from smoking related disease... It helps you relate to it." (UK, ex-smoker, 35 female)*

- Tailor the messages to a younger life stage so that young people feel the effects are more immediate instead of thinking they are a distant concept (UK, BG)
- Speak directly to people, so instead of 'Smoking kills' use 'Smoking can kill you!' (BG)
- Appeal to smokers' emotions (IE)

*"Anyone who smokes knows that it's harmful. I think if they played more to the emotional side of people's psychology that would impact how they feel rather than how they think." (Ireland, established, 38, female)*

- Make the messages short and concise (AT, IT)

### **3.3 Response to health warnings**

Many of the smokers interviewed discussed the ways in which they were able to 'deny' that the warnings were applicable to them. Some respondents acknowledged that these arguments were conscious strategies; others presented them as straightforward rationalisations, without necessarily seeing some of the weaknesses inherent in their stated positions.

The arguments deployed during the interviews included:

- Amongst those who smoke occasionally or who smoke relatively little, some feel that the health warnings do not apply to them (CZ, UK, BE, EL). There is a tendency to assume that the warnings are applicable only to heavy smokers or those who have been smoking for many years.

- Others expressed the view that that the chances of their being affected were low (MT, PL, HU, IE).

*"I do sometimes read the warnings but I think that, although those things may happen, you have to be 1 out of a 100." (Malta, established, 17, male)*

*"Luckily I am still young and I live by the rule 'you can do anything.' Yes, the warnings have influence, it's just that, for now, I am not too worried or stressed about any of this... I hope that nothing like this will ever happen to me." (Poland, established, 28, male)*

- As suggested by the previous quote, many young people tended to see ill health as something that would only be relevant to them in the distant future. As a result, the current health warnings do not seem to resonate with them (FI, UK, HU, IE).
- Some smokers argue that the effects of smoking will have no more impact on their chances of ill-health or premature death than other aspects of modern life (DE, SI, IE, CZ)

*"I tell myself, as a kind of excuse, that I can also be run over by a car and die that way." (Germany, ambivalent, 29, male).*

*"Food is produced artificially; therefore, living is unhealthy in any case. Smoking is just one additional unhealthy thing." (Slovenia, established, 40, male)*

*"I know smoking is bad for my health, but I think there are many things which are even worse. I tell myself that such warnings would have to be not only on cigarettes but also on cars, Coca-cola, and many other things." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 47, male)*

- Finally, some smokers put forward the perspective that whether one suffers from the diseases mentioned in the health warnings is dependent on other factors apart from smoking, such as a genetic predisposition and physical fitness. Consequently they felt able to distance themselves from the likelihood of smoking being a factor (LU).

In contrast to those smokers who 'denied' the health warnings, some smokers fully accepted the truth of the warnings but maintained they were just not ready or prepared to change their behaviour. Once again, there were nuances in how this point of view was presented:

- Some smokers have 'come to terms with' the harm they are doing to themselves by smoking and are prepared to accept it as a result of their choices (UK, EL)
- Other respondents admitted that they were simply 'putting their heads in the sand' and trying to ignore the health warnings (HU)

- Finally, some claim that they will give up smoking 'later,' when they feel the health warnings becomes more immediately relevant (HU)

*"That is why I said that, when the baby comes, I will quit smoking. I think that I'm going to smoke for two more years, then I will quit completely."  
(Hungary, established, 32, male)*

Despite the claims from the majority that the impact on them of health warnings is very limited, a few respondents acknowledged finding certain warnings more difficult to ignore.

A respondent from Poland discussed the ways in which she tried to avoid particular warnings by selecting packs with messages that are less impactful. Similarly a respondent from Luxembourg explained that he had once exchanged a pack because the text message was so shocking that he did not wish to keep seeing the packaging ('Smoking can be harmful to sperm and reduce fertility').

Others in Poland admitted that warnings referring to the consequences of smoking for people around them made them feel guilty and responsible.

*"Recently I got really scared, when I read that it can hurt the people in my surrounding, or something like that. It made me think... Obviously they are true. I get really upset when I read something like that, I can't even describe it. Sometimes one knows and I already know and should not smoke. Yet I do... It's like sweeping it under a rug. If I do not read it, then I will not know it." (Poland, established, 45, female).*

Although this research was not primarily concerned with the factors involved in helping smokers to give up some respondents discussed the role of different influencers. For example, respondents in Slovakia and Slovenia expressed the view that the motivation to give up smoking came primarily from family and friends and knowing other people whose health had been impacted by smoking and from experiencing deterioration in one's own health or some serious smoking-related disease. This view was shared by some Portuguese ex-smokers, who made the point that they gave up smoking because of health problems rather than in response to warnings they read on cigarette packets. Some Slovenian and Czech respondents also talked about the role of pregnancy as a motivator for some women to stop smoking.

Some respondents felt that the health warnings were more likely to have an impact on certain groups of people. The groups identified included:

- Young smokers / those who have recently started to smoke (LV, MT, DE, HU, IT, AT, EE, EL, RO)
- People who are thinking about giving up (NL, LT, UK)

*"Now I read them because I want to quit smoking, before I didn't read them." (Netherlands, ambivalent, 24, female)*

- Smokers who have, or have recently developed, health problems (LV, CZ, EE)
- Smokers who have seen others with health problems and illnesses as a result of smoking (CZ, DE, HU)
- Occasional smokers (HU, RO)
- Older smokers (CZ)
- Physically active people who have a more health conscious attitude (HU)

## 4 RESPONDENTS' REACTIONS TO NEW HEALTH WARNINGS

Following our discussions with respondents about existing health warnings we showed them 24 possible new warnings. The warnings were shown in a different order to each respondent to reduce any bias which might arise from the interview process. For each warning message we observed respondents' initial reactions as well as discussing the statement and its impact with them.

The reactions of the respondents to each statement are summarized below.

### 4.1 Health messages

#### 4.1.1 Messages related to cancer

##### Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers

***- Cancer is an emotive message for most and the statistics add impetus to the warning -***

The majority of respondents in each of the Member States were visibly shocked by this statement. The use of the word 'cancer' was emotive and the statistics were impactful.

*"Ugh, that's awful." (Sweden, established, 28, female)*

*"This is very harsh! This sort of gives you the message that if you continue smoking, this is what's going to happen to you. It's your choice; you either choose to lie in bed, swallowing pills, or else quit smoking and live. It's very scary, because with lung cancer, with every breath you take, you're in pain." (Malta, ambivalent, 30, female)*

*"This is a good warning. It is proven that lung cancer is related to smoking." (Cyprus, established, 31, male)*

The statement was perceived to be powerful because it reports figures and so it appears to be based on statistical evidence (UK, SE, SI, RO, NL, MT, LT, IE, FI, CY, BE, EE, DK, AT, BG, DE, ES, CZ, IT, PL, FR). The figures contribute to the statement's credibility and shock value.

*"It is very good. Because it is supported by something concrete, it is a proof. So based on some studies it has been demonstrated that 9 out of 10 cases... I mean the smokers have a higher incidence of lung cancer." (Romania, ambivalent, 27, male)*

*"This message is very factual which has impact." (The Netherlands, ambivalent, 24, female)*

*"Effective and statistics were used. It really makes one think." (Lithuania, established, 22, male)*

Some respondents explained further that the statement was effective because it reinforced existing knowledge they already had. They knew smoking was the cause of lung cancer but they did not know before how many people were affected by it; they felt this was where the real strength of the message lay (UK, DE).

Quite a number of respondents expressed disbelief in the statement (SI, RO, PT, NL, MT, IE, HU, EE, EL, LU); these respondents often shook their heads in denial as they read the statement and went on to say that they felt the quoted statistic was too high and that they did not believe that smoking was the only cause of lung cancer.

*"Nonsense. I do not believe it. Somebody wrote it just like that. Smoking is also not the only decisive factor for lung cancer." (Slovenia, established, 55, female)*

*"Yes, this is one which I recall. Is it true? I don't think so. It is too high [the incidence]. Maybe 7 out of 10, but not 9 out of 10 ... because, taking into account how many people are smoking, nobody will be alive... My parents smoke, especially my mother smokes a lot everyday and she doesn't have it... I would not give these figures. Just one person staying alive... it is too much." (Romania, ambivalent, 15, female)*

A minority of respondents suggested that people's familiarity with the link between cancer and smoking would mean that this message would be redundant and liable to be overlooked (CZ).

A few respondents suggested that the message could have more of an impact among those who have a personal knowledge of lung cancer (RO, EE, IT, FR). However, one Swedish woman whose family was affected by the disease was not sure she would respond to this warning as a consequence.

*"Probably those who care about their health might really think twice before lighting a cigarette... and maybe those who have someone ill in their family and are aware of this illness. If I haven't seen, I haven't heard... lung cancer is like anything else." (Romania, established, 29, female)*

*"Cancer is such a serious nasty illness that no one understands it." (Sweden, ex-smoker, 48, female)*

*"I had a relative and when you start to see persons dying, you start to focus on these messages" (Italy, ex-smoker, 36, male)*

Some of the younger respondents felt the message was targeted at older people who had been smoking for a long time and not them as young, healthy individuals (PT, BE, CZ). While other youngsters found the message more complicated and difficult to understand immediately either because of the figures (LT, EE) or the language relating to cancer (AT).

*"It was hard to understand at first. It was strong enough, just the formulation was bothersome. Somehow I didn't feel any emotion after reading it." (Lithuania, ex-smoker, 21, female)*

Some Italian respondents distanced themselves from the impact of the message, claiming that they were equally at risk from breathing the air in Milan.

A minority of Irish respondents felt that the message made insufficient reference to the prevalence of lung cancer among smokers. As a consequence some respondents tended to downplay the risk of contracting lung cancer from smoking in the first place.

*"Think about all the people who have smoked all their lives and never had cancer." (Ireland, established, 38, female)*

A few felt they had heard this message many times before and that the statement did not provide any new information. As a consequence they felt that it could easily be overlooked or ignored (FI, HU, IT, PL, LU).

There were a few instances of people misunderstanding some aspects of this message:

- Some of the Dutch, Bulgarian and Czech respondents misunderstood it initially, thinking that it said '9 out of 10 people die of lung cancer'. However, on rereading it they understood the correct meaning.
- Most of the Latvian respondents understood the statement to mean that nine out of ten smokers will get lung cancer and as a result most of them did not believe the statement was true.

*"I smoke and I don't have that lung cancer!" (Latvia, established, 53, female)*

- German respondents recommended using the term 'lung cancer' (Lungenkrebs) rather than 'carcinoma' as it is more widely understood.
- The respondents in Luxembourg believed that in German lung cancer is 'Lungenkarzinomen', however, the expression was not known by the respondents and so it was suggested that simpler, more comprehensible words be used
- Some (IE, SI) felt the statement was not written clearly and that it could be interpreted to mean that there are ten types of cancer and that nine of them are caused by smoking.

Specific suggestions made by respondents of ways to improve the message included:

- Phrasing the statement as a percentage (90%) as it is easier to understand and more impactful (LV, IE, CZ)

- Amongst those who disbelieve the figures there was a suggestion to remove the figures so that the statement only reads 'Smoking causes lung cancer' (RO, LV, BE)
- Adding a source reference to the information to improve the credibility of the message (SI)
- Including an image on the warning, such as a black lung full of tar (SE)
- Two suggestions were made of changing the statement so that it referred to the prevalence of lung cancer among smokers:
  - State that smokers have an xx% chance of getting cancer to enhance the strength of the message (SE)
  - Rephrase the statement to 'x out of 10 smokers get lung cancer' (DK)

### **Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer**

**- *Mouth and throat were new and shocking types of cancer to many; the intuitive connection with smoking added credibility to the message* -**

Most respondents were shocked by this message and felt that it was impactful; a few respondents unconsciously put their hands to their mouths or throats (UK, AT) on reading it.

*"Brrr, it is disgusting. Ugh this is something that you don't bear in mind."  
(Sweden, established, 28, female)*

For many, this warning represented new information since they had been unaware that smoking could cause mouth and throat cancer or even that such cancers existed.

*"There are cases of mouth cancer? I did not know that it is possible to get throat cancer!" (Austria, established smoker, 15, female)*

Some felt that this statement was effective because the information was new (NL, BE).

*"It has more effect than [a warning about] lung cancer because this is new information to me." (The Netherlands, ex-smoker, 17, female)*

Those who had experience of such cancers felt the warning was particularly believable and impactful (EE, DE, CZ).

*"Yes, it is proven, because my friend's father just died and he had throat cancer and he had been smoking for a long time.... My grandfathers both died from cancer and they both smoked, one had throat cancer." (Estonia, ambivalent, 16, male)*

*"I have already seen someone with the device attached to his throat; that is extremely shocking." (Germany, non-smoker, 15, female)*

The mention of the word 'cancer' in this and other warnings evoked fear for many and, as a result it made the message powerful (MT, IE, FI, HU, EE, AT).

*"For me, like everybody else, cancer is scary, where it is, is irrelevant. It is bad all over... you might have a better chance of survival with this maybe but it is still scary in my head." (Malta, smoker, 24, female)*

*"Even the word cancer, it's just a scary word. It's just scary and we all know about it." (Ireland, established, 18, female)*

*"I consider this warning as effective as the one about lung cancer. While reading it I'm immediately visualizing awful pictures of mouth or tongue cancer!" (Austria, established smoker, 29, male)*

Some respondents made an instant link to a discolouration of the teeth as a result of these cancers (NL, SE, LV) or a hole in the trachea (FR, PL); visualising these thoughts was clearly powerful. Others imagined dying as a result of asphyxiation, which was clearly a horrible thought (IT).

*"Yes I knew this; I link the information with the fact that teeth become yellow, so it has an effect." (The Netherlands, established, 24, female)*

It was felt that cancers of the throat and mouth would be worse than other cancers since they would be highly visible, disfiguring and unappealing. Some respondents felt this was particularly undesirable and so felt this message was especially impactful (UK, LT, ES, CZ).

*"It sounds horrible... it would make a lot more people think. It would have an effect on your physical appearance; it would be more obvious to people that you had it, so it would have more of a debilitating effect on your day to day.*

*When you see the picture of the shrivelled up lung, it's awful, but can be hidden away so people don't see it." (UK, established, 35, female)*

*"You immediately start seeing that mouth, it is very easy to visualize. This is not some lungs that are inside and no one sees how they look." (Lithuania, ambivalent, 44, female)*

Some respondents felt this message would be effective and credible because throat and mouth pain are easy to visualise and many smokers have experienced mouth or throat pain at some time or another (HU, LT). In addition, respondents understood how the disease could happen because of the direct contact of smoke with the mouth and throat (IT). One respondent expressed his own fears of the disease:

*"That is what I fear sometimes. When I went to my GP because of sore throat 3 weeks ago he told me that I should smoke less or switch to something lighter because my sore throat will not go away. I've been sick for weeks, I could not eat, drink, swallow. Therefore it affects my life now*

*because it makes me aware of this problem that I feel anyway." (Hungary, established, 32, male)*

At the other extreme, the fact that they had not heard about throat and lung cancer before meant that some did not believe this warning. In addition, since the message made them feel uncomfortable, they wanted to deny that it could be true (SI, RO, HU, DK, EL).

*"Mouth cancer... I really didn't know that smoke might cause mouth cancer... It is a little bit too detailed... 'Smoking causes cancer' would be much better... this is for professionals." (Romania, ambivalent, 15, female)*

*"I don't agree with it at all because it does not cause this to everyone therefore this statement is false and therefore I say that this is stupid and they just try to force it on the people." (Hungary, ambivalent, 42, female)*

*"I've never read about it, so that makes me think, how many cases are we actually talking about then... It doesn't affect me, because I can't really believe it, the risk is so low that I don't care about or it doesn't touch me." (Denmark, ex-smoker, 51, female)*

Furthermore, some Slovenian, established smokers even attempted to attribute other factors with being more harmful than smoking or they denied that smoking caused cancer at all.

*"What does genetically modified food cause? What do cell phones cause? What does stressful life cause? Or the genetic code or CO2 emissions?" (Slovenia, established smoker, 40, male)*

*"I already said that I knew a person, who died of throat cancer and never smoked. I don't know if it is entirely true. But people get scared." (Slovenia, established, 22, male)*

Others doubted the message or felt that the message was weakened because they did not know anyone with throat or mouth cancer and so they felt that these cancers are not widespread among smokers (EE, DE, EL, BG, IT). Notably, the majority of Bulgarian respondents rejected this message because they felt mouth and throat cancers are rare.

*"This has not really been widely discussed. Honestly I do not know anybody who has died of throat or mouth cancer." (Estonia, ex-smoker, 46, male)*

Some respondents, particularly established smokers, felt that this message was using scaremongering tactics, intended to make smokers feel bad rather than trying to encourage them to stop (DK). Some Czech respondents were also unimpressed with the message as they saw it as 'just another cancer warning,' which made them 'glaze over' rather than take notice. Others who were familiar with the information in this message were unmoved by it (PL).

*"I don't like it, it's just like all the others, it's just trying to scare me, everyone knows how horrible smoking is, and this is just one of those*

*messages that is trying to tell me, 'ohh smoking is so horrible, stop now'." (Denmark, established, 27, female)*

*"What can I say? It simply doesn't work on me. I guess it is as obvious as the previous one." (Poland, ambivalent, 39, female)*

Some younger respondents claimed to be unaffected by the message. Some felt that these diseases are not going to affect them personally (CY, BE, IT) or they doubted that smoking was the cause of them (LT).

*"You mean tongue cancer? This is what I have heard... No, does not have an impact on me." (Cyprus, established, 17, female)*

While some casual smokers felt they did not smoke enough to contract these cancers and so they were indifferent to the message (BE).

It was suggested that the following could enhance the impact of this warning:

- Include statistics to enhance the credibility of what is otherwise a relatively new piece of information (UK, MT, SE, FI)
- The effect of the message could be enhanced by a picture warning label (SE, IE, FR)
- The message would be more credible if it was rephrased as 'smoking could / can cause mouth and throat cancer' (HU, DK)
- Focus on either mouth or throat cancer (DK)
- The French respondents felt the message was too long and should be shortened for greater impact

### **Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer**

***- Although new news to many women; the impact of this message is liable to be weakened as more women obtain the cervical cancer vaccine***

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Not surprisingly, this message was perceived as being relevant only to women (ES, BG, CZ, AT, DK, EE, LT, HU, BE, CY, FI, IE, LV, PT, RO, UK, SI, SK, SE, IT, PL, FR, LU). Most men instantly disregarded this warning as not being of relevance to them and many women were unaware of the link between smoking and cervical cancer.

