

Balancing Regulation, Innovation, and Access: Experts Debate the Future of Nicotine Products at EVO NXT Milan



The Global Institute for Novel Nicotine (GINN) hosted a pivotal panel at EVO NXT Milan 2025, drawing together leading voices in regulation, public affairs, science, and consumer advocacy to tackle the complex interplay between innovation and regulation in the evolving nicotine landscape. The session, moderated by [Wingle Group's Daria Votnova](#), featured industry experts [Peter Beckett](#) ([Clearing the Air](#)), [Jacobo Truan Aguirre](#) ([EPPA](#)), [Chris Allen](#) ([Broughton](#)), and [Philip Drögemüller](#) ([BfTG Germany](#)).

A Regulatory Crossroads

Kicking off the session, panelists agreed that the EU Tobacco Products Directive (TPD3) arrives at a critical time. While TPD2 led to a fragmented regulatory environment across Europe, TPD3 offers the opportunity—if handled correctly—for harmonization. Philip Drögemüller noted the ripple effects of inconsistent policies, particularly in Germany where higher taxes and flavour bans have unintentionally driven black market activity. “If you do A, you get B,” he said. “Strict regulation without balance fuels illicit trade.”

Flavour Bans: A Misguided Tool?

The panel did not mince words when addressing the rising trend of flavour bans. Jacobo Truan called it “the most absurd regulatory tool,” arguing that these measures are based on misconceptions about youth initiation rather than scientific evidence. Peter Beckett warned of the cultural and political fallout of such bans, stating, “This is how you ignite a culture war.”

Chris Allen echoed concerns over enforceability. “How do you define a flavour ban?” he asked, citing examples of companies circumventing bans through ambiguous product naming. All agreed: banning flavours jeopardizes both innovation and public health goals, pushing consumers toward unregulated alternatives.

Illicit Trade and Cross-Border Conflicts

A recurring theme was the growing risk of illicit trade driven by inconsistent regulations and high taxes. The panel stressed that the EU lacks the enforcement mechanisms to deal with this on a regional level. Beckett argued, “People don’t want to buy vapes out of vans—they do it because those are the only places selling what they need.”

The solution? Smarter, science-based regulation and a more unified EU framework that avoids overly restrictive measures which create enforcement headaches and drive illicit supply chains.

Testing Labs and the Role of Standards

Chris Allen spotlighted testing labs as a bridge between science and policy. “We need harmonized standards across countries. Right now, data collection is inconsistent, and much of it is ignored at the policy level,” he said. He called for basic but universal requirements—such as standardized units and clear data reporting—to make regulations both meaningful and enforceable.

Packaging and Consumer Information

Packaging and labeling emerged as another battleground. Panelists stressed the importance of clear, honest communication rather than plain packaging mandates that stigmatize consumers. “Let manufacturers tell the truth on their packaging,” Beckett said. “This isn’t about gummy bears—it’s about being allowed to say your product is safer than smoking.”

Final Reflections: Get Ready, Speak Up

The panel closed with a call to action. With the EU preparing for consultation on TPD3, now is the time for industry voices, researchers, and advocates to get involved. “Speak up,” said Jacobo Truan. “Be ready. Understand the process and participate. If we don’t, others will shape the narrative.”

Beckett added that small businesses and consumers must continue engaging policymakers with micro-level communications. “That’s how we kept vaping legal in 2013. We need that same energy now.”

 **Watch the full session and stay connected for more insights:**

<https://youtu.be/4ujJtpCKpuw>

 For inquiries or to participate in the TPD3 discussion, contact: info@ginn.global