Question for written answer E-000250/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Use of EU funds for studies that encroach on Member States' competencies

The Commission recently admitted that the revised Council Recommendation on smoke- and aerosol-free environments[1] is a non-binding instrument and that 'the competence of introducing smoking bans and bans against the use of emerging products in public places, rests with the Member States, at national level'.

While the goal of protecting public health is undoubtedly important, the use of taxpayers' money to fund EU activities that encroach on Member States' competencies raises serious concerns – even more so as the Commission is considering revising Directive 2011/64/EU on the minimum rates applicable to tobacco products at the national level[2].

1. How much money has the Commission spent on the consulting contract used for the study on smoke-free environments and advertising of tobacco and related products?

2. Can it estimate how much time and EU money was spent in drafting the Commission staff working document that accompanied the proposal to revise the Council Recommendation on smoke- and aerosol-free environments?

3. How much money has the Commission spent on contracts for the studies conducted by the economic consulting firm Economisti Associati on the taxation of tobacco products (namely, the studies carried out in 2017 and 2019, and the 2021 and 2025 impact analyses of the review of tobacco excise duty rules, which was commissioned by the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union)?

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[1] Council Recommendation of 3 December 2024 on smoke- and aerosol-free environments replacing Council Recommendation 2009/C 296/02 (OJ C, C/2024/7425, 12.12.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/7425/oj).

[2] Council Directive 2011/64/EU of 21 June 2011 on the structure and rates of excise duty applied to manufactured tobacco (OJ L 176, 5.7.2011, p. 24, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2011/64/oj).