*"I cannot comment this, because it only concerns women. The messages should be for everybody, otherwise it is comical to see it on my pack." (Bulgaria, ex-smoker, 22, male)*

*"This could be mostly shown on slim cigarettes that women tend to buy." (Cyprus, established, 17, female)*

In fact, some men found it difficult to understand the message (BG, BE, LV, MT) or were unfamiliar with the term 'cervical cancer' (UK):

*"I do not even know where this cervical thing is. It does not seem to be a typical illness caused by smoking." (Bulgaria, established, 16, male)*

Many respondents said that they did not know that smoking was linked to cervical cancer (ES, DE, AT, EE, LT, HU, CY, IE, LV, MT, NL, RO, UK, SE, IT, LU).

*"I did not know about the doubled risk of cervical cancer. This warning label would definitely have had an effect on my smoking behaviour!" (Austria, ex-smoker, 24, female)*

However, some women doubted the link between smoking and cervical cancer (ES, DE, HU, FI, IE, SK, IT, FR, LU). They believed that there are other more significant causes of cervical cancer, such as sexual activity, poor personal hygiene or the contraceptive pill (DE, PT).

Describing the risk of cancer as 'doubling' was felt to be less impactful than using absolute figures because it is a relative term. A number of respondents explained that they were not aware of the incidence of cervical cancer and so they did not know the significance of doubling this percentage (ES, HU, NL). Other respondents felt that the term 'double' did not sound shocking enough because it implied that even if a person does not smoke they are still at risk of cervical cancer (BG).

Finally, some of the German respondents believe that the incidence of cervical cancer is relatively low and doubling the incidence will have little impact. As a result they thought the warning was ineffective.

Other respondents rejected this warning simply because they felt that it was impossible that smoking doubled the risk of cervical cancer (RO).

*"Nonsense... It is true that it is about a very sensitive part of the human body... [but] it is too much to say that [the risk] doubles." (Romania, ambivalent, 32, female)*

Against this general trend, the Danish respondents liked the use of the word 'doubles' as they felt that it sounded scientifically proven but equally they felt it is not as precise as a percentage would be.

*"The wording here is very good, very direct and it sounds like it's a statistic fact. You don't doubt it; here it is, a fact, they have proof that it really doubles the risk." (Denmark, ex-smoker, 51, female)*

As we saw with the previous warning, merely using the word cancer for some was sufficiently frightening to be effective (AT, LV).

*"The term 'cancer' is rated quite negative among our society. Everyone understands the risk of cancer and therefore this message would be quite effective as well" (Austria, established smoker, 30, female)*

Amongst women the biggest concern appears to be about the impact the disease would have on their ability to have children (EL, BG, EE, LT, HU, SK, SI) and for them this made the warning a significant potential deterrent. In Spain, women over 40 years were also concerned as they felt gynaecological cancers were more associated with women of their age.

Younger women who had been vaccinated against cervical cancer were less concerned about this warning (CZ, DK, BE, NL). Other respondents felt that this risk would be lessened because the cervical cancer vaccine is becoming increasingly available to women (MT, LV, SK, SI).

*"There has been a lot of talk about vaccination against cervical cancer. You could even interpret this as a reminder to get vaccinated rather than as a warning to stop smoking." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 24, female)*

The warning was viewed as being insufficiently 'harsh' or weak by some respondents because of the way it was written. The warning states that it increases 'the risk' rather than causing it, which is seen as being less threatening and downplaying the role of smoking in the cause of the disease as it implies there is a chance that you might not get it (CZ, IT). While on the other hand, some Romanian respondents, who doubted the validity of the statement, felt that the wording was not harsh enough.

In one or two cases respondents did not understand the language used: Some respondents in both Spain and Finland were unsure what area of the body was being referred to. Spanish respondents suggested referring to 'uterine cancer'.

The other suggestions made of ways to improve this warning focused on making it more direct/harsh, for example:

- 'Smoking causes cervical cancer' (LT)
- Make the message more personally impactful; 'Smoking doubles the risk of you getting cervical cancer' (DK)
- Make the point that the risk is increased irrespective of age (SE)

### **Smoking causes leukaemia**

***- Many could not understand how smoking caused leukaemia and the association of leukaemia with children undermined the credibility of the warning further -***

A few respondents were shocked by this health warning and felt it was effective (CY, PT, RO, EE, LT, PL) but most could not understand it and did not believe the connection with smoking. As a result, many felt it was not an effective message.

*"I don't believe this... how should I know this? I am not at all touched. It doesn't seem to be true to me." (Romania, established, 17, male)*

As with the other cancer related warnings, this message resonated more strongly with those who had personal experience of leukaemia through friends or family (FI, MT, UK, IT).

Whilst most respondents had heard of the disease 'leukaemia' not everyone knew what the condition was and so they found it hard to relate to the warning (LV, MT, RO, SI, BE, DK, BG, DE, ES, IT). This was particularly true amongst young people.

*"I do have a vague idea of what leukaemia is but I don't know exactly what it is... I think that words like these are a bit hard to understand... I would not understand this message and I think that even others would not understand it." (Malta, established, 17, male)*

*"I don't know what it is, so I just think a disease, I don't know if it's a serious disease or what effect it has on me, so [the warning] wouldn't affect me." (Denmark, ambivalent, 29, male)*

Those respondents who knew a little about the condition identified it as a frightening disease and one which is often fatal. (CY, HU, LT, BG)

*"This is actually shocking. It makes me panic. This is completely new information to me. Leukaemia is a deadly disease; very difficult to get a cure." (Cyprus, ex-smoker, 21, female)*

For a few respondents, the warning was perceived as impactful simply because it was about cancer (NL, SE).

As with the smoking link to mouth and throat cancer, most respondents were unaware of the link with leukaemia (CY, IE, LV, MT, RO, UK, SI, SK, BE, HU, EE, AT, CZ, ES). Furthermore, respondents grappled with the concept of a relationship between what they saw as two separate systems; the blood and respiratory system (NL, SI, LT, IT).

*"I do not believe that smoking has anything to do with blood. It does affect some things on the lungs, but I do not believe that it causes leukaemia." (Slovenia, established, 40, male)*

Some respondents suggested including factual evidence or substantiation of the link in the warning (IE, LV). However, the Czech respondents felt that the pack was an inappropriate place to inform people for the first time that smoking can cause leukaemia, they felt communication through other media was more appropriate.

On the whole, respondents responded in one of three ways to being informed about the link between smoking and leukaemia:

- Many respondents doubted the link. They felt that the relatively high incidence of leukaemia amongst children undermined this claim as these children had never been smokers (IE, LV, PT, NL, RO, UK, SI, SK, BE, HU, CZ, BG, EL, LU).

*"I wouldn't have known that. It's normally children, they've never smoked, so I'd wonder how does smoking cause it? It's normally portrayed as sick kids. I'd question it as not hard hitting, not necessarily believable."* (UK, ambivalent, 43, male)

- Some felt that leukaemia is a rare disease and so they felt it was unlikely they would be affected by it (FI, CY, UK, SI, EL, ES) making the warning of relatively low relevance.
- A few felt that the message was effective because the prospect of getting leukaemia was powerful and that would be a deterrent to smoking (MT, LT, CZ)

Respondents suggested a range of possible improvements to the warning including:

- Rephrasing it as 'Smoking can cause leukaemia.' Although it was acknowledged that this makes the statement less definitive it was felt that, since there are clearly other factors that cause leukaemia as well, rewording the statement makes it more accurate and hence more credible (IE, HU, DK)
- Use the term 'blood cancer' instead of 'leukaemia' (RO, DK) and Swedish respondents recommended the use of the Swedish term, rather than 'leukaemia'
- Support the warning with statistics/evidence (RO, UK)

#### 4.1.2 Messages related to non cancerous respiratory diseases

##### Smoking destroys your lungs

***- Opinions were mixed on the effectiveness of this message because no specific disease was mentioned -***

Opinions were divided on this warning. There were some respondents who felt the message would be effective because, as smokers and ex-smokers, they had already felt this effect. However, others felt this message would be ineffective because it was too vague and unspecific.

The respondents who identified with this statement agreed that smoking damages the lungs and so felt this statement was credible (BG, EL, AT, SK, SI, RO, NL, LV, IE, CY, FI, FR). Some specifically liked the conciseness of the message (FR, LU).

*"This is true; it should be on tobacco packs. All people are aware of the fact that smoking destroys the lungs. You should think if I destroy my lungs at this age what would I do later?"* (Romania, ambivalent, 15, female)

"It's good as a phrase and they might even add to it bit by bit to produce more fear". (France, established, 23, male)

Use of the word 'destroys' was received positively by some. It gives the warning a harsh meaning since it implies that the damage is irreversible. (DE, ES, AT, LT, BE, NL, MT, IE, CY).

*"The choice of words is very clear. Therefore, the effect caused by this label would be quite high... Destroying sounds so aggressive, it emphasises the terrible effects."* (Austria, established, 29, male)

*"When they use words like destroy it makes a big impression."* (The Netherlands, established, 17, male)

Others commented that they appreciated the way in which the message felt personal; it referred to 'your lungs' (DK). While for others the positive aspect of the message was that it described the current effect on the lungs and not something that may happen in future, such as cancer (MT).

Others felt this warning was ambiguous (SE, UK, RO, CY, HU). They felt that it was vague because it did not specify to what extent the lungs were destroyed and it did not provide any statistical evidence to support the statement (CZ, LT, HU, BE).

*"It sounds like something my mother would say. We all know this: so what?"* (Czech Republic, ambivalent, 19, female)

Many felt that this warning was a very familiar statement when associated with smoking and that this familiarity weakened its impact so it was no longer seen as a deterrent among smokers (BG, DE, EE, RO, NL, PT, MT, IT, PL, FR, LU).

*"Everybody knows this and it is written on the packs even now."* (Bulgaria, non-smoker, 15, female)

*"Everyone is aware that smoking damages the lungs – but that still doesn't stop anyone smoking."* (Germany, established, 52, male)

*"As a slogan, it is short, so I think that's ok, but on the other hand this is so obvious that you don't even notice it. It is too obvious."* (Poland, ambivalent, 39, female).

The use of the word 'destroy' in this warning was felt by some to be contentious and they disliked the use of it on a range of grounds:

- Some felt that 'destroy' was inappropriate because the lungs are not destroyed per se (SI, UK, MT). It was felt that details of how the lungs are affected should be given, rather than a blanket statement that the lungs are destroyed.

*"This is obvious. But I don't think the expression 'destroy' is appropriate. Perhaps 'harm' would be more appropriate. Something is destroyed when you hit it with a hammer. After 25 years of smoking my lung capacity*

*index considering my weight, age and gender is 169." (Slovenia, established, 40, male)*

- Others felt the use of the word 'destroys' was childlike and unprofessional (DK).

*"Yeah I know it ruins my lungs. There is nothing new in that. It's a too vague statement. Maybe if it's about cancer it's more specific, but 'ruin your lungs' is so diffuse" (Denmark, ambivalent, 35, female).*

- Some of the Latvian respondents (mainly younger people) did not believe that the lungs would be irreversibly damaged
- Some respondents pointed out that using the word 'destroys' would not encourage people to stop as there would be no incentive if the lungs do not recover (IE, EE). They felt that the message should be phrased to encourage people to stop smoking.

*"If I quit now, will it help to improve my lungs? Maybe some people will find the excuse that if I have already started smoking and if I quit now, will I get my lungs back?" (Estonia, established, female, 56)*

- Other respondents felt that the lungs can be destroyed in many ways and that it would be better to focus on specific diseases (FR)

Nevertheless, although they did not like the warning, it made some established Greek smokers, for example, feel uncomfortable and angry when they read it; they attempted to console themselves with the belief that the destruction could be treated with medication.

*"I know that smoking destroys the lungs. Though, I also know that there are medications for that." (Greece, established, 25, female)*

Some smokers denied that this warning was applicable to them and expressed the view that this type of damage only occurred among heavy smokers and not among casual or light smokers (EL, UK).

A few respondents explained that, although they knew that smoking damaged their lungs they viewed it as damage that occurred after many years of heavy smoking and so they felt they did not have to worry about it in the short-term (FI, HU).

*"I am old enough to understand that this is true but too young to care. I just don't [need to] care." (Finland, established, 16, female)*

Some Romanian respondents felt that this warning was similar to the warning about lung cancer but they felt that this message might be more easily understood by the average smoker who may not know what lung cancer is.

Some of the Italian respondents felt this warning is too general to have any impact. They felt that the health warnings focussing on specific diseases are more impactful.

Translation considerations were raised in two Member States:

- In the Czech Republic, the word for destroy does not have appear to have the same connotations as it does in English; the word used can describe a long, slow, gradual process with no significant result.
- In Spain the language used had a colloquial connotation which the younger respondents liked as they could relate to it. However, the older respondents felt that it undermined the seriousness of the message and was inappropriate

Other suggested improvements to the warning included:

- Show a visual of the effect of the 'destruction' (CZ, DK, BE, SE, CY, EE, IT, FR)
- Include statistics/ specific numbers (DK, LV)
- Rephrase the warning to 'Smoking destroys your lungs and others'' (SE)

### **Smoking causes suffocating breathlessness for life**

***- Although many respondents had experienced 'breathlessness' the concept of 'suffocating breathlessness' was obscure and so was not sufficiently deterring -***

Although many respondents recognised that they had experienced breathlessness as a result of smoking, half or more in most of the Member States felt that this statement would not be an effective warning message (BG, EL, CZ, AT, DK, EE, LT, SK, SI, RO, NL, FI, IE, LV, MT, PT, HU, PL). They felt that it lacked credibility and was not 'serious' or 'frightening' enough to hold their attention.

However, some respondents felt this warning was credible since they had already experienced being breathless as a result of smoking (HU, PT, MT, CY, NL, LT, DE, BG, PL).

*"It is probably true. One coughs more, breathes harder, especially when one has to go uphill. My mom lives on the hill and I don't like going up there. The uphill is horrible." (Hungary, established, 48, female)*

The permanence of the effect ('for life') was questioned by some (MT, UK, SK, RO, IT, NL, DE). Furthermore, some respondents felt that if the effect was irreversible this would discourage people from giving up smoking (IE, BE, LT).

*"I wouldn't really believe this because I know people who used to smoke, but now they're much older and they're fit again, running around and playing football. So this wouldn't really have any effect on me." (UK, ex-smoker, 18, male)*

*"Yes, indeed you may feel a kind of breathlessness; I experience this if I stay in a place where many people smoke, yet it is not for life, this is*

*nonsense. I would not use this, honestly. It is about a sensation, it is nothing dangerous." (Romania, ambivalent, 32, female)*

*"This is not true, I quit smoking and I solved all my breathing problems." (Italy, ex-smoker, 36, male)*

On the other hand, some respondents (particularly the younger respondents) felt the 'for life' part of the warning was impactful and would make them think about stopping smoking (NL, BE, FR).

*"It makes you realise you will suffer for the rest of your life, so stop now." (The Netherlands, established, 17, male)*

Relatively few respondents overall were shocked by this warning. Those who were shocked imagined smokers coughing, being short of breath and choking (SE, ES).

Although smokers recognised that smoking makes them breathless, a few felt that this statement was too familiar and so it would not be an effective health warning (PT). Some Czech respondents also explained that they have 'learned to live with' breathlessness and accept it as the price to pay for smoking.

However, some dismissed the statement as they have not experienced breathlessness and so they felt the statement lacked credibility (IE, FI, NL, RO, DK).

*"I don't believe this at all. I have smoked but I never had any breathing problems during or after smoking." (Finland, ambivalent, 30, female)*

In comparison to messages that referred to life threatening diseases this message was considered as less serious because there appeared to be no impending threat of death (MT, LT, CZ, DE, EL). On this note, some respondents suggested rephrasing the warning so that it had a more life threatening tone to it (CY).

The phrase 'suffocating breathlessness' was considered awkward and confusing by some respondents (IE). The two words did not bring to mind an image of the same condition; with suffocating being seen as more severe than breathlessness.

Some respondents were critical of the statement because they felt that other factors, such as being overweight or asthma could cause an individual to be breathless (HU, EE, AT, DE, LU).

There were some instances of the warning being misunderstood in Slovakia where respondents where the term 'breathlessness' was not recognised. Some respondents in Sweden queried what was meant by breathlessness, wondering whether it referred to asthma, COPD or some other respiratory disease. A respondent in Luxembourg was unfamiliar with the word 'chronic'.

Finally, some respondents did not understand the warning at all, they felt it was confusing and unclear (SI).

*"What is lifelong suffocating breathlessness? I have no idea." (Slovenia, established, 40, male)*

Those who felt the statement would be effective included:

- Those with first-hand experience of breathing problems as a result of smoking (MT, SK, EE)
- Non-smokers (MT)

*"[this is] not only good for young teenagers but for everyone... because for ex-smokers, even if you are a 30 year old, you cannot go up a flight of stairs without becoming short of breath." (Malta, non-smoker, 16, female)*

There were some groups of people that respondents felt this warning was more relevant for than others:

<b>Groups of people for whom this warning is more relevant:</b>	<b>Respondents from:</b>
Sports people / athletes	HU, LV, FI, EE, CZ
Older people (who have smoked for a long time)	MT, LV, SE, CZ, ES
Those with lung diseases, asthma	LV, CY
Those who recognise the symptoms in themselves	RO, UK, EE
Heavy smokers	LV, ES
Overweight people	LV
People in physical jobs	LV
Young people	EE
Non-smokers	RO

Translation considerations:

- Some of the Czech respondents did not understand the word used for breathlessness and guesses at its meaning ranged from gassiness to psoriasis
- In the Italian translation the phrase was translated as 'Smoking causes not curable breathing difficulties' - there was some confusion among respondents around what 'not curable' meant

Suggestions made of ways in which the warning could be improved were:

- Rewording to encourage people to give up:
  - 'If you reduce the number of cigarettes daily, it will be easier to breathe' (LV)
  - 'Stop smoking and recover' (BE), which is also shorter and quicker to read

- To increase the impact make it sound more life threatening 'Smoking equals serious breathlessness problems' or 'Breathlessness equals death' (CY)
- Shorten the statement to increase the impact (IT)
- Simplify the statement to 'Smoking causes breathlessness' without 'for life', which might then have a greater impact on those with breathing problems (RO)
- The Danish respondents who had not experienced breathlessness proposed rewording the warning as 'Smoking can make it difficult for you to breathe like before' or 'Smoking can create difficulties breathing'
- Include a picture or explain what breathing means to increase the impact among the young (SE)
- Include the toxic aspect of smoking 'Smoking poisons your bronchial tubes' (BE)
- 'Smoking causes emphysema / grave respiratory problems / chronic respiratory diseases' (ES)

#### 4.1.3 Messages related to cardiovascular diseases

##### Smoking causes heart attacks

***- Respondents claimed they were not motivated by this message; citing that they already knew about the link with smoking and that they felt there were other factors other than smoking involved -***

Most respondents felt largely indifferent about this statement. They felt it lacked credibility as it implied smoking was the only cause of heart attacks and yet there are many contributory factors. They felt it was targeted primarily at older smokers.

