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Failure of partial smoking bans (in prevention and cessation)

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In 2006 Spain introduced smoking bans exempting small hospitality venues. In 2008 these partial smoking bans were copied to a large extent by the Austrian government. The Spanish government realized that partial bans were difficult to control, failed to protect waiters and helped the tobacco industry to continue seduction of youth in discotheques, bars and pubs. Smoking cessation was not promoted by this legislation and smoking stayed visible in public as normal behavior. Therefore the Spanish tobacco law was changed in 2010, now matching requirements of FCTC and meeting tobacco control standards of Western Europe. Also in Italy, Scandinavia and Turkey total bans have been introduced successfully and the age limit for buying tobacco was raised to 18 years.

In Austria a reactionary policy kept up smoking in most hospitality venues and the tobacco law is weak and not enforced. Tobacco prevention and promotion of non-smoking are virtually non-existent. The age limit for buying tobacco was kept at 16 years, but Austria reached the highest rate of 15 year old smokers in Europe. Employees in the hospitality industry are not protected, not even trainees. We found dangerous exposures to fine and ultrafine particles (correlated to air nicotine) in smoking rooms and adjacent "non-smoking rooms". Results of surveys commissioned by the chamber of commerce are contradicted by results of the Eurobarometer in Austria and by our own research in Vienna. While in Turkey tobacco consumption and smoking prevalence showed a decrease recently, no such trend can be seen in Austria, where the tobacco cartel succeeded to increase business.

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