

# Europe and electronic cigarettes

1 June 2013

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France [said on Friday](#) it would apply the same bans to electronic cigarettes as it does to tobacco but would not completely outlaw the popular smokeless product.

Below is an outline of the situation in other [European countries](#):

- BELGIUM: Since September 2012, electronic cigarettes have been banned in places where smoking is banned, notably restaurants and cafes.

- ITALY: The [health ministry](#) in April banned the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors. The Italian medicines agency recently ruled that they should be considered as drugs and should only be sold in pharmacies.

- GERMANY: The sale of electronic cigarettes is allowed but the authorities want them to be considered a drug and to need authorisation to be sold. The sale of electronic cigarettes is banned in shops but consumers get around that by buying them on the Internet.

- AUSTRIA: Inhalers and refills are available in pharmacies, tobacconists and online shops. Capsules containing nicotine are banned in pharmacies and tobacconists but are available online.

- PORTUGAL: Electronic cigarettes do not come under the anti-smoking law and can be used in public places.

- SWITZERLAND: Electronic cigarettes containing [nicotine](#) can not be sold in shops, but there is no [legislation](#) to stop them being sold on the Internet.

- THE [CZECH REPUBLIC](#): The same rules apply as for cigarettes. It is prohibited to use them in places where smoking is banned, to sell them to people under 18 and to promote them as an anti-smoking tool.

- LITHUANIA: Electronic cigarettes are banned.

- LATVIA: Electronic cigarettes are authorised in public places, unlike [tobacco products](#). They are banned for minors.

- SLOVAKIA: There is no difference between legislation on electronic cigarettes and ordinary cigarettes. In addition to rules on selling to minors, advertising and the use of electronic cigarettes in restaurants, schools and hospitals, as well advertising for the cigarette are banned.

- CROATIA: Like for tobacco, it banned to smoke electronic cigarettes in public places. Advertising is banned.

- HUNGARY: Electronic cigarettes are currently sold in tobacconists, kiosks and vendors of travel tickets as well as online. Under a law which is due to come into force in July, they will only be available on the Internet.

- GREECE: In this country of smokers, electronic cigarettes are widely sold.

- SPAIN: Legislation on smoking does not affect electronic cigarettes.

- POLAND: There is no legislation on electronic cigarettes and there is no ban on publicity, unlike for cigarettes.

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