Some respondents were surprised or frightened by this statement (AT, HU, PT, ES, EL, FR), in particular the younger respondents. A few respondents said that they had not known that smoking caused heart attacks (AT, FR).

*"I do ask myself how many people are aware of that. It is commonly known that smoking causes lung diseases and cancer but that smoking also harms the heart is not very well known." (Austria, ambivalent, 17, male)*

*"It's good because it shakes you up. And it could have an impact on everyone; women, the old, the young, men, all sorts of people." (France, ambivalent, 64, female)*

Conversely, others who claimed they already knew of the link between smoking and heart attacks reacted differently and felt that it was not an effective,

impactful warning (EL, MT, IE, CY, NL, RO, UK, SI, BE, EL, IT, LU); the information appears to be too familiar with no personal relevance.

As with a number of the other statements, some respondents did not believe that smoking was the only 'cause' of heart attacks and objected to the statement's implication that this was the case. They felt that there are other contributory factors such as unhealthy eating, a lack of exercise, obesity and stress that lead to heart attacks (DK, CZ, HU, DE, IE, FI, UK, SI, SE, EE, FR, LU). As a result they felt that the credibility and impact of the statement was weakened.

*"Again the wording should be changed, because otherwise it sounds like smoking is the only cause of heart attacks and that is not true." (Denmark, ambivalent, 29, male)*

*"This is a good headline but a bit boring. Heart attacks are very common in general but usually the reasons for having one are something other than smoking." (Finland, ambivalent, 30, female)*

*"This doesn't really impact me because there are other things that cause heart disease, it's not specific enough." (UK, ambivalent, 25, female)*

However, the warning resonated more strongly with respondents who knew individual who had experienced a heart attack (HU, BE). Added to this, some respondents felt that the message was impactful because heart attacks are sudden and potentially fatal (MT).

Some felt that the risk of a heart attack from smoking was less than that of cancer from smoking. As a consequence, they felt this warning had less impact than the warnings about cancer (DK, BE). Others felt that heart attacks do not generate as much fear as cancer because there is a greater perception people can recover from them. They explained that, when people do not die from a heart attack, they recover and lead a normal life and so the warning was not a strong enough deterrent (ES, BE).

Some respondents were of the belief that there was a low chance of having a heart attack unless a person was genetically predisposed to it and so they did not believe the statement (LV). Others felt that those predisposed to a heart attack would be unlikely to smoke and if they did they felt it was unlikely this pack warning would not stop them when they knew their condition (CZ).

Respondents (particularly younger people) felt this warning was targeted at older smokers and, as a result, many younger smokers felt it was not relevant for them. Respondents repeatedly identified older smokers who had been smoking for a long time as the target for this health warning (ES, DE, HU, PT, LV, NL, RO, UK, SK, SE, BE, LT, PL). In addition, some older people felt they were in the target group and, as such, they felt the message was impactful (CZ, LT).

*"I am in the affected generation and it was one of my fears when I used to smoke. Smoking blocks blood vessels: I could feel my legs tingle when I had had a cigarette." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 47, male)*

*"I don't think this message is that effective... I think this affects those who are older rather than those of my age." (Malta, established, 17, male)*

Finally, some felt this warning would only have an impact among those who already have heart disease (LV, EE).

Some respondents felt that 'heart attack' was used as an emotive term when in fact 'heart disease' might be more appropriate as it conferred a long-term impact (IE).

Others felt that the lack of statistical data was a weakness in the statement (CZ).

There were some translation issues:

- The Bulgarian wording used for heart attack was not commonly known and was understood to refer to a milder version of a heart attack.

*"It is when the heart stops for a part of the second... That happens, it is not so frightening" (Bulgaria, ex-smoker, 52, male)*

Suggestions to modify this statement included:

- In order to overcome the implication in the current warning that smoking is the only cause of heart attacks, changing the wording to 'Smoking causes many cases of heart attacks' or 'Smoking can cause heart attacks' (DK) or 'Smoking may cause heart attack' (RO)
- Making it more personal 'When smoking you can die of a heart attack' (LV)
- Include statistics, evidence or more information (PL):
  - For example: 'Smoking causes heart attacks x times more often' (LV) or 'Smoking causes 9 out of 10 cases of heart attack' (RO) or 'Smoking causes heart attack in 5 months, 10 months....' (RO)

*"Say it adds to the risk instead." (UK, established, 17, male)*

*"These warnings on their own do not work if there isn't the possibility of getting more information about it." (Estonia, ex-smoker, 30, female)*

- Change the terminology – 'Smoking can stop your heart' (RO)
- Include images to reflect the warning (SE)

### **Smoking causes strokes and severe disability**

***- Not understanding the connection between smoking, strokes and severe disabilities appeared to undermine this message; however, the prospect of being disabled was frightening for some -***

Many people had never heard that smoking was associated with strokes and severe disability before. Most found it difficult to make the connection, which

brought the validity of the statement in to question and so weakened the potential impact of the warning.

A few respondents 'believed' this statement and found it impactful (DE, IT, EL, AT, LT, UK, BG).

*"I think a stroke happens in the head, and smoking takes place in some way in the head, and as a result of these strokes people end up with disabilities." (Germany, ambivalent, 41, female).*

However, a few respondents ignored the reference to disabilities, seeing only the connection between smoking and strokes (CZ).

There was a lack of understanding of what a stroke is among some respondents (ES, BE, FI, LV) and so they did not appreciate the impact of the warning. Among those who appeared to know what a stroke is many doubted the connection with smoking (DE, RO, IT, FR, SI, UK, IE, LV, CY).

In addition, it was felt that the statement implied that smoking was the only cause of strokes and yet the respondents knew this was not the case (FR, LT, SK, NL, FI, IE, HU, DK). Equally, respondents expressed the view that disabilities could be caused by numerous other illnesses or accidents (SI, FI).

*"I get annoyed when reading this message... It is not the only cause, there are many other causes for that and they are just trying to make me feel bad when writing something like that" (Denmark, ex-smoker, 51, female).*

The association with severe disability was thought not to be credible for two reasons: some respondents did not see how smoking could cause severe disability (DE, ES, IT, EE, UK, NL, LV, HU, CY, LU), whilst others did not associate strokes with severe disability (ES, BE, MT, UK, HU).

*"I don't understand how tobacco can cause disability." (Spain, ex-smoker, 48, male)*

In some cases the term 'disabilities' was felt to be somewhat intangible since it was perceived to be too broad and respondents wished to know what kinds of disabilities this meant (DE, MT, FR, AT, SE, FI, CY, DK).

Nevertheless, the disability aspect made some feel uncomfortable and frightened when they thought about the concept of being dependent on someone else or being in a wheelchair (BE, SI, UK, HU).

*"I'd be terrified of this... you can lose your ability to walk and talk... you have to live with this." (UK, ambivalent, 25, female)*

Others talked about the potential dependency on others that could result from a stroke; they felt that this loss of independence was a frightening consequence of a stroke (MT, IE); more frightening than after a heart attack where a recovery was seen as possible.

*"If you have a heart attack you either die or survive and recover, if you have a stroke you cannot recover... This message has a greater impact*

*because the consequences of having a stroke are scary." (Malta, ex-smoker, 41, male)*

Conversely, others felt that because there was hope of survival after a stroke this message was less effective than those that involved potentially life ending diseases such as cancer (MT).

Some smokers tried to deny the credibility of this warning by citing cases of smokers who had smoked for years without any health problems (EE, SI).

*"My dad has smoked for as long as I remember and nothing has happened to him." (Estonia, established, 19, female)*

Some felt the warning was too long and, as a result, people's attention was less likely to be held by it (FR, SE, SK).

Respondents tended to distance themselves from the warning (particularly younger respondents) and felt that it was aimed at:

- Older people (BE, MT, IT, LT, SE, CY, LV, PT, HU, BG, CZ, DK)
- Heavy smokers (BE, CZ)
- The physically weak / those with health problems (BE, CY)

Suggested changes to the warning included:

- In its current format it is felt to be too long (LU) and as the connection of smoking and disabilities is the least strong some feel it is better to focus on stroke 'Smoking causes strokes' (IT, NL)
- As strokes are caused by many factors, rephrase to 'Smoking can cause strokes' (NL, HU)
- Need for more information to corroborate the link with smoking:
  - Include details of how to find out more so that smokers can understand for themselves the link between smoking and strokes and disabilities (EE)
  - Have supporting leaflets or advertising (UK)

### **Smoking causes leg amputations**

***- Amputation was a frightening prospect; however, it was relatively easy for respondents to dismiss the message as they could not make the connection with smoking -***

Most found this statement difficult to believe and could not understand how it could be true (RO, ES, MT, BE, IT, FR, EL, EE, LT, SE, SI, SK, UK, HU, PT, LV, IE, FI, NL, BG, DK, CZ, CY). In fact many respondents laughed when first presented with the warning because they felt it was too far-fetched. They felt the link

between smoking amputation was missing from the warning and this made the statement sound ridiculous.

*"It appears to be nonsense. Perhaps it should talk about a specific disease, it doesn't explain why legs are amputated." (Lithuania, established, 31, male)*

*"It is believed by those who don't smoke, as they say that it is so bad for everyone... but for us who smoke, reading this - that they are going to amputate your legs for smoking - on a night out for a drink... we'll have a laugh. This warning will be mocked." (Spain, ambivalent; 45, female)*

*"This message, it made me laugh, it's too enormous, too big. It's not credible." (France, ambivalent, 21, female)*

There were, however, some respondents who had not heard this link before and were more open to the possibility of its being true. They felt it could be an effective message (RO, MT, IT, LV, HU, AT, PL).

*"It is just horrible. Although I do not know how this can happen, it scares me just the idea. It has a very bad effect on me, it works!" (Italy, ambivalent 17, female)*

*"Definitely. When I get old, I would like to have healthy legs and I would definitely like to walk and play with my grandkids. My dad's legs were blue and used to be in pain a lot and I know that his condition was caused by smoking. I would not want to have such legs, especially that I'm a girl and I have my whole life ahead of me. I would like to have beautiful legs." (Poland, established, 17, female).*

Some respondents felt uneasy or shocked when they read this statement; 'amputation' was clearly a powerful and emotive concept (DE, FR, EL, AT, SK, UK, HU, CZ).

*"I don't think that anyone wants to lose his leg. This is very deterring and shocking!" (Austria, ex-smoker, 16, male)*

A few of the younger respondents did not understand the meaning of the word 'amputation' (LV, BG).

Some respondents expressed the view that amputation is more commonly associated with diabetes, alcohol use and road accidents (MT, UK, HU, PT, LV, CY) which reduced the statement's credibility when applied to smoking.

Only one respondent had personal experience of circulatory problems herself and she felt concerned after reading the warning. Not surprisingly, she felt that this warning should be used on packs (EL).

*"I do not believe it... my doctor said that I should stop smoking but I have never realized that it is imperative. I am shocked! It is as if the Ministry had me in mind when they wrote this warning." (Greece, established, 46, female)*

Those few who had heard of leg amputations as a result of smoking felt it was very rare and some of those who had not heard of it happening also concluded it must be very rare because they had not come across it. Consequently, people feel the likelihood of their being affected by amputation from smoking is very low (DE, EE, LT, IE), which reduces the impact of the warning.

Only the respondents in Luxembourg claimed to be familiar with leg amputations and smoking and as a result they reacted with indifference to the health warning.

The effectiveness of the warning for some respondents was driven by the potential seriousness of the outcome and their perception of the impact it would have on their lives:

- For some, this was thought to be a more effective warning than those concerning heart attacks or strokes because the loss of a leg would be so immediate (AT)
- Other respondents, who had previously expressed their concern about being dependent on others as a result of disability, saw amputation in the same light as stroke related disability and so felt that the warning about amputation was more effective than those warnings about potentially life-ending conditions (MT)
- However, others who found such warnings (e.g. those related to cancer) particularly effective felt that this statement was less effective because the outcome was not terminal (MT)

There were also mixed opinions as to the target for this message. Some felt the warning was aimed at everyone (AT), whereas others felt it was intended only for older smokers (SE, HU, CZ), heavy smokers (FR) or those with pre-existing health conditions (UK). Some thought that sportspeople / athletes might be more influenced by this statement than others because of the potential impact of amputation (EE, CZ, CY).

Suggested changes included:

- Make the statement more credible by changing it to 'can cause' instead of 'causes' so that it does not imply that all amputations are caused by smoking (IT, RO, HU)
- Support the statement with statistical evidence on the strength of the relationship with smoking, in order to make the statement relevant to everyone (RO, EE, UK, DK)
- Explain the link between smoking and amputation (SE, LV, DK, CZ)
- Include a picture to increase the warning's impact (SE, UK, LV)

#### 4.1.4 Messages related to other illnesses

##### Smoking causes blindness

**- *Blindness was another condition that frightened respondents but was easy to discredit on the basis that they did not believe it was connected to smoking* -**

Most respondents from virtually every Member State felt this statement was hard to believe as they did not know what the connection was between smoking and blindness. As a consequence most tended to reject the statement:

*"I just don't see the relation between smoking and losing sight. I'm sure it's been proved scientifically but I can't believe it and I don't think it's going to stay with people." (France, ambivalent, 31, male)*

*"This one doesn't have any logic, it is likelier that cancer will eat your lungs than you will lose your vision." (Lithuania, established, 31, male)*

*"Did the person poke themselves in the eye with a cigarette and become blind?" (Luxembourg, ambivalent, 43, male)*

A few respondents in some countries were shocked by the concept of becoming blind and thought the message could be effective because of this (BE, FR, IT, AT, UK, PL, MT, RO, LT, EE, SE, HU, BG, CY). These respondents tended to want to know more about the risks involved.

*"I find that very alarming. I would find it really horrible to be blind." (Belgium, ambivalent, 17, female)*

*"The impactful one is the blindness one because nobody on this planet would want to lose their eyesight but the other ones, you get given time with them, with blindness, there is no time, you are just blind." (UK, established, 15, male)*

Some people expressed the view that this must be a rare condition since they had never heard of it before. They therefore felt it was unlikely that this would happen to them and they felt this reduced the statement's credibility (DE, HU, IE, FI).

*"Well I have never heard of that before, that you can go blind from smoking... That must happen very rarely." (Germany, established, 15, male)*

A few respondents mentioned other factors such as genetic predisposition and environmental factors which they believe cause people to go blind; they felt that smoking, in itself does not cause blindness (EE, HU, CY).

Only a handful of respondents who already have bad eyesight were particularly moved by this statement, for them this health warning was highly relevant (FI, DK).

*"This really touches me, because I am blind in one eye. Whether the smoking has affected it, I don't know, but I would definitely notice this warning and think about it." (Denmark, ambivalent, 35, female)*

Only one issue was raised regarding translation. In German the translation implied 'leads to' rather than 'causes', it was suggested that 'causes' would be better as it is more forceful.

Suggested improvements to the message included:

- Add an explanation of the link between smoking and blindness to improve the credibility of the statement (DE, EE, HU, LV, IE, NL, CZ)
- Change to 'can cause' or 'may cause' to make the warning more credible (IT, RO, HU, DK)
- To enhance the message include statistics (SE)
- Include a visual representation (SE) to increase the impact

### **Smoking causes rotten teeth and gums**

***- Respondents recalled their teeth had been affected by smoking; however, they felt this could be counteracted by dental care and as it was not life threatening it was not motivating to quit -***

Most respondents acknowledged that they believed this message to be true (LU, DE, IT, EL, AT, UK, MT, RO, LT, EE, SK, SI, SE, HU, LV, PT, IE, FI, NL, BG, DK, CZ, CY). They understand the link between smoking and the teeth since smoking is an oral activity and many smokers already felt their teeth and gums were affected by their smoking. Notably respondents talked more about their teeth 'yellowing,' rather than rotting and some respondents were sceptical about the 'rotten' teeth and gums claim (EL, UK).

*"Here the cause / effect is more than possible: all those that are smokers tend to have yellow teeth." (Italy, non-smoker, 17, female)*

*"I have noticed that my teeth were becoming yellow when I was smoking and I often visited the dentist to clean them. But rotten teeth and gums are an exaggeration of the problem." (Greece, ex-smoker, 48, male)*

Not surprisingly, those who had experienced problems with their teeth and gums felt very strongly about this issue. They felt that the power of this message was in the tangibility and immediacy of the problem, which makes it different to the seemingly hypothetical risk of, for example, cancer (CZ).

However, not everyone felt the warning was impactful because damage to the teeth and gums is not felt to be as frightening as 'incurable' diseases like cancer or other serious conditions like heart disease (FR, IT, AT, PL, MT, LT, SK, PT). In addition, some respondents talked about the fact that, in Europe, there are

dental treatments to minimise the effects that smoking has on teeth and gums (LU, BE, ES, PL, MT, RO, LT, EE, SK, NL, BG, DK, CZ).

*"We have such good resources in dental medicine these days that it is possible to avoid having yellow or damaged teeth if you smoke. It is not a motivation to not start smoking." (Luxembourg, established, 30, female)*

*"I would not stop because of this; I would just clean my teeth better." (The Netherlands, established, 24, female)*

*"Everyone knows your teeth will become yellow but then you can just get dentures." (Denmark, ex-smoker, 51, female)*

As with a number of other warnings, a few respondents felt that it was inaccurate to imply that rotten teeth were caused by smoking when it was not the only factor; sugary foods and drinks also caused the same effect (UK, SK, CY) and drinking too much coffee discolour the teeth (EE). This was felt to undermine the credibility of the statement. However, some respondents felt that the statement was accurately portraying that each cigarette smoked contributed to rotten teeth and gums (IE).

A few respondents simply did not believe the statement and felt they needed further evidence to justify it (IT, EE).

*"I should ask the dentist if it is true or not." (Italy, ambivalent, 33, female)*

Other respondents were indifferent to the statement (ES) since they felt it lacked impact; it was not severe enough to encourage smokers to quit smoking.

Among those who felt this statement was impactful, the majority felt it would be most effective amongst people for whom appearance is important, such as young people (particularly young girls) (DE, BE, FR, ES, AT, MT, RO, LT, EE, SI, HU, LV, PT, IE, BG, DK, CZ). Others felt it was relevant for everyone (UK, PL, SE, HU, IE, FI).

*"The teeth are representative of the person. Aesthetic appearance is important in society nowadays." (Germany, established, 29, female)*

*"External cosmetic things are far worse than an internal organ. Everything is about the visual." (UK, ex-smoker, 64, male)*

Translation issues:

- The Danish respondents compared 'Smoking is the cause of ruined / destroyed teeth and gums' and 'Smoking causes rotten teeth and gums' and selected the latter since it sounds stronger and less pleasant

Suggestions to improve the impact of the warning included:

- Include visuals (BE, EE, SE, IE, FI, BG)

*"If there is a picture, this message would be 10 times more influencing."  
(Bulgaria, ex-smoker, 22, male)*

- Shorten the statement:
  - To 'Smoking ruins your mouth' (BE)
  - Or to focus on the part about rotten teeth (IT)
- Word the phrase more clearly; smoking 'definitely causes' yellowing teeth (RO)
- One person who had experienced gum disease as a consequence of smoking, suggested making the warning more accurate by changing the wording to 'smoking causes rotten teeth and severe gum illness' (LV)
- Clarify how this can be harmful for the teeth enamel and colour to increase the impact (LT)

## 4.2 Social messages

### Smoking can kill your unborn child

**- Clearly an effective message provoking a strong reaction -**

Most reacted very strongly to this statement, recognising its validity and finding it shocking, frightening and direct. As a consequence they thought it was an effective warning (AT, IT, FR, DE, UK, PL, MT, RO, LT, SK, CY, DK, BG, NL, FI, IE, PT, LV, HU, SE).

*"Yes, it is shocking it's the future that will crumble due to a single cigarette." (France, established, 17, female)*

*"Well, to poison your own organism, this is your decision. But to poison an innocent baby, this is a criminal act. I stopped smoking when I got pregnant." (Bulgaria, established smoker, 46, female)*

*"Really good warning, I get so angry when I see mothers who are pregnant, and stand smoking. This is a familiar concept and yet they are not able to calm the cravings but are feeding their baby with poison." (Sweden, ambivalent, 29, male)*

Many respondents expressed the opinion that that it is not acceptable for pregnant women to smoke since they are endangering the lives of third parties: their children. (AT, FR, UK, CZ)

*"Yes, I condemn it, when I notice a pregnant woman who smokes. That's absolutely irresponsible. This warning label is very effective; at least it should be for women!" (Austria, ex-smoker, 24, female)*

*"This message has force in that it's not myself I am killing, it's someone else. I'm acting in a way that will harm another." (Czech Republic, established, 25, male)*

The impact of this warning can be seen from the way in which some respondents chose to discuss it in specific detail, one expressing the view that the stress caused by attempting to quit smoking could be harmful to the unborn child (IE) and others referring to instances of doctors permitting women two cigarettes a day to prevent the anxiety associated with attempting to quit (ES, BE).

*"I heard that my sister and my aunts, who smoked whilst pregnant, were told by their gynaecologist to carry on because otherwise it could be worse for the child." (Belgium, ambivalent, 17, female)*

Some respondents thought that the message was overly strongly expressed or exaggerated. They felt that the use of the word 'kill' was inappropriate and too brutal (LU, HU, SI).

*"If you smoke during pregnancy there is a big risk that the unborn child may show secondary effects. But you don't kill your child." (Luxembourg, ex-smoker, 47, female)*

*"I don't agree with it in reality because it does not kill the child but it could damage it. Having a sick child because it is damaged just because someone could not stop smoking during pregnancy is a so much bigger problem." (Hungary, established, 48, female)*

A few respondents felt that women already know that they should stop smoking during pregnancy and they felt that most women do (CZ, IE, LV). Some respondents doubted that this warning would stop those who continued to smoke despite knowing that they should not (CZ).

A minority of older Irish respondents denied that smoking harmed unborn children; they explained that they had smoked during pregnancy and given birth to healthy babies. They felt this was evidence against the claim of smoking harming unborn babies.

A few respondents pointed out that this message might only have an impact for a limited time; after the birth the mother could resume smoking again (MT). Some respondents also pointed out that this warning is similar to the existing warning about smoking whilst pregnant (IT).

Not surprisingly, the respondents felt that this statement was directed at female respondents who are pregnant and they questioned whether other smokers would respond to this warning on a cigarette packet (AT, IT, FR, BE, DE, PL, EE, SK, BG, IE, LV). As a consequence some suggested that the message be included only on brands which are seen traditionally as women's cigarettes (EE, LV). However, others felt that the statement targeted the partners of expectant mothers as well as the mothers themselves (ES, EL, UK, RO, LT, CY, CZ, DK, NL, FI, PT, HU).

*"The term kill is very direct and effective, but it depends on who is reading the warning label. Male or very young smokers won't do a lot of thinking about pregnancy and harming the unborn child." (Austria, ex-smoker, 47, male)*

*"OK it's more of a message to women than men, but it gives men more of a chance to quit with the wife, fiancée, girlfriend – it gives them more of a reason to give up, as well." (UK, established, 17, male)*

There were some issues identified with the translations of this warning:

- The Belgian respondents explained that the French translation seemed a bit strange as it was a phrase that is not typically used, they suggested using a translation of more commonly used French, such as 'Fumer peut tuer votre futur enfant'
- In Italian the respondents felt the statement is too long
- One Lithuanian respondent did not understand the statement

*"It is difficult to understand, is it future plans for an unborn child or was there already a tragedy." (Lithuania, established, 31, male)*

Suggested improvements to the warning included:

- Making the warning more direct / frightening:
  - 'Smoking will kill / kills your unborn child' (BE, ES, LT, DK)
  - 'You can have no children at all' (LV)
- Conversely, some respondents felt that the statement should not refer to 'kill' and suggested that it be changed to 'may affect' / 'can harm' or 'Smoking causes disabilities' supported with relevant pictures (RO, SI)
- Include statistics related to the impact of smoking on pregnancy to increase the impact of the warning (BE, SI)
- Include a picture of a pregnant woman smoking (SE) to increase the effect

### **Your smoke harms your children, family and friends**

***- The impact of smoke on others is not a new concept and most smokers already move away from others to smoke; most believe the message would not motivate them to give up -***

Most of the respondents already knew about the effect of passive smoking on other people (AT, IT, DE, LU, UK, MT, RO, LT, EE, SK, IE, PT, HU, LV, SI, FI) and some explained that they already go outside or move away from non-smokers to smoke (AT, BE, LU, UK, MT, LT, CY, IE, PT, HU, LV, SI).

*"I would not want children, friends who come over to be affected by it [smoking]. I go outside, somewhere like the balcony or the garden." (Belgium, ambivalent, 16, male)*

Some felt that this warning was not a new idea because it is very similar to other health warnings already in existence (ES, IT, RO, LT). Furthermore, whilst it may encourage people to move away from others to smoke, it is not sufficiently motivating to encourage people to give up smoking (ES, IT, FR, BE, EL, UK, PL, MT, LT, EE, CY, CZ, BG).

*"It won't dissuade people away from smoking but it will encourage them to smoke away from people who don't smoke." (France, established, 23, male)*

*"This message would make someone go out to the balcony, but would not make him stop smoking." (Bulgaria, established, 46, female)*

However, others thought this message was more motivating than the similar current message with which they are more familiar because it refers specifically to people that one cares about ('children, family and friends'), whereas the current message only refers to 'people around you' (LT, CZ, DK, NL).

*"The reference to children gives it power." (Czech Republic, ambivalent, 41, male)*

*"It is true, you harm everyone with your tobacco smoke, I do know that." (Austria, ambivalent, 54, female)*

*"It is awful that when I smoke, I not only hurt myself, but also children; the children become sick because of my smoking." (Sweden, established, 57, male)*

However, the specific reference to children, family and friends was disliked by some established smokers as they felt this portrayed smokers in a particularly negative light (DK).

*"This is the kind of message I hate, I mean, we're just sitting outside a cafe and suddenly I am killing everyone around me. Who says that I am with my family, friends and kids anyway" (Denmark, established, 27, female).*

Some respondents felt that the part of the message referring to children was motivating whereas the part about friends was not. They felt that friends could make their own choices and either move or ask the smoker to stop smoking in front of them (ES, IT).

*"It sounds important when talking about children, but it is not interesting in the part about friends: they are grown up enough to ask you to stop smoking!" (Italy, ex-smoker, 29, male)*

*"Children are a vulnerable point for a person because they represent his /her emotional world, and the family also, though less so. But friends, they pose a lesser emotional commitment and are associated with leisure, going out and there you have tobacco." (Spain, ex-smoker, 48 years, male)*

A few respondents thought the message could be sufficiently motivating to make them consider giving up, particularly mothers or women who intended to have children.

The message struck a chord with them, increasing their realisation of the impact they would be having on the health of their children or the example they would be setting (EL). Others thought that an initial change in behaviour could ultimately result in stopping smoking (NL).

*"Yes you will change your behaviour and not smoke around the ones who do not smoke, and then eventually you might stop yourself." (The Netherlands, ambivalent, 17, male)*

However, since the warning does not refer to the health of the smoker themselves, some feel it may not be very effective at encouraging people to stop smoking (AT, SE).

A few respondents felt that this message was already known and was, therefore, less likely to have an impact on those who do not consider others and continue to smoke around them (RO).

*"Honestly, the message could be very good as long as smokers would care about those around them... [but] I don't think it will have a great impact... on a tobacco pack that everybody throws away when they've finished the cigarettes." (Romania, ex-smoker, 17, female)*

Given the introduction of increased smoking restrictions in public places it was felt by a few that this message had become redundant (DE, UK, SI). Conversely, some Irish respondents recognised the introduction of regulations to restrict smoking in the workplace and in public places but they still felt the warning was important.

Some expressed the view that smoking in the home is uncommon nowadays and so they doubted the need for this warning (DE). Others thought that passive smoking was an 'overworked topic' and that no one would pay attention to this message (EE, BG).

Some respondents felt the message was too long and could be ignored as a result of small font size or lack of immediate impact (FR, BE, SE).

A few Slovakian respondents questioned whether this statement was true and whether smoke was really dangerous for others.

People had a range of views about what the target audience for this message was:

Groups of people for whom this warning is more relevant:	Identified by respondents from:
Everyone	IT, BE, HU
Parents / families	FR, MT, RO, EE, SK, SE, LV
Young families / those planning families	IE, LV
Adults in the presence of children	HU

*"Families in which just one person is smoking... They could reproach him based on this warning." (Latvia, ambivalent, 41, male)*

Suggested improvements:

- Shorten the statement to make it more impactful by removing the reference to friends (IT, ES, LV)
- Increase the impact by replacing the word 'harms' with the actual effects (IE) / 'may cause cancer' (RO)
- Some of the Danish respondents did not like the personalised nature of the message and so suggested changing the phrase to 'Smoking harms your surroundings'
- Include a picture (of a man in a puff of smoke with a gas mask) (LV)

### **If you smoke, your children will smoke**

***- A contentious message which stimulated much denial; nevertheless, some were able to see the potential in the message -***

Most expressed strong doubts about the veracity of the claim that there was a connection between parents smoking and their children smoking (IT, AT, FR, BE, DE, LU, UK, EE, SK, CY, CZ, NL, IE, PT, HU, LV, SI); they doubted the credibility of the message and consequently the impact.

*"I don't think that there is a connection between smoking parents and possible smoking of their children. There are many examples to prove otherwise." (Austria, ambivalent, 27, female)*

*"Smoking is not something you inherit. I'd kill my daughter if she came out of the home smelling like cigarettes." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 47, male)*

Many challenged the absolute assertion made by this warning because they knew of parents who smoked and whose children did not (DK, MT, RO, LT, EE, NL, IE, HU) or their own children had already told them they would not smoke (BE). Some were irritated by the statement because they felt it was not true (SE, LT).

*"If smoking is a part of your growing up period, it can easily signal that it is ok to smoke, but I become a bit irritated when reading the warning, because it is not strictly true, it does not need to turn out as the warning says." (Sweden, ex-smoker, 34, male)*

*"No not really for me, because my daughter often tells me that she would never smoke." (Belgium, established, 46, male)*

*"No, my daughter is so anti-smoking." (UK, established, 61, female)*

The perception was that whether a child smoked or not was dependent on several factors including the child themselves, peer pressure and parenting skills (EE, IT, SK, CY, IE, HU, LV).

*"There are parents that smoke and children that don't, there is no connection between the two things, it depends on who the children have as friends." (Italy, ambivalent, 17, male)*

*"I did not take it up from my mother, but it was rather the youth around me; my friend smokes and I will smoke too." (Estonia, ex-smoker, 30, female)*

Furthermore, a few respondents disliked the statement because it appeared to question people's parenting skills (DK, FR).

*"It tries to make you feel bad again, saying that you are a bad parent, they should not interfere in that, that is not their business." (Denmark, established, 27, female)*

Nevertheless, some respondents saw the potential power of this warning and felt it could be effective (DK, PL, MT, RO, LT, EE, SK, CZ, BG, FI). They felt that the prospect of their children becoming smokers was frightening and made the warning impactful.

*"It has an impact on those who smoke but feel guilty when smoking, who know and try to quit. It is more impactful for such kinds of people." (Estonia, ex-smoker, 46, male)*

*"You can educate your children not with words, but by actions, by example. If I smoke, I cannot tell my children not to smoke. And that is what happened indeed. My son started smoking at 16. This is something I could not forgive to myself." (Bulgaria, established smoker, 46, female)*

However, there was some doubt as to whether the message would be motivating enough, there was a perception that only the most responsible and intelligent parents would react to this warning (BG).

A few respondents misinterpreted the message as being about passive smoking (IT, PT).

The target for the warning message is believed to be:

- Parents (SE, ES, BE, LT, EE, CZ, BG, HU, LV)
- Young people when they have / are expecting children (LT, BG, LV)

*"For a parent, it can be an aggressive statement: through my fault, my child smokes. But I do not have children. No [it makes no difference to me]." (Spain, ambivalent, 18, female)*

- Everybody (IT)

Only one translation issue was mentioned:

- Danish respondents expressed a preference for 'If you smoke there is a bigger risk that your children will smoke' to 'If you smoke your children will smoke' since the latter was perceived to be factually inaccurate

Suggested amendments to the message included:

- Include statistics to support the message / probability that children will smoke (DK, FI)

*"Yes, this is good because it makes you think, but I would like to see some statistics on it." (Denmark, ex-smoker, 29, male)*

- Increase the impact by including a picture of a crying baby (SE)
- Reduce the length of the statement (FR)
- Focus on the health of children, rephrase as 'Don't smoke in front of your child, take care of his health' (BE) / 'If you are a smoker, you are destroying your children's health (CY)
- Position the message as passing on an addiction, a burden from generation to generation: 'Smokers risk passing on their addictions to their children' (IE)
- Use words like 'responsibility' to make people think – 'It's also your responsibility whether your children smoke or not' (HU)
- Allow for the fact that there are other factors affecting whether children smoke or not - 'If you smoke your children are more likely to become smokers' (HU)

### 4.3 Cessation messages

#### Quit now – stay alive for your children

- Respondents are motivated by the inclusion of children in the message but they are irritated by the instructional tone -

Respondents were divided in their opinion about this warning. Some felt that it would be motivating for parents but others felt the tone was too directive and felt the absolute assertion implicit in the message (smoke and you will die) undermined its credibility.

The warning was perceived as impactful by many respondents (particularly, although not exclusively, parents or parents to be), it seems that the reference to children induced a feeling of concern and ensured the impact of the warning for most respondents (IT, SE, AT, ES, FR, BE, EL, MT, RO, LT, EE, CY, CZ, BG, NL, IE, HU, FI, UK).

*"I like the fact that they bring the responsibility for your family into focus. The message might not be as aggressive as others, but to me it is still very effective." (Austria, ambivalent, 27, female)*

It was felt that this statement provided a positive rationale for stopping smoking ('stay alive for your children') but without being overly emotive (ES, BE, LU, CZ, BG, IE, HU).

*"Talking about what you will gain if you quit smoking has greater impact than talking about the specific harmful effects of tobacco such as cancer or heart attacks or even talking about your children." (Spain, ambivalent, 35, male)*

*"When the children leave the home parents... have a lot of time, get bored or start going out more, so they are tempted to smoke more. So this message could make them think that there is a sense to have a healthier lifestyle and keep enjoying the family life they have built." (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 39, male)*

Some Belgian respondents commented that they particularly liked the fact that the warning was written in a positive way.

However, many respondents perceived the message as too directive, it was viewed as a 'telling off' and as a consequence was received negatively (DK, IT, FR, RO, NL, PT, SI, FI).

*"This makes me so annoyed, why should people interfere in how I live my life. Seriously, I am getting tired of this. It's private how I choose to live my life, we don't want to be pointed fingers at all the time, just leave us alone." (Denmark, ambivalent, 29, male)*

*"My God, it sounds like a priest talking to you! It prompts you to do the contrary just because of the tone of voice!" (Italy, established, 48, male)*

*"It seems to be an order. Smokers are usually people who get angry frequently. This might strengthen their intention of continuing to smoke. I would not use this warning." (Romania, ex-smoker, 28, male)*

Some respondents felt that the implication that one would die if one did not stop smoking was untrue and, they claimed, this undermined the credibility of the message (IT, SE, DE, LU, PL, RO, LT, CY, LV, SI, UK).

*"There is no indication saying you will 'die' because you smoke." (Sweden, established, 57, male)*

*"You do not die so early from smoking, at 60 at the earliest and by then the children have grown up anyway." (Germany, non-smoker, 15, female)*

*"My Nan's been smoking for 60 years and she's still alive to see her children grow up, grandchildren grow up. Anything could happen, you could get run over by a bus, so that one doesn't really bother me at all." (UK, established, 17, male)*

Some said that they would not be influenced by this health warning because the decision to quit smoking is a personal one that is taken primarily for themselves and not for others (EL, MT, HU). Some respondents felt that health warnings should focus on the individual and so felt this message was inappropriate (MT).

*"I think it should be 'enjoy life - stay alive for your children'... because it means you're going to stay alive not just for your children but also for yourself." (Malta, non-smoker, 16, female)*

Others felt that the information in the warning was very well-known and, as a result, the warning was unlikely to be effective (LU, SK, PT).

Some respondents noted that the warning did not make any reference to quality of life and respondents felt that references to having a good quality of life could be impactful, as well as messages about living longer (DK, LT).

*"Maybe 'stay healthy' for your children, without disease... when in a coma or bed ridden, you are alive then too." (Lithuania, ambivalent smoker, 44, female).*

Some of the Italian respondents interpreted this statement as a piece of 'advice', which they felt was weaker than the statements about specific illnesses.

The phrase 'quit now' was criticised by some Lithuanian respondents as they felt it was not possible to stop smoking immediately.

*"This 'quit now' bothers me. You cannot quit just like that." (Lithuania, ambivalent, 44, female)*

Some respondents were clearly unmoved by this statement (SE, AT, ES, PL, CZ, BG, LV); they tended to be younger and so appeared to be able to distance themselves from the warning.

*"I think this slogan is better for older people as one has to think what it is about. The young may pay some attention to it, but some may not understand it." (Poland, ambivalent, 16, female).*

Parents were identified as the niche target for this warning, specifically:

Young parents	Older parents	All parents
PT, LV, UK, ES, PT, CZ, RO, FR, AT	EE	FI, HU, NL, LT, BE, SE, CY

*"For smokers with children this warning is definitely an alarming argument; it is very effective for a certain group of people. But for me, since I have no children, this message is not very effective." (Austria, established, 29, male)*

There were translation issues identified in Latvia where the translation was complicated and the respondents had to read it several times to understand it because there is no simple direct translation.

Suggestions to improve this health warning included:

- Make the wording more positive and encouraging:
  - 'Stop today – live longer and healthier for your kids' (DK)
  - 'Stay healthy for your children without disease' (LT)
- Shorten the statement as it is too long (IT)
  - Focus on the positive aspect first to increase the impact and increase the relevance to everyone - 'Stay alive – quit smoking' (BE) / 'Quit now – stay alive' (IE)
- Change the directive tone to increase the impact (IT) / 'Quit and stay healthy for your children' (SI)
- Make the statement more personal (SE) – 'for yourself'
- Include grandparents to widen the target and include older parents (HU)

### **Stop smoking now - your health benefits immediately**

***- The message was seen as over-promising because it stated the benefits are immediate -***

Most questioned whether it was true that their health would benefit 'immediately' (DK, IT, SE, FR, BE, DE, EL, PL, MT, RO, DK, CY, CZ, SK, HU, SI, FI, UK, EE) and so they doubted the credibility of the message. In fact, some said the immediate effects of giving up smoking made them feel worse as their body adjusted and that in fact they felt the benefits later (IT).

*"I don't think this is going to work at all, I mean most people will probably think, 'it can't be true.' The message is fine, but that your health will benefit immediately is quite hard to believe." (Denmark, non-smoker, 17, female)*

*"When I quit smoking, I was coughing much more than before because my lungs were getting used to the new situation. The benefits arrived later, they were not immediate!" (Italy, ambivalent, 33, female).*

Some viewed the message positively (DK, SE, AT, BE, PL, MT, CZ, BG, NL, IE, HU, LV, SI, FI) and some liked the fact that message concentrates on the positive benefits of stopping, rather than the negative effects of smoking (DK, AT, BE, PL, CY, NL, IE, LV, FI).

*"Well, this is a beautiful, optimistic statement, and I like it a lot... These situations must, after all, be turned around and the positive sides must be highlighted. Banging our heads on and on with cervical, lung or throat cancer does not make people quit, whereas something optimistic is a totally different matter." (Poland, established, 30, male).*

*"This is wonderful, cheering, because everyone wants to feel better, both the young and the old." (Latvia, ambivalent, 20, female)*

For some the strength of the warning was in the truth of the health benefits message (DK, HU).

*"This is really good, because it's absolutely correct, your health will become better immediately, you can actually feel that on your body." (Denmark, established, 72, male)*

For a few, this promise of an 'immediate' effect would have a motivating impact (DE, CZ).

However, it was clear that for some the phrase 'your health benefits' was too generic and, if interpreted as meaning that every negatively affected area of your health benefits, would be unrealistic (BE, BG, RO, LT, IE, UK). In order to be more realistic the warning should be more specific (CY).

*"Let's be serious! This is a joke like, 'call now and you will win 5 million.' There is nothing can cure you on the spot. This 'immediately' suggests that if you have cancer and you quit, tomorrow morning you will be perfectly healthy." (Romania, established, 29, female)*

*"It would be more impactful if it mentioned how your health could immediately benefit. It's too vague and general in nature." (Cyprus, ambivalent, 32, female)*

*"Health is too general... There are so many things harming our health, if you stop one of them, the smoking, I do not believe that the benefits will come immediately. There are thousands of examples for people who have*

*never smoked or drunk and die at 40 or 50 years from cancer." (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 39, male)*

Some felt that, from the point of view of its impact on health, quitting smoking is a double-edged sword as it is stressful and can result in people putting on weight (BE, CY).

*"I think [this is] only somewhat [true]... Stopping smoking also means putting on weight, stress, and, therefore, no benefit." (Belgium, ambivalent, 17, female)*

Similarly, a few respondents expressed the opinion that heavy smokers should not give up suddenly; going 'cold turkey' after decades of heavy smoking is too much of a shock for the body (LV, SI).

Some ex-smokers described the way in which they felt positive health benefits within one to two weeks of giving up smoking (BE, LT, SK, SI, EE, ES). They felt it was unlikely that smokers would believe the health benefits were possible until they experienced them for themselves and so they questioned the value of placing the message on cigarette packs.

*"In fact, after two weeks, you see a change. You feel like you have been cleaned out." (Belgium, ex-smoker, 29, male)*

*"If someone had told me this when I was still smoking, I wouldn't have believed him. But I experienced it myself when I started to feel reborn after a few days." (Slovenia, ex-smoker, 25, female)*

Some smokers who felt themselves to be in good health could not perceive how they could feel any better and so the message did not resonate with them (FR, PL, SI, FI, UK).

*"If our health is already good, I don't see how it could get better. This makes me laugh more than anything else, I think it's funny." (France, ambivalent, 21, female)*

*"I don't cough in the morning nor do I have any other problems. I feel good. Why should I stop smoking?" (Slovenia, established, 40, male)*

Some felt the message was relatively weak because it offered nothing new or shocking to those reading it and that, as a result, it would not be effective at encouraging people to give up smoking (IT, MT, NL, ES).

*"I think that smoking is so addictive that you have to scare the person in order for them to consider quitting." (Malta, ex-smoker, male, 41)*

Some respondents felt that, in common with some others in the category, the message was too directive ('stop smoking now') which they did not like (IT, PT). On the other hand, some liked the direct style of language used, making it feel personal (DK, LT). Others from Lithuania felt it sounded more like an advertising slogan than a health warning and so they did not feel it was sufficiently serious.

A few Irish respondents felt that this message could give smokers a license to continue smoking. If they felt they could regain their health as soon as they gave up there is the potential that they could put off giving up until later (IE).

Finally, some Slovakian respondents expressed the view that this message contradicted 'Smoking causes suffocating breathlessness for life' and as a consequence they did not believe it (SK).

Views on the target audience for this message varied. Some of the suggestions included:

- Everyone (IT, SE, HU)
- Heavier smokers (BE, ES)
- Older smokers (BE)
- Smokers with health problems (BE)
- Those feeling ill-health effects of smoking (FR, DE, LV)
- Those in bad health generally (FR, DE, CZ)
- Those involved in sports (DE, UK)
- Younger smokers who would most feel the improvement (HU)

Translation issues identified were:

- The statement was perceived as too impersonal (LU)  
*"I find it better to say "Hör auf zu rauchen ! Denk an deine Gesundheit." (Luxembourg, established, 16, female)*
- It was suggested the statement be rephrased into a more positive and expressive translation (LU)  
*"Auch du kannst es schaffen aufzuhören! Glaub an dich." (Luxembourg, ambivalent, 47, male)*
- The Dutch translation of 'immediately' was 'with big leaps', which was felt to be exaggerated

Suggested improvements to the message included:

- Those who did not believe that the benefits were immediate suggested:
  - 'Stop smoking now – your health benefits with time' (DK)
  - 'Stop smoking now – your health benefits tomorrow' (DK)
  - 'Stop smoking now – and get better health' (DK)
  - Change 'immediately' to 'now' or a realistic time frame such as two weeks (HU)
- Be more specific about the health benefits that will be achieved to make the statement more credible (CY, IE)
  - 'Within 48hours of quitting cigarettes, your sense of taste and smell will return to a normal level' (IE)
- Some felt the message is currently too long to be effective and suggest shortening it (IT, LU)

- Latvians were concerned about health risks to heavy smokers who give up suddenly and so they suggested including information that health improvements could even come from reducing the number of cigarettes smoked (LV)
- Include pictures of trees and shrubs to indicate freshness and health (SE)
- Include statistics to demonstrate the health benefits, such as x people quit and y were able to do z again (RO)
- Among those who felt the message was too 'soft', it was suggested the message be rephrased as a challenge (IE)
  - 'Try not smoking for a month and watch your health improve' (IE)
- Encourage people to give up now – 'The sooner you quit, the better you feel' (IE)
- The Spanish respondents tended to prefer the more 'negative' warnings and so suggested making the statement into a negative one to highlight the harmful risks of tobacco

### **Get professional help – it makes it easier to quit**

***- Most believe that it is personal motivation first and foremost that is required to quit, so they were unconvinced by this statement -***

Most were unmoved by this statement both because they saw it as a statement of advice rather than a warning and because they were not convinced of the value of professional help.

In many cases, initial reactions to this message included respondents saying they were not convinced that using professional help would ensure success in stopping smoking. For example, some referred to friends who had been able to give up smoking without the need of professional support and so saw such help as unnecessary (IT). Others, who had tried quitting without professional help, felt the support of family and friends was more important (AT).

*"I do not consider this message as very effective. After all, the decision to quit has to start in the smoker's mind at first. I would rather look for support and help among my friends and family." (Austria, established, 30, female)*

In addition some talked about professional help being expensive and not offering any guarantees (BE, RO, NL), while others were not convinced that professional help would ensure success since giving up needs to be personally motivated (BE, DE, MT, RO, LT, CY, SK, PT, HU, LV, SI, FI, UK, EE).

*"Over half of the desire to stop smoking must come from the person themselves. If I don't want to stop, then the professional won't be able to help me." (Belgium, established, 46, male)*

*"People always resort to their earlier patterns of behaviour. If you do not have the wish to stop of your own will, then professional help is of no use either." (Germany, established, 52, male).*

Finally, some respondents knew people who had tried to give up with the help of a professional and failed, which they felt undermined the credibility of the message (LU, CY, HU, SI).

A number of respondents expressed the view that professional health is not appropriate for stopping smoking, either because they felt they did not need it (IT), or because they believe that smoking is not a disease or serious problem (such as drug or alcohol abuse) that merits professional help (EL, MT, DK).

*"I do not believe that you need to go to a specialist, maybe somebody is so weak as to need it." (Italy, established, 48, male)*

*"It's [smoking] not considered as serious... you're not going to rehabilitation to quit smoking, people will laugh at you." (Malta, ambivalent, 30, female)*

*"It sounds a bit patronising. I can hear someone with a really American, sarcastic accent saying that to me." (UK, established, 29, female)*

A few respondents did not like this statement because they felt it allowed people to pass on the responsibility of quitting to someone else instead of accepting responsibility for the task themselves (IT). However, some found abdicating responsibility motivating as they felt that, if they were simply doing as they were told, it would be easier to give up (CZ).

*"This is cool, it just needs an Internet address or a telephone number. Remember, people are like sheep, we need step-by-step advice!" (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 24, female)*

A number of Danish respondents did not like the directive tone of the message. They preferred the existing warning of 'Your doctor or pharmacist can help you stop smoking', which is less authoritarian and does not suggest that the smoker is ill.

*"I would be so annoyed by this one. They are not only ordering me but they are also judging me as sick and unhealthy, like someone is saying to me, 'you have to get professional help.' Well, what if I don't want that? I am an educated person, I can choose my own life." (Denmark, ambivalent, 29, male)*

In common with the other cessation warning, this message was seen as relatively 'weak' by some respondents which led them to the view that it would not be effective (AT). It was seen as a suggestion / advice by some, rather than a warning (LT, CZ, PT).

Some respondents explained that seeking 'professional help' for problems was not normal in their culture and it is not something that people would be

comfortable doing (RO, EE). Other respondents feel that 'professional help' has mental health connotations and, as a result, they would not want to be associated with such help (IE).

A different perspective came from some of the Polish respondents who did not believe that professional support to help them give up smoking was available in their country.

*"I don't think this is the case. I have not heard of anyone who had received a pill from a doctor which actually helped him and made him healthy, or even any tips. So I think this is rather false. Knowing our health service one cannot really expect any outstanding lectures, discussions. I am totally not convinced by this statement that I should go and see a doctor as he will help me. I have never thought of doing it." (Poland, established, 30, male)*

The younger Irish respondents felt they would be embarrassed to seek this sort of help and would rather try and quit alone.

*"I'd prefer to do it myself and go about it myself. I would probably be a bit uncomfortable with it [using a helpline]. I prefer to do it with the support of my family and friends rather than a stranger on the phone." (Ireland, established, 18, female)*

Some younger Bulgarian respondents expressed similar views, mentioning that a message of this sort is already used in their country, with a telephone number but that they did not know of anyone who had called it and they did not visualise themselves doing so.

Relatively few respondents expressed positive views about this message, those who did coming from Sweden, Malta, Cyprus and Estonia. In addition a few from Belgium felt it was impactful. The specific factors which were felt to contribute to its effectiveness included the fact that the message suggested that giving up was an attainable goal (BE) and, for one respondent, personal experience.

*"This is correct and this should be there. I also tell all my friends that there is much help from going to a therapist." (Estonia, ex-smoker, 30, female)*

Other respondents took a more neutral view of the message, either feeling it was 'useful' to know that there is an option of seeking professional help (EL, MT) or seeing the message as being more suitable for a health campaign than for a cigarette packet warning (FR).

Some felt there was a specific target audience for this message:

- Established smokers (IT, IE, HU)
- Those already thinking about quitting (SE, LU, CZ, IE)

*"You have to want to quit or no amount of help will help you." (Czech Republic, established, 16, female)*

- Those who have failed many times (HU)
- Those who are weak-willed (LT)

An alternative translation was suggested in Latvia: „Lūdziet palīdzību profesionāļiem – tas palīdzēs vieglāk atmest.” (Ask professionals for help – it will help to quit easier)

Other suggested amendments included:

- Add a telephone number / more information on clinics / pharmacies / a website address (SE, FR, BE, DE, LU, SI, IE, LV, DK)
- Make it clear what sort of specialists one should go to (LT, NL, HU, LV, FI)
  - ‘Your doctor or pharmacists can help you quit smoking’ (DK)
- Make it clear that there is a free service or a service which the consumer is reimbursed for if they are successful in quitting, since ‘professional’ implies expensive (BE)
- The statement could be shortened as it is currently felt to be too long (IT)
- Include a reason why people should seek help, to improve the credibility of the message (SI)
- Remove the directive tone – ‘If you want to quit smoking, you can get professional help’ (DK)

#### 4.4 Other messages

##### Smoking makes it harder to have children

**- Viewed as a niche message for those who have decided to have a family, this statement was vague and unspecific -**

This message was perceived as impactful by some respondents (BE, FR, SE, IT, PL, RO, CY, SK, BG, NL, HU, UK, EE, ES, DK, PL, EL, LU) but others, often from the same country were unmoved by it (AT, SE, IT, MT, CY, CZ, SK, NL, PT, HU, LV, SI, FI, UK, EE, ES, LT, PL, EL, LU). On the whole, reactions were dependent on whether the possibility of having children was something with personal resonance or not.

*“At this point in time, I am not interested in this... In the future I do plan to have children but for now this doesn't affect me... However it may affect those who are thinking about having children.” (Malta, established, 24, female)*

*"I don't know to what extent it [tobacco] is a factor, whether a lot or a little, but if it affects the likelihood of becoming a father, then one needs to give it some thought." (Spain, ambivalent, 35, male)*

*"The words come straightaway, "smoking", "fertility", they are the first and last words of the slogan, it says enough, it could make me stop smoking and I think that that could affect many people." (France, ambivalent, 21, female)*

Many respondents did not understand how smoking could affect their fertility / ability to have children and so this undermined the credibility of the message in their minds (BE, AT, IT, LT, CY, IE, LV, EE, ES). The statement was seen as being too vague and unspecific; there was a lack of clarity in exactly how and to what extent smoking affected the ability to have children.

*"I see it more as advice. It does not say that if you smoke you will have no children." (Italy, ex-smoker, 53, female)*

In addition, some respondents expressed the view that smoking was not a major factor in fertility (SK, HU, ES, DE).

*'Well, maybe, but there are so many other things that influence it [fertility]. The drinking water – we don't know what chemicals are washed into it - or what we eat.'* (Hungary, ambivalent, 48, male)

Some respondents simply did not believe the message was true (PL, MT, CZ, SK, NL, LV, SI, UK), in some cases because they did not know anyone who had experienced such problems (MT, CZ, NL, LV). Others simply felt that smoking is unjustifiably held accountable for many health problems and this was 'another of those problems' (PL).

*"This is not true. Even if the influence is minimal I don't think it would improve if I stopped smoking. It absolutely isn't true with women." (Slovenia, established, 16, female)*

*"I don't know, this is hard to believe. Maybe it's true, maybe it isn't, and maybe it's just one case in a million! But if you you're healthy and you don't have any problems, it's not really likely to be an issue." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 18, male)*

*"There are a lot of children out there, and a lot of mums that smoke – I don't think you'll find many people who believe that!" (UK, ex-smoker, 64, male)*

The lack of statistical information in the warning meant that the message was viewed as non scientific, which lowered its impact for some Finnish respondents.

Some respondents from the Netherlands particularly liked the way the message had been phrased:

*"It is a gentle warning and therefore I like it. It is not like you can't have children if you smoke." (The Netherlands, established, 47, female)*

*"The way it is formulated is good, mentioning 'to have children' is nicer than 'makes it more difficult to get pregnant'." (The Netherlands, ambivalent, 30, male)*

Some respondents felt that the existing warning 'Smoking can damage sperm and decrease fertility' was more effective because this was seen as communicating the specific harm smoking does and how this affects fertility; this prospect was perceived as frightening (CZ, DK).

Some male respondents misunderstood the message and initially thought it referred to impotence (IE, ES, BE).

The target group for this message was felt to be small:

- Young adults (men and women) who decide to have children (BE, IT, AT, LU, IE, PT, HU, LV, FI, UK, ES)

*"It applies to a certain group of people, but this group of people is not very large; if there are warning labels only for a certain group of people, these labels might not generate any interest in all the other smokers. They probably think that it does not concern them, so they don't care about it." (Austria, ambivalent, 17, male)*

- Some perceive that this message refers mainly to women (DE, EL, NL, EE) and, in particular, it was felt that it could be most motivating amongst women over 40 who are trying to conceive (DE)
- Conversely, some men felt that this message is targeted at them (RO)

*"It might be true. It targets more the males. It is clear and targeted." (Romania, established, 17, male)*

- Others were unclear whether the target included women and men (BG)

*"But is it for women too? I have never heard it had a negative effect on female fertility. There was something about sperm etc... If it is true for the women too, I would reconsider my smoking habits. I am very afraid of not having children. After all, I am 21 and soon I will have to think about this." (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 21, female)*

- Those having difficulties conceiving or sensitive to fertility issues (UK, ES)

Suggested modifications included:

- Additional information to explain the connection between smoking and the impact on having children at child care centres / gynaecologists offices (SE)
  - 'Smoking causes sterility' (ES)
  - 'Smoking makes men and women sterile' (ES)

- Make the message tougher and provide an explanation - 'Smoking kills sperm and causes impotence' (BG)
- Some prefer the existing message because the outcome of no children is clear - 'Smoking harms your sperm' (BG)
- Shorten the message to make it clearer:
  - 'Do not smoke if you want children someday' (BG)
- Include statistics (RO, FI)
  - 'Those who have smoked for 10 years need two times more fertility treatment' (FI)

**Smoking reduces your sexual performance**

**- Opinions were divided as to whether this statement would be effective; most assuming that it referred to men's performance -**

Most assumed that this statement referred to the sexual performance of men primarily (BE, SE, AT, IT, LU, EL, PL, LT, CZ, SK, BG, NL, IE, PT, SI, FI, UK, HU). Relatively few felt that this warning targets both men and women (DK, CY).

*"Yes, this would worry a fair number of blokes... in a world which is based on appearance and sex." (Belgium, ex-smoker, 29, male)*

*"I think that, for some reason, this is more effective to men than women... For men sex is more important... All men but especially those between their teens and 40." (Malta, non-smoker, 16, female)*

*"No red-blooded male would ignore this." (UK, ex-smoker, 18, male)*

However, there were mixed reactions as to whether the statement would motivate men to stop smoking:

Potentially motivating message	Not a motivating message
DK, HU, EE, UK, PT, CY, RO, LU, BE	ES, EE, FI, SI, LV, BG, SK, LT, EL, FR, AT

NB: All countries are not represented in the table above as respondents in all countries did not express a view as to whether the message was motivating or not

Many respondents, men in particular, flatly rejected this warning (AT, FR, DE, EL, PL, MT, LT, CZ, SK, BG, NL, LV, SI, ES), doubting its veracity primarily on the grounds of personal experience.

*"That is not right! I haven't noticed anything of that." (Germany, established, 52, male)*

*"They say the same for alcohol, but nobody cares. And I do not believe this is the truth." (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 16, male)*

A few expressed doubts since they did not understand how there could be a link between smoking and sexual performance (BE, IT). The statement was felt to be

too vague by some respondents who were unsure what exactly was meant by 'sexual performance' (SE, NL, IE, FI). Others wanted further substantiation; they wanted to know how many cigarettes would cause what type of reduction in performance (IE). Finally, some felt that the statement would be more convincing if it provided reasons for why sexual performance is affected (LT).

*"I would like it better if it was a direct warning about sperm count decreasing. This one here appears without reason." (Lithuania, ambivalent, 25, male).*

Some respondents assumed that the statement was referring to impotence (SE, CZ, FI, ES, HU).

*"This is quite effective message for men: it does not say that you are dying (like in some other messages) but for men impotence is almost the same." (Finland, ambivalent smoker, 27, male)*

Some felt that having this warning on a cigarette pack would be embarrassing, particularly in social situations when other people could see the packet; when they are on the table in a pub for example (CZ, UK). This factor was perceived as a strength of this warning, as it would be an additional deterrent that could help in making the decision to quit.

*"I think that's quite an embarrassing statement to have on a cigarette packet and I think it would make you feel quite self conscious." (UK, ambivalent, 25, female)*

However, there was concern among some respondents that young smokers would think the warning is an exaggeration and they would simply laugh at it rather than taking it seriously (RO, LT).

*"I find it a little bit exaggerated. I think all teenagers will laugh. I don't like how it sounds." (Romania, ex-smoker, 17, female)*

*"Maybe young people would think about it, but some others perhaps just laugh about it. They would say, look an advertisement." (Lithuania, established, 57, female).*

The target for this statement was perceived to be:

- Mainly older men (BE, SE, AT, IT, MT, LT, SI, ES, HU).

*"This warning label appeals only to men. But I don't think that it would have a lot of influence on smokers. Maybe among elderly men; I don't think that this is very effective." (Austria, established smoker, 30, female)*

- Some respondents (often older people) felt that this message was targeted mainly at young men (LU, MT, CY, SK, IE, ES)
- Some felt that the message was intended for men of all ages (PL, LV)
- Men with potency disorders (LV)

Suggested improvements included:

- Include an explanation of why and how smoking reduces sexual performance to dispel any doubts people may have (BE)
- Increase the impact with more information or statistics (RO)
- The phrase is too definitive, rephrase as 'Smoking may reduce your sexual performance' (IE)
- Strengthen the message – 'Destroys sexual potency' (LV)
- Shorten the statement (IT)
- A few respondents (particularly women) were embarrassed by the use of the term 'sexual performance' and suggested using 'sexual life' instead (RO)

### **Smoking is severely addictive - don't start**

***- Most thought this message was intended for those who had not started smoking and as such they felt the cigarette pack was the wrong place for this message -***

The respondents were surprised that this warning was being considered to be put on cigarette packets; they felt that this is a warning for people who are likely to start smoking and not those who are already smoking. The perception was that by the time someone is buying packets of cigarettes they are already addicted and so this message is too late (FR, BE, DE, LU, EL, MT, RO, CY, CZ, SK, NL, IE, PT, FI, UK, EE, ES, DK).

*"Ah that, that's got no place on a packet of cigarettes. If someone buys a packet of cigarettes that means that they have already started so it's more an advertising slogan." (France, ambivalent, 21, female)*

*"There is no point for this warning message... For someone to be buying a pack, it means that he or she is already a smoker." (Cyprus, ex-smoker, 21, female)*

*"It might be effective for people who did not start smoking yet; for people who already smoke this warning label would have no effect." (Austria, established, 29, male)*

*"Once you've bought the pack you're hardly going to throw it away just because it says something like this." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 18, male)*

Most felt this message would not have an impact on existing smokers (FR, AT, SE, IT, LU, MT, LT, CZ, IE, SI, HU). Only the Slovakian respondents felt that it might dissuade some ambivalent smokers.

Conversely, some smokers thought the message could be effective in dissuading those who were thinking about smoking from starting (AT, BE, SK, UK). They felt that, had they seen the message when they were younger, it would have influenced them (SE, UK).

*"If I had been younger the warning would have influenced me not to start to smoke. Where I stand today the dependence is stronger than the warning." (Sweden, established, 57, male)*

However, some felt that this message would be unlikely to prevent young people from starting smoking. They felt that it was peer pressure that encouraged people to start and this would exert more influence to start than the fear of becoming addicted would to resist (IT, DE).

In addition, it was felt that young people tend to disobey orders and as a consequence this message may incline them to doing the opposite and starting to smoke (MT, RO, BG, IE, PT, EE). Only the Lithuanian respondents viewed the message 'don't start' positively, they thought it was clearly telling people what to do (LT).

*"When you tell someone not to do something, they'll be more curious to do it." (Malta, ex-smoker, 28, male)*

*"The young people really hate somebody to tell them what to do and what not. So, if they read this they would say, 'who are they to tell me what to do or not?' Much better would be to put something like: 'The cancer comes with the first cigarette.'" (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 39, male)*

Some felt this message was over-used and, as a result, would be overlooked (BG, CZ). It was felt that it is well-known that smoking is addictive and the decision as to whether to become addicted rests on the individual (IT, LT, ES).

*"This message is everywhere; parents tell this to you when you are small, in school they used to show us movies on this, it is written on the cigarettes packs... It is used for very long time so it has become ineffective." (Bulgaria, ex-smoker, 22, male)*

However, some young respondents felt that this message could act to dissuade people from smoking and should be used (PL, EE).

*"Maybe if someone bought his first packet of cigarettes and saw such a slogan, maybe he would put it down and not start smoking at all. Some people smoke and do not know that they can become addicted so quickly but, if they saw such a slogan, maybe they would not start smoking at all." (Poland, non-smoker, 16, male).*

Others felt that the addictive nature of tobacco might not be fully appreciated by non-smokers, however they felt that the financial cost of smoking could be included that might be more of an incentive not to start smoking (CY, MT, DK).

*"Only a smoker can understand the significance of this health warning... If somehow the financial factor could enter the equation it might become more impactful." (Cyprus, established, 31, male)*

*"I don't understand why they do not focus on the financial aspect... That was why I stopped in the first place and I am sure that many people have the same considerations." (Denmark, ex-smoker, 51, female)*

Some respondents (mostly younger) even challenged the assertion about the addictive nature of smoking (BE, IT, RO, CZ, SK, PT, SI, ES, HU); they feel they could give up whenever they want to and so they do not feel that they are the target for this message.

*"It makes me think about addiction. Am I really addicted? I am a bit scared, but for the moment I don't feel that I am addicted." (Belgium, established, 18, female)*

*"I understand that it is an addiction, but I believe that it is more a character issue than a problem with smoking itself. If you have a strong character you can start and stop whenever you want." (Italy, ambivalent, 17, male)*

Some felt that the use of the word 'addictive' had been devalued over recent years (e.g. chocolate cake is 'addictive'), therefore they suggested using 'addiction' to restore a more serious tone (IE). However, others felt that addiction was too strong a term as it implied an altered state of mind and behaviour as seen with drugs and alcohol, which they felt cigarettes did not do to them (HU).

Some smokers liked the message as they felt it was accurate and direct (UK). They felt it was an important message for non-smokers to hear as they had not yet experienced the addictive properties of tobacco and needed to avoid it.

Respondents identified the targets for this message as follows:

<b>Target group:</b>	<b>Respondents from:</b>
Young people (experimenting with smoking)	SE, BE, CZ, EL
Non-smokers	FR, AT, DE, SK, BG, NL, IE, LV, FI, UK, ES, HU
Recently started smoking	IT, BG, LV, ES, CZ
Ambivalent smokers	SK

There were translation issues in Luxembourg where the German version of the message was criticised for being in the third person plural.

Suggested amendments to the warning included:

- Shortening it to 'Smoking is severely addictive' (IT)
- Make the message harsher / more impactful:
  - 'Don't touch!' (FI)

- 'Smoking causes irreversible addiction – don't start!' (LV)
  - 'Smoking causes addiction and brings on many incurable diseases' (LV)
  - 'It's easier not to try than to quit!' (LV)
  - 'Smoking causes addiction. Don't start – it is expensive!' (LV)
- Adopt a humorous tone to lessen negative reactions and remove the authoritarian tone – 'Fool! You started to smoke; now you are going to get addicted!' (DK)

### Smoking reduces your sports performance

***- The message evoked thoughts of 'professional' sports people and athletes rather than every day sports activities, as a consequence people found it easy to distance themselves from this warning -***

Most respondents accepted that smoking affects sports performance (FR, AT, SE, BE, IT, DE, LU, EL, PL, MT, RO, CY, CZ, SK, PT, LV, SI, FI, UK, ES, HU, DK). However, many of these same respondents did not feel that the statement was directly relevant to them since they did not consider themselves to be 'sports people'.

The impact of smoking on sporting performance was acknowledged by those respondents who participate in sport as a part of their daily lives (SE, IT, LU, MT, RO, CY, CZ, NL, IE, LV, UK, ES, HU). However, while some are still not prepared to give up smoking (MT, CZ, ES, HU) for others it was their motivation to quit (EL, CZ, LV, UK) or to limit their smoking (UK).

*"I love sport and I take part in it. It does affect my performance, but I don't feel that it affects me so much that I have to stop smoking altogether. After training, I do complain because of my smoking, but it doesn't affect me that much." (Malta, ambivalent, 28, male)*

*"My fellow hockey players kept on teasing me about my smoking when I started playing hockey again a couple of years back. I could feel that my lungs weren't what they used to be, and it was one of the reasons I quit." (Czech Republic, ex-smoker, 47, male)*

*"This is quite true. I have colleagues who play sports and since they started smoking they perform slower. Anyone who plays sport must not smoke." (Romania, ambivalent, 15, female)*

Those respondents who are less active, however, are less concerned about sporting performance (IT, DE, PL, MT, LT, CZ, SK, FI, ES, HU); they did not consider themselves to be sports people per se and so they did not consider the warning as relevant to them.

*"I do not give a damn about sport and I go on smoking!" (Italy, ambivalent, 33, female)*

*"It's true but as I don't do sport, it does not impact on me. I walk at my own pace." (Spain, ambivalent, 46, female)*

*"Since I am not into sports, I don't run this is not relevant to me. For me, the warning about sexual ability is scarier. But most people that are into sports don't smoke anyway." (Lithuania, established, 31, male)*

Some of the younger respondents were more concerned about a decline in sporting performance than older respondents (AT, PL) because for them being fit is important.

*"Any kind of reduced sports performance addresses a lot of young people. Everyone knows that your fitness and condition suffers from smoking. It is definitely thought-provoking to a certain group of people. I consider myself as part of this group and therefore I'm definitely affected by this warning." (Austria, established, 29, male)*

Most respondents felt that, from its phrasing, this message was targeted at top sports people and did not include 'everyday' sport (BG, SI, UK). Consequently they thought that the target audience for this message would be very small and so they questioned its relevance (BE, MT, CZ, IE, PT, SI, UK, EE, IE).

*"Other than people doing sport at a high level, or professional athletes, other people won't be worried by this." (Belgium, ambivalent, 22, male)*

*"This is for sportsmen. If they want to address it to a broader audience, they should drop this word performance. 'Performance' is about 1st, 2nd, 3rd place, medals." (Bulgaria, ambivalent, 39, male)*

*"It is not a good combination of words, there are no professional sportsmen who smoke and the warning is targeted to them, so I don't find this useful." (The Netherlands, ambivalent, 17, male)*

In addition, for some people the credibility of the message was undermined by their both their personal experience and observations (IT, DE, IE).

*"This is again one of the messages which have a ring of utopia to them... We have heard about parties that sportsmen have where they drink and rave as much as ordinary people, they are definitely not all that decent." (Estonia, ex-smoker, male, 46)*

The target for this message was seen by most as being very niche since the message was perceived to be targeted at athletes and sportspeople (FR, BE, IT, DE, MT, RO, CY, IE, PT, LV, ES, DK).

*"It wouldn't touch me at all, because I don't do that much sport. Maybe it's good for people who exercise a lot, but not me." (Denmark, established, 17, male)*

- Physically active people / those who like to be fit (MT, CY)
- Young people who have just started smoking (MT, PT, LV)

- Teenagers (RO)
- Young, active people with a strong interest in sports who may be casual smokers (UK)

Suggested improvements included:

- Adding an image (SE)
- Changing the word 'performance' to encompass a broader audience than just elite sports people (BE, FI, UK, DK, IE, SI)
  - 'You get more enjoyment of sports if you quit smoking'
  - Replace 'sports performance' with 'fitness'
  - 'Smoking reduces your physical shape /condition / fitness'
- Support the message with additional information or examples to improve its impact (RO)

### **Smokers die younger**

***- A complete mixed bag of responses from shock to complete acceptance***

The response to this statement was extremely mixed. Some acknowledged the truth of the statement and found it shocking; others simply accepted it as a foregone conclusion whilst a third group either tried to deny it or dismissed the warning.

The word 'die' was shocking and powerful for some as it evoked unwelcome thoughts of death, mortality and dying (SE, FR, IT, DE, MT, ES, HU).

*"Nobody wants to die young." (Sweden, ex-smoker, 16, female)*

'Younger' was also an impactful word for some (BE, MT, ES).

*"'Prematurely' means earlier than average, thus [you live] less long than other people." (Belgium, non-smoker, 15, female)*

The warning was viewed as particularly effective by those who had friends or family who had died prematurely (SK, ES). Others talked about how they wanted to get the most out of life and to live as long as possible (ES, AT).

*"It has a great impact on me because I love life and I am very afraid of death. If I could live to 80 but, because of smoking, died at 70, that would be terrible. I want to live to my maximum age." (Spain, established, 17, female)*

*"I consider this warning label as very effective. One starts to think, how young...?" (Austria, ex-smoker, 16, male)*

A few respondents mentioned that they liked the brevity of the message (DK, NL, RO).

*"This one is great, it is fresh and hip, it sounds good in my ears, just the way it should be. And it's a fact." (Denmark, established, 27, female).*

*"Yes, I know this message. I think this is the most popular. It is short and anyone can recall it. It is good as warning. It is targeting the people up to 40 years. It doesn't apply for those aged 50 years and over." (Romania, ambivalent smoker, 15, female)*

Nevertheless, this warning made less impact on some respondents because there is a similar warning already in use ('Smokers die sooner') (AT, RO, NL, IE, PT, EE, CZ) and as a consequence they felt it would not have as much impact as some of the other warnings.

However, many respondents simply denied that the message could be true, using a range of reasons to support their arguments. Firstly, some felt that there are other reasons people die young not just smoking (BE, IT, DE, MT, CY, CZ, SK, SI, FI, UK, EE), such as genetic predisposition, general lifestyle or other illnesses. While others tried to be more philosophical about dying and accepted it as an inevitability (BE, CY, BG, UK, EE).

*"Well, whether you smoke or not, your life will end." (Belgium, ex-smoker, 41, male)*

*"It doesn't bother me. I don't believe that... every single person that smokes will die younger. Everybody I know, when you have those conversations, will say, 'well when it's my time, it's my time,' that kind of attitude. No one will sit there smoking a cigarette and think, 'oh but I'll die a week earlier'." (UK, ambivalent, 43, male)*

Some respondents particularly disliked the implication that all smokers die younger (CZ, FI). They questioned how it was possible to know if someone had died early or not (CZ).

*"What is 'prematurely' anyway? What does it mean? Everyone has their own time: for one person, 70 could be a premature death; another may naturally die at 50. It depends on genetics and on lifestyle. This is too definite and it isn't necessarily true." (Czech Republic, established, 32, female)*

Some challenged the statement because they knew 'very old' people who had smoked all of their lives (IT, RO, LT, CY, SK, BG, IE, LV, SI, FI, UK, EE, ES, DK, HU).

*"I know a man that lived more than 90 years and he was a smoker: I am completely unaffected by this statement [Non mi fa né caldo né freddo], maybe this can touch somebody else!" (Italy, established, 48, male)*

Some felt that this statement was only relevant to heavy smokers and that those who smoke 'a few' cigarettes per day would not be affected (BG, HU).

*"Maybe it is true if you smoke 5 packs per day. But if you smoke several cigarettes, you would not die from this." (Bulgaria, established smoker, 21, female)*

As well as those who tried to deny the truth or relevance of the message, there were a number who rationalised away its impact in other ways. Some, for example, claimed that an early death was preferable to living for a very long time (DE).

*"I don't really want to become so very old. That is terrible when old people go on living or vegetating for ages in an old people's home." (Germany, established, 29, female)*

Some older smokers seemed less concerned by the warning and there were others who claimed that every smoker knows the risks of dying younger when they smoke, but that it is a risk they choose to take (BE, IT, PL).

Finally, some of the younger respondents dealt with the statement on the basis that dying was a distant concept at their age (IT, CZ, IE, FI, UK, HU) and some assumed that they would give up smoking before it had such an impact (CZ).

*"Well young people think they are invincible, even though we're not. I would think that too, to some extent. But I know deep down that it isn't true." (Ireland, established, 18, female)*

There were some specific comments about the content of the message itself:

- Some felt that the word 'younger' was not effective because it was a relative term and so did not necessarily suggest that they would die very young (DE, CY, IE, HU).

*"Younger can also mean that I die at the age of 70." (Germany, established, 15, male).*

*"Maybe if it were something like, 'smokers die at a young age'... because just saying, 'die younger,' this could mean 90 for one person or 50 for another." (Cyprus, ex-smoker, 21, female)*

- Some felt the message was too general to be impactful and motivational (EL, PL) and might be better as part of a wider media campaign than as a cigarette packet warning (LU).
- The lack of specific causes being given for early death made some respondents feel that the statement was too vague and raised doubts in their minds as to whether the statement was valid. They felt the statement should be more precise about why smokers would die younger (LT, CY, SI).

Suggested improvements included:

- Include a picture of an old and wrinkled person who smokes (SE)
- Add 'severe sufferings' (BE)
- Include evidence / statistics to support the claim (SE, DE, RO, EE, HU)

*"I heard that every cigarette you smoke shortens your life by 6 minutes. That's what they should put on it." (Czech Republic, ambivalent, 16, male)*

- Specify the difference in life expectancy between a smoker and non-smoker as this is a tougher warning to counter (IE)

There was a wide range of suggested rephrasings of the warning, many of them related to the phrasing of the translations. Suggestions included:

- 'Smokers die young' (RO)
- 'Smokers die sooner' (CZ)
- 'Smokers' lives tend to be shorter' (CZ)
- 'Smoking will shorten your life' (LV)
- 'Smokers die earlier' (LV)
- 'Smokers die earlier than non-smokers' (LV)
- 'You die younger if you smoke'(DK)
- 'Smokers have a tendency of dying younger' (DK)
- 'Smokers risk dying younger' (DK)

Other suggestions involved combining this warning with elements from others:

- 'Smokers die slowly – but you will suffer from diseases for years' (LV)
- 'Smokers die younger – will you be here for your child?' (IE)
- 'You may not see your grandkids if you smoke' (DK)

In addition, the Latvian respondents suggested making the warnings more personal by using the 'Tu' form of you as opposed to the formal 'Jūs' form.

### Smoking causes wrinkles

***- Men felt this message was for women, however women felt that smoking is no more impactful than ageing and there are treatments available to counteract both -***

Some felt that this statement would have an impact since it concerned visual appearance, something about which people, particularly women, are concerned (AT, BE, PL, LT, CY, BG, IE, EE, DK).

*"Yes, this warning label would have an effect on me. It is very deterrent for me, when I notice elderly ladies, whose looks shows their long-time cigarette smoking. They were the most effective warning examples for me in order to quit smoking!" (Austria, ex-smoker, 24, female)*

*"Now that I think about it, I have not seen this... but this would actually have an impact on me... Even my boyfriend tells me... let's see how you*

*will be when you are 30. This actually bothers me. Women would be impacted by this; for men, wrinkles mean charm!" (Cyprus, established, 17, female)*

*"I would definitely put it on the package, I think everyone knows that if you look at a person who has smoked for years and years and at a person who has not smoked for years then the difference is very noticeable... Maybe you should put an image on the package; a picture and that text." (Estonia, ex-smoker, female, 30)*

Most men felt this warning was addressed to women since men are not concerned about wrinkles. As a result they felt the warning had no relevance to them (SE, BE, IT, LU, RO, LT, CY, CZ, NL, IE, SI, UK, HU).

*"Well, it is cosmetic, it doesn't matter if I have wrinkles, I will age regardless." (Sweden, ambivalent, 29, male)*

*"Men don't care enough about it. This is certainly aimed at women." (Belgium, ambivalent smoker, 22, male)*

A single Hungarian man was the only exception amongst the male respondents, acknowledging personal concern about the warning.

This message resonated strongly among women with personal experience of this problem (IT, CY, BG, NL, IE, SI, EE) and, for some, it had been their reason for stopping smoking. Wrinkles caused by smoking are believed to be a more common problem than some of the diseases referred to in the other warnings, since more respondents knew people with smoking related wrinkles and so the message was felt to be relevant to a wider audience (DE). In particular, those most concerned with their appearance were most impacted; those from higher incomes and middle aged women (DE, ES).

*"Maybe when I was a teenager I did not perceive this as a problem, but now that I am 30, I start seeing the difference." (Italy, ambivalent, 33, female).*

*"That was one of the reasons to stop smoking. It affects the skin a lot. You can always guess who is a smoker and who is not." (Bulgaria, ex-smoker, 41, female)*

However, others dealt with the relationship between wrinkles and smoking in ways that allowed them to maintain that the message was insufficiently motivating to make them stop smoking. One widespread argument was that wrinkles are an unavoidable fact of ageing and result from a range of factors. Those putting forward this point of view saw smoking as far less impactful than the general effects of ageing (IT, LU, RO, LT, CZ, NL, IE, LV, SI, EE, ES).

*"I already have all my wrinkles, it does not have any effect on me!" (Italy, ex-smoker, 53, female)*

Some respondents felt that, even if smoking did increase wrinkles, people could counteract or remedy the effects with creams / lotions, Botox or surgery. As a

consequence they did not feel that this warning would be especially impactful (BE, MT, RO, CZ, SK, BG, NL, PT, SI, ES, HU).

*"This warning wouldn't make me stop and think. You get one of those creams or a shot of Botox and the problem is resolved. When I think how irritated I get when I don't have my cigarette... Well, I would rather invest more money in a good-quality cream and stay calm." (Czech Republic, established smoker, 16, female)*

Some questioned whether smoking actually contributed to wrinkles (CZ, IT, SK, SI) and some felt that yellowing and drying of the skin was more of a problem (IT, SK, LV). However, even these problems were not thought to be 'insurmountable'.

Amongst the of the younger respondents some expressed the view that this message would not have any impact on them because they felt they were young and still had time to take care of their looks if they wanted to (BE, UK). Finally, some occasional smokers felt they would be unaffected, assuming that this warning applied to heavy smokers only (HU)

Some respondents expressed the view that this warning was 'superficial', particularly in comparison with some of the other warnings which were considered to be much more 'serious' as they related to core health issues (FR, LU, EL, NL, FI, ES, HU) whilst wrinkles are not life threatening (LT, LV).

*"Compared to the others that we have seen so far it is a bit ridiculous as a warning." (France, established, 23, male)*

*"What does it matter if you have some wrinkles? More important is to inform about some real harm that has an effect on health or the quality of life." (Finland, established, 31, male)*

The main targets for this warning were perceived to be:

- Women (SE, BE, IT, LU, MT, PL, RO, LT, CY, SK, BG, IE, LV, SI, UK, EE, HU)
- Particularly women concerned with their external appearance (LT, CY, CZ, PT, HU)
- People concerned about their appearance (MT, LV)
- Teenagers (LV)
- It was even suggested that the warning should only be included on the brands of cigarettes which women smoke as the message appears to be targeting women (MT)

Suggested amendments included:

- Include a visual / picture of a smoker and a non-smoker to show the effect (BE, LU, MT, IE, EE)

- Make the wording more general to appeal to men and women – 'Smoking makes you look older' (BE)
- Some Danish respondents suggested shortening the statement to 'Smoking causes wrinkles' but others would opt for a more direct approach; 'Smoking gives you wrinkles'

As wrinkles are a natural part of aging, many of the suggestions involved increase the impact of the message:

- 'Smoking causes wrinkles earlier' (SE)
- 'Smoking accelerates aging' (RO)
- Mention premature skin ageing since women are alarmed by the word 'ageing' (CY)
- 'Smoking causes ageing of the skin' (the current version in CZ) is felt to be more powerful and appropriate
- 'Smoking causes premature ageing of the skin' (ES)
- 'Smoking causes premature ageing / wrinkling of the skin' (IE)
- Talk about tobacco's negative impact on the overall health of the skin (IE)

### **Tobacco smoke contains highly toxic chemicals**

***- Many want clarity on what toxins are in tobacco smoke, although they don't believe this in itself would be motivating to quit -***

Overall, most respondents did not think this message would motivate them to give up smoking. The message appears to be too general; for the statement to be motivating they feel some specific impact on their health needs to be stated. For example, some respondents wanted to be told the effects of the chemicals (SE, IT, DE, PL, RO, LT, CY, LV, ES, HU, FI), there is no deterrent unless they know the effect.

*"It does not say what chemicals do to people who smoke." (Sweden, ex-smoker, 29, male)*

*"We know it. Everyone knows it. This is too general. It should be described more thoroughly what cyanides are and what they do or that the hot smoke can deflate the lung bladders. And there are 200 chemicals in it at least that are harmful. It cannot be elaborated on a cigarette pack." (Hungary, ambivalent, 48, male)*

Others wanted more clarity as to the actual toxins that tobacco smoke contains (SE, BE, FR, PL, LT, CY, CZ, IE, PT, FI, UK, EE, DK, SI).

*"There should be a scheme on the package like the one that was in the schools where you could see exactly what is in a cigarette. This was frightening, at that time I did not smoke yet and I did not develop any appetite after seeing the picture. Younger people who mustn't smoke do not go deeply into the message but look at the picture and it influences them better" (Estonia, ambivalent, female, 18)*

There were mixed views on the use of specific names, some thought naming the various harmful substances would have a powerful effect, even if people did not know what the chemicals were (CZ). Others disagreed, questioned the value of including a list of chemicals that people did not know or recognise (CY).

However, there were a few amongst those who felt the message was not motivating, who admitted that it was thought provoking (DE).

*"It prompts you to think about what other toxic substances they contain."  
(Germany, ex-smoker, 57, female)*

The use of the words 'toxic' and 'chemical' had an impact on some respondents (BE, PL, CZ, IE, FI, ES). These words communicated that smoking was harmful and destructive to health (BE, PL). However, some thought that 'toxic' had been overused in recent years (they cited examples such as toxic relationships and toxic debts) and so they felt that 'poisonous' might be a more powerful alternative (IE).

*"There's 'chemical' and 'toxic' in it, two scary words." (Belgium, ambivalent, 22, male)*

*"This is good. When I started to smoke I did not know that the smoke contains so many toxic substances and is so harmful to health. This is more of an informing inscription. I think it would really help. Toxic chemicals; this sounds really tasteless... I think it would affect both women and men." (Poland, ambivalent, 27, male).*

Some respondents liked the simplicity of this message in that it does not contain any technical chemical terms and so they thought it was effective (AT).

Some respondents simply rejected the warning outright. As with some of the other warnings tested the reasons given varied. Some feel that there are many toxic chemicals in the air and in everyday products and that those in cigarettes are simply part of the wide range of chemicals people are exposed to (IT, RO, LT, CY, CZ, SK, LV, SI, ES, HU).

*"Why should I worry about those included in the cigarettes? Now food, milk, mozzarella are all becoming toxic, at least with smoke you know it in advance!" (Italy, ex-smoker, 53, female)*

Other specific arguments for rejecting this warning included:

- The assumption that the warning is only referring to nicotine and tar, which some feel are not that very since the levels in cigarettes are relatively low (IT)
- Others claimed they were not concerned because they believed that each cigarette contained only trace amounts of these toxic chemicals (CZ)
- Tobacco is a natural product and so some could not believe it was toxic (SK)

- Some felt that tobacco could not be 'highly' toxic because otherwise the tobacco trade would be prohibited by law (RO, BG, IE)

*"Highly toxic is too much. 'Harmful,' that could be, but if they were highly toxic, the cigarettes would be forbidden." (Bulgaria, established, 46, female)*

- Finally, some respondents expressed the view that cigarettes are already harmful irrespective of the toxic chemicals (SI) and others simply choose to smoke regardless of the presence of toxic chemicals, seeing them as part of the 'package' (IT, EE)

*"It is like there are E-substances in cookies." (Estonia, ambivalent, 39, male)*

Many respondents claimed to have heard this message before (SE, BE, FR, LU, EL, MT, PL, CY, BG, NL, IE, PT, LV, UK, ES, HU, DK) and, as a consequence, they found the warning ineffectual.

*"There are other warnings that have greater impact on me than this have. You have heard about it too many times." (Sweden, established, 15, male)*

*"Yes, I know there are bad things but this wouldn't make me want to stop." (The Netherlands, established, 47, female)*

*"Everyone already knows that... they'll look at that but just think, oh well, but everyone else is." (UK, ambivalent, 17, male)*

In its reference to tobacco smoke, some thought that this message referred primarily to passive smoking (IE, ES), which weakened the message for some smokers since it implied the message was directed at the passive smoker.

There was some confusion among respondents in Bulgaria about the meaning of the word 'toxic' (BG).

*"This is so confusing, that nobody would read it. What does toxic mean? Probably poisonous?" (Bulgaria, non-smoker, 15, female)*

In Slovakia the translated warning was seven words long, leading to the proposal that the warning be changed to 'Tobacco smoke contains toxic substances,' reducing the number of words.

Suggested improvements to this warning included:

- Adding the image of a skull (SE) or a 'toxic' logo (BE)
- Add a list of the chemicals and toxins contained in cigarettes to increase the impact - 'When smoking you consume x, y and z' (BE)
- Include data / statistics (PL)
- Provide a website link for more information

*"If this appears on tobacco packs there should be a link to a video on YouTube in which one can see that the details. I think that link might have an impact on many. To see what may happen to your lungs because of this." (Romania, ambivalent, 27, male)*

- Explain the impact the chemicals have on people: for example, 'Tobacco smoke contains toxic chemicals which may affect your health' (RO) and 'Tobacco smoke contains the substance x which affects the organ y in such and such a way' (LV)
- The warning needs to convey that these toxic chemicals 'settle and stay in your lungs' (LT)

## 5 MOST POWERFUL / PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

Once respondents had been shown all 24 of the possible health warnings they were then asked to identify which they felt were likely to be the most effective in making people consider not taking up or stopping smoking. Respondents were given the opportunity to choose as few or as many of the possible health warnings as they wanted. They were also asked to identify those warnings which they felt would be least effective.

A summary of the answers provided by the respondents is given in the following tables.

## 5.1 Most effective according to respondents

Most effective	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	Total
12. Smoking can kill your unborn child	6	1	8	8	9	7	2	6	3	8	4	7	7	1	7	8	6	5	4	6	6	5	8	7	6	5	5	155
1. Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers	7	5	7	6	7	8	5	5	6	8	4	5	5	4	4	8	3	0	7	6	6	5	4	8	7	8	4	152
2. Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer	10	2	6	6	6	4	4	6	2	8	3	4	7	5	7	9	4	3	3	6	3	7	2	7	3	5	5	137
5. Smoking destroys your lungs	7	2	8	6	2	3	5	7	2	6	3	3	2	4	7	2	4	3	3	4	2	3	5	5	8	4	1	111
15. Quit now – stay alive for your children	4	5	6	4	6	5	1	4	2	6	2	5	6	5	2	5	1	5	3	0	5	3	3	5	1	6	4	104
3. Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer	8	1	4	7	3	5	1	4	4	3	1	2	4	4	4	9	2	4	2	3	4	3	2	7	5	3	4	103
7. Smoking causes heart attacks	5	2	6	4	3	5	3	5	3	7	1	4	4	2	5	5	5	3	3	1	3	4	4	3	3	4	1	98
13. Your smoke harms your children, family and friends	6	4	2	2	5	3	2	3	2	2	2	4	5	4	2	4	2	1	1	5	8	6	3	6	7	5	2	98
18. Smoking makes it harder to have children	2	2	3	3	3	8	2	3	3	5	2	3	5	3	5	4	0	3	0	4	6	4	3	2	3	6	4	91
8. Smoking causes strokes and severe disability	7	3	8	2	3	4	3	4	2	4	0	3	3	6	3	4	2	3	2	2	3	7	1	5	3	1	2	90
4. Smoking causes leukaemia	9	0	4	8	5	5	1	4	2	3	0	1	5	2	5	5	0	3	4	3	2	4	2	1	4	2	3	87
11. Smoking causes rotten teeth and gums	4	1	3	2	5	4	2	7	2	2	6	1	1	5	4	1	5	3	1	4	1	3	0	5	1	6	5	84
19. Smoking reduces your sexual performance	3	2	2	3	4	6	3	6	1	2	2	2	4	3	4	2	1	2	3	3	4	4	1	2	2	5	2	78
22. Smokers die younger	3	2	1	4	3	4	2	5	2	6	1	5	1	4	2	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	3	3	5	4	0	76
20. Smoking is severely addictive - don't start	2	1	6	2	3	5	4	1	2	1	1	5	3	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	2	0	4	4	4	4	74
14. If you smoke, your children will smoke	2	1	5	5	3	5	2	2	3	4	4	3	1	1	0	4	1	2	1	1	5	5	3	3	2	3	2	73
6. Smoking causes suffocating breathlessness for life	6	4	2	3	2	2	4	2	0	5	0	5	4	1	3	2	2	1	0	2	2	4	2	2	3	5	0	68
21. Smoking reduces your sports performance	5	0	2	4	1	1	4	3	4	2	2	3	1	1	5	0	1	2	1	3	3	3	2	4	3	6	2	68
9. Smoking causes leg amputations	8	0	4	5	4	3	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	1	4	1	0	1	2	3	0	2	1	5	63
10. Smoking causes blindness	2	2	3	3	1	4	1	4	1	2	5	2	2	2	4	1	0	3	3	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	5	61
16. Stop smoking now - your health benefits immediately	4	3	3	3	4	7	2	5	0	0	3	2	3	3	0	0	2	3	0	3	0	1	1	4	1	4	0	61
17. Get professional help – it makes it easier to quit	0	5	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	1	3	3	1	3	1	5	0	2	1	0	4	3	1	2	2	4	0	57
23. Smoking causes wrinkles	2	3	3	3	1	4	3	4	1	0	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	54
24. Tobacco smoke contains highly toxic chemicals	4	2	1	0	1	4	1	4	1	1	1	4	1	5	2	2	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	3	2	0	0	50

## 5.2 Least effective according to respondents

Least effective	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	Total
23. Smoking causes wrinkles	7	5	2	5	7	6	1	5	7	10	0	7	6	5	5	6	2	4	4	5	2	9	4	9	7	2	1	133
10. Smoking causes blindness	5	3	3	5	5	6	1	6	3	6	3	7	4	5	5	6	5	2	1	4	3	7	5	9	8	3	0	120
9. Smoking causes leg amputations	1	5	2	4	3	6	2	7	3	8	6	6	6	3	6	4	5	0	3	6	1	7	3	9	7	3	2	118
17. Get professional help – it makes it easier to quit	10	2	4	8	4	7	2	8	1	9	4	2	5	3	6	3	2	4	1	3	3	7	0	7	6	1	2	114
14. If you smoke, your children will smoke	6	2	2	5	5	4	2	8	2	5	2	2	8	4	8	5	6	1	0	4	0	5	1	7	6	3	3	106
16. Stop smoking now - your health benefits immediately	4	2	0	4	4	3	1	4	1	9	1	4	6	3	4	9	1	4	2	5	3	9	2	7	7	0	1	100
21. Smoking reduces your sports performance	5	2	2	5	3	9	1	7	1	8	2	2	3	3	2	8	4	2	2	2	2	7	0	5	5	0	3	95
24. Tobacco smoke contains highly toxic chemicals	3	1	3	6	4	6	2	6	1	9	2	3	3	1	5	2	3	1	4	3	1	7	2	6	5	2	4	95
20. Smoking is severely addictive - don't start	8	2	1	7	3	5	0	7	0	8	1	1	6	3	5	4	2	2	4	2	2	8	0	4	6	2	1	94
11. Smoking causes rotten teeth and gums	6	2	0	7	2	6	1	3	5	8	1	4	4	0	4	3	0	1	4	1	3	7	1	5	8	0	0	86
22. Smokers die younger	3	2	2	6	3	5	2	4	2	3	1	1	4	1	4	5	4	1	2	2	5	7	1	7	3	0	2	82
19. Smoking reduces your sexual performance	5	0	1	7	4	3	0	3	2	7	0	4	3	4	2	0	2	3	2	1	1	6	1	7	5	1	2	76
6. Smoking causes suffocating breathlessness for life	2	0	2	7	3	7	0	7	0	4	2	0	2	3	2	0	2	2	0	3	1	5	3	8	5	2	1	73
15. Quit now – stay alive for your children	5	0	1	5	0	5	1	5	0	5	2	1	1	0	5	6	4	0	0	2	2	7	1	5	8	1	0	72
18. Smoking makes it harder to have children	4	1	0	7	4	3	0	6	1	5	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	4	0	1	6	0	7	4	0	1	70
4. Smoking causes leukaemia	0	2	0	2	4	4	0	4	2	6	4	1	2	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	6	1	9	4	2	1	64
8. Smoking causes strokes and severe disability	3	0	0	7	1	5	1	4	0	5	6	1	1	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	3	2	4	3	2	3	60
13. Your smoke harms your children, family and friends	3	2	0	7	0	5	1	6	1	7	1	1	1	0	3	2	1	3	2	0	0	4	1	4	3	1	0	59
5. Smoking destroys your lungs	3	1	0	5	4	6	0	3	1	3	1	3	3	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	7	0	5	1	1	2	56
3. Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer	1	2	0	2	3	5	0	6	3	7	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	0	7	1	3	3	1	0	55
7. Smoking causes heart attacks	3	1	0	4	3	5	0	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	7	5	1	1	55
1. Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	5	0	1	0	0	3	1	2	2	3	3	1	0	1	5	1	2	3	0	0	39
2. Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer	0	1	0	4	3	6	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	3	2	3	5	1	0	39
12. Smoking can kill your unborn child	1	1	0	1	0	3	1	4	2	1	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	5	0	3	2	1	1	35

### **5.3 National researchers recommended fourteen**

In each country the researchers responsible for conducting the interviews and analysing the findings compiled a recommendation of which set of health warnings they felt would be most effective in their country, based on the explicit views expressed by respondents and their own analysis of the responses to each warning.

The table below indicates the fourteen statements recommended by the researchers in each Member State and summarises the number of times each statement was included as part of a suggested shortlist. Following this table we provide our recommendations based on the overall analysis at an EU27 level, taking into account local recommendations and the full analysis of the findings reported above.

"Tobacco Packaging Health Warning Labels" – Aggregate Report

Country recommendation	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	Total
1. Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	26
7. Smoking causes heart attacks	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	26
12. Smoking can kill your unborn child	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	25
2. Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	24
3. Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer	1	1	1	1				1	1	1			1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	20	
18. Smoking makes it harder to have children			1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1	20
13. Your smoke harms your children, family and friends	1	1			1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1		19
15. Quit now – stay alive for your children		1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1		1		1	1		1	1	19
8. Smoking causes strokes and severe disability	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1			1	1	1		1	1		1	1			18
5. Smoking destroys your lungs	1		1				1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1			1	1	1			17
19. Smoking reduces your sexual performance		1		1	1	1	1	1	1				1		1			1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	17
11. Smoking causes rotten teeth and gums	1		1		1	1	1	1			1			1	1		1	1		1				1		1	1	15
22. Smokers die younger					1	1	1			1	1	1		1	1			1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	15
4. Smoking causes leukaemia	1		1	1				1	1	1			1	1	1	1			1	1			1	1				14
21. Smoking reduces your sports performance	1			1			1		1		1				1		1		1	1			1	1	1	1	1	14
16. Stop smoking now - your health benefits immediately	1	1			1	1		1				1	1	1			1	1		1				1		1		13
6. Smoking causes suffocating breathlessness for life	1	1		1			1			1		1	1				1					1			1	1	1	12
14. If you smoke, your children will smoke			1	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1							1		1						11
20. Smoking is severely addictive - don't start			1				1				1						1	1	1	1	1				1		1	10
24. Tobacco smoke contains highly toxic chemicals		1			1	1		1						1	1	1	1					1			1			10
9. Smoking causes leg amputations	1			1					1	1					1	1					1		1			1		9
17. Get professional help – it makes it easier to quit		1			1				1		1	1				1						1		1		1		9
23. Smoking causes wrinkles		1	1			1	1								1	1		1			1							8
10. Smoking causes blindness				1						1	1					1			1		1					1		7

## 5.4 Conclusions

In order to provide a final recommended shortlist of fourteen health warnings we need to take into account a range of factors:

- The observed reactions of respondents when first shown the warnings;
- Their explicit comments about each warning;
- Their views on which warnings are likely to be most and least impactful and, importantly, their rationale for these views;
- The views of the local researchers in compiling shortlists on a Member State basis (but bearing in mind that, with only ten interviews on which to base their comments, there may be patterns which can only be seen at the aggregate level).

Taking all these factors into account we can identify some key themes which inform our recommendations for the shortlist.

One of the strongest themes to emerge in respondents' evaluations of effectiveness was that those warnings which included **any mention of cancer** or a link to another generally acknowledged **severe or life threatening condition** were generally deemed to be very effective. On this basis, there are six warnings which we believe should be included in the final shortlist:

- Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers (1)
- Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer (2)
- Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer (3)
- Smoking destroys your lungs (5)
- Smoking causes heart attacks (7)
- Smoking causes strokes and severe disability (8)

These six warnings also include examples of three of the other strong themes which respondents deem to make warnings the most effective: **relevance to a broad audience** (arguably applicable to all the above with the exception of 3); the **inclusion of 'statistics'** (true of 1 and 3); an **'obvious' direct connection** with smoking (1, 2 and 5).

Another strong theme to emerge, both during the discussion about the warnings and in respondents' selections of the most effective warnings, was that any warnings which mention potential **harm to or impact on**

**children** are likely to be effective. On this basis, a further four warnings can be added to the recommended shortlist:

- Smoking can kill your unborn child (12)
- Your smoke harms your children, family and friends (13)
- Quit now – stay alive for your children (15)
- If you smoke, your children will smoke (14)

Of the ten warnings so far identified for inclusion on the shortlist, all but one are amongst those which were selected as 'most effective' by at least a third of all respondents (see section 5.1). The exception is the last one listed above – If you smoke, your children will smoke (14) – which was more likely to be selected as one of the least effective. However, a review of the responses to this warning and the rationale for its being classed as relatively ineffective shows that, in many cases, people were rejecting the warning because they did not want to believe it; if it were true they would find it discomforting and, as a result, a genuine smoking deterrent.

In the analysis of the interviews it became clear that those warnings which **contain new or previously unknown information** about the risks of smoking tend to have a high initial impact. However, as with warning 14, such new information can also serve to make the warnings contentious. Some respondents will try and deny the existence of the claimed link or underplay smoking's significance as a causal factor. As a result, they will classify such warnings as of low effectiveness. Despite this and because of their clear ability to shock and disturb, the following two warnings are included in the recommended shortlist:

- Smoking causes leg amputations (9)
- Smoking causes blindness (10)

The final two warnings in the shortlist are included primarily because they are likely to be **disproportionately effective amongst younger respondents** although they also meet some of the other criteria already discussed. They are also among the 14 warnings identified as potentially most effective by respondents and local researchers:

- Smoking makes it harder to have children (18)
- Smoking reduces your sexual performance (19)

On this basis, therefore, our final recommended shortlist of health warnings is:

- Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers (1)
- Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer (2)
- Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer (3)
- Smoking destroys your lungs (5)

- Smoking causes heart attacks (7)
- Smoking causes strokes and severe disability (8)
- Smoking causes leg amputations (9)
- Smoking causes blindness (10)
- Smoking can kill your unborn child (12)
- Your smoke harms your children, family and friends (13)
- If you smoke, your children will smoke (14)
- Quit now – stay alive for your children (15)
- Smoking makes it harder to have children (18)
- Smoking reduces your sexual performance (19)

As already noted, three warnings in particular (9, 10 and 14) tended to receive 'denial' reactions from many respondents. As a result we recommend that, should they be adopted, they are supported by wider campaigns to raise awareness of the links between smoking and these risks.

Since providing such educational and informational programmes would be a significant and costly exercise we recognise that it may not be immediately feasible to implement this recommendation. Should this prove to be the case we would still recommend including warning (14) but replacing warnings (9) and (10) with two alternatives, neither of which would require the same level of immediate educational and informational support:

- Smoking causes leukaemia (4)
- Smokers die younger (22)

## ANNEX

### QUALITATIVE EUROBAROMETER – TOBACCO HEALTH WARNINGS IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE

*This qualitative discussion guide is intended to assist the interviewer in conducting the in-depth discussion, providing them with guidance on the topics to be discussed as well as suggested prompts and probes. As with all qualitative discussion guides it is not intended to be a definitive list of questions but provides a clear agenda for the interviews.*

*The guide will be supported by a detailed briefing via 6dTV, when interviewers will be given further guidance on the project objectives and the key issues to be explored during the study.*

**Note to moderators:** *the overall objectives of this study are to evaluate the proposed options for the next generation of tobacco packaging health warnings. There are 24 warnings to be tested and the main objectives are:*

*1) To evaluate each message to establish its likely impact amongst the target audiences.*

*2) To establish which of the warnings are likely to be most effective – it is intended to reduce the final set of warnings from 24 to 14.*

#### 1) Introduction (5 minutes)

*The primary aims of this section of the discussion are for the moderator to introduce the study, to get to know the respondent and to begin to build a rapport with them. This section will also provide us with initial factual information about the respondent's situation and circumstances as a context for the discussion.*

##### Moderator

- Introduce self
- TNS Qual+ / local institute
- Independent
- Impartial

##### Process

- Confidentiality
- Open discussion
- No right or wrong answers
- Audio-recording

##### Subject

- Smoking and tobacco packaging health warnings

Respondent

- General introduction
- Personal situation (married/single, children etc.)
- Occupation
- Hobbies and interests

**2) Smoking history (10 minutes)**

*This section is primarily intended to introduce the subject of smoking, allow us to understand the respondent's smoking history and to establish their general views and attitudes to smoking, whether they have ever tried to stop etc. Some of the basic information will have been gathered at the recruitment stage but we are now interested in gaining a deeper understanding which will assist in our analysis and interpretation of later responses.*

INTERVIEWER: SINCE OUR RESPONDENTS ARE A MIX OF SMOKERS AND EX-SMOKERS (AND SOME 'NEVER SMOKERS' IN THE 15-17 AGE GROUP) YOU WILL NEED TO ADAPT SOME QUESTIONS ACCORDINGLY

ASK 15-17 YEAR OLDS:

Have you ever smoked

ASK THOSE 15-17 YEAR-OLDS WHO HAVE NEVER SMOKED:

Has any-one ever offered you a cigarette (or other kind of tobacco to smoke)

- Why did you decide not to take it
- How hard was it to refuse

Would you ever consider smoking

- Why (not)
- What things are most likely to stop you smoking
- What things (if any) might make you think about starting

ASK ALL OVER 18 AND UNDER 18s WHO HAVE EVER SMOKED:

When did you first start smoking

- How old were you
- What made you start

Have you ever tried to give up

- How often have you tried
- How successful were you

What things are most likely to make you want to stop from smoking

- Why

What things are likely to make you start smoking again if you do give up

- Why

ASK ALL CURRENT SMOKERS:

How much do you currently smoke

- Does the amount you smoke differ on different days or in different places
- Why / how

### **3) Recall of and attitudes to health warnings (10 minutes)**

*This section will provide us with an understanding of the respondent's view about the current health warnings on tobacco packaging. This is our third section of context setting and will provide the final perspective to assist in our analysis and interpretation of responses to the proposed new health warnings.*

How conscious are you of the health warnings on tobacco packaging

- Do you notice them
- When / where

Do the health warnings have any impact on you

- How do you feel when you notice them
- Do you think about them

Which specific health warnings can you recall

- Why do you think these are the ones you remember
- Are there others that you remember less well
- Why

What do you think of such health warnings

- Are they appropriate
- Are they necessary
- Are they effective

### **4) Evaluation of possible new health warnings (25 minutes)**

*In this section we will present the respondent with each of the new health warnings in turn and, firstly, observe their reactions to the warning then ask them what they think of it. It should be noted that, although we are asking directly whether a statement would have an impact on the respondent themselves, for this type of subject a mix of inference and observation is a far more effective way to establish this than direct questioning (although the answers they give will be taken into account).*

INTERVIEWER: IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT ALL WARNINGS ARE GIVEN EQUAL EXPOSURE IN THE STUDY, PLEASE FOLLOW THE ROTATION BELOW CAREFULLY.

Countries	AT, FR, LU, ES	BE, DE, MT, SE	BG, EL, NL, UK	CY, HU, PL	CZ, IE, PT	DK, IT, RO	EE, LV, SK	FI, LT, SI
Rotation of cards for interviews 1-5	1-6; 7-12; 13-18; 19-24	7-12; 19-24; 1-6; 13-18	13-18; 18; 1-6; 19-24; 7-12	19-24; 13-18; 18; 7-12; 1-6	19-24; 24; 7-12; 13-18; 18; 1-6	13-18; 18; 19-24; 24; 1-6; 7-12	7-12; 1-6; 9-24; 13-18	1-6; 13-18; 18; 7-12; 19-24
Rotation of cards for interviews 6-10	19-24; 7-12; 13-18; 18; 1-6	13-18; 18; 19-24; 24; 1-6; 7-12	7-12; 1-6; 9-24; 13-18	1-6; 13-18; 18; 7-12; 19-24	1-6; 7-12; 13-18; 18; 19-24	7-12; 19-24; 24; 1-6; 13-18	13-18; 18; 1-6; 19-24; 24; 7-12	19-24; 13-18; 18; 7-12; 1-6

CARDS CAN BE SHOWN RANDOMLY WITHIN EACH 6 CARD GROUP IF DESIRED:

SHOW EACH CARD TO RESPONDENT IN TURN (IN THE ORDER SHOWN ABOVE). IN EACH CASE:

- FIRST NOTE THEIR IMMEDIATE REACTION, WITHOUT ASKING ANYTHING (WE HAVE INCLUDED A RECORDING SHEET)
- THEN ASK THE QUESTIONS BELOW

What do you think of this warning

- Why

Do you think it would have an impact

- Why (not)

Would it affect you

- Do you think it would affect other people
- Who
- Why

What, if anything, could be changed to increase its impact

### 5) Most powerful / persuasive messages (10 minutes)

*Once all the health warnings have been shown, we will ask the respondent to identify which ones they feel are the most effective. In our analysis we will take all three elements into account in assessing the likely effectiveness of each statement.*

ONCE ALL 24 CARDS HAVE BEEN SHOWN, GIVE RESPONDENT ALL THE CARDS AND ASK THEM TO SELECT THE ONES THEY FEEL ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE

Why have you chosen these warnings

- What is it that makes them particularly effective
- Why would they work better than some of the others

IF TIME PERMITS ALSO ASK RESPONDENT TO SELECT THE CARDS THEY FEEL ARE LEAST LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE

Why have you chosen these warnings

- What is it that makes them particularly ineffective
- Why would they work less well than some of the others

## **6) Closing remarks (2 minutes)**

*This final section will provide an opportunity for any final comments from the respondent.*

Is there anything else you would like to add

- Anything relevant that we haven't discussed

Thank respondent and close interview

**REACTION RECORDING SHEET (SECTION 4)**

MODERATOR: THIS SHEET IS INTENDED TO ASSIST YOU IN QUICKLY RECORDING INITIAL REACTIONS TO EACH HEALTH WARNING.

WE SUGGEST YOU DEVELOP A NUMERIC SYSTEM TO CODE REACTIONS AS THE PROJECT PROGRESS.

WE HAVE INCLUDED SOME SUGGESTIONS BELOW TO INDICATE THE SORT OF THING WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

- 1 = discomfort / unsettled (*e.g. winces, looks uncomfortable etc.*)
- 2 = dismissive / denial (*shakes head, sneers etc.*)
- 3 = angry (*frowns, verbalises etc.*)
- 4 = surprised / taken-aback (*intake of breath, raised eyebrows etc.*)
- 5 = uninterested (*no obvious reaction*)
- 6 = etc.

Card	Reaction	Card	Reaction	Card	Reaction	Card	Reaction
1		7		13		19	
2		8		14		20	
3		9		15		21	
4		10		16		22	
5		11		17		23	
6		12		18		24	