

72% Say Policy-Making Should be Open to Dialogue with Business

As the WHO Closes its Conference on the Regulation of Tobacco and Reduced-Risk Products, New European Research Shows that Policies Based on Evidence and Dialogue are Needed to Restore Public Trust in Policy-Making

Geneva, October 8, 2018 – As the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) just closed in Geneva, new research commissioned by JTI and conducted in Europe by Populus with Ipsos as fieldwork providers, reveals that the public want regulators to be open to dialogue with business, and that more fairness and credible evidence is needed in policy-making.

The research found that of the 8,473 respondents surveyed across eight European countries, an average of:

- 72% believed that it is either very important or somewhat important that the policy-making process is open to dialogue between governmental authorities and all parties who are potentially impacted by it, including businesses;
- 79% believed that it is either very important or somewhat important that a policy should be introduced based on credible evidence of its effectiveness, instead of a biased assumption it will work.
- 76% would protect the principle of free speech; either actively fighting for the right of someone they disagree with to speak, or passively agreeing with someone they disagree with's right to express their opinion.

Proceedings at the FCTC COP's echo chamber differ hugely from other UN decision-making bodies such as at the UNFCCC on Climate Change, where businesses are an integral part of discussions, and plenary sessions are public. Today's new research shows that the public want politicians and officials to consider all the facts and viewpoints – including from businesses. Ousting one group of companies from giving their views and sharing their expertise contradicts basic democratic principles and is counterproductive.

The same can be said of discussions on harm reduction at COP8 last week. Thanks to innovation and advances in science, JTI offers products that have the potential to reduce risks associated with smoking and the Company would have been well placed to take part in those discussions. Yet, it appears that the FCTC COP still has an obsolete conception of tobacco companies.

“The public are right that all views must be heard,” states Jonathan Duce, Head of External Communications at JTI’s global headquarters in Geneva. “The FCTC COP would have been wise to follow their advice last week, because governments can only make good decisions once they have taken everyone’s views into account. The findings of this research are clear: more must be done by governments around the world to restore public confidence in the regulators who make the rules we all abide by. This research has shone a light on what citizens expect from decision-making and shows that people only want policies if they are supported by credible evidence and proven to be effective.”

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Note to editors

Methodology:

8,473 interviews were conducted online among adults living in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland and UK between September 28 and October 4, 2018. Populus was commissioned by JTI and designed the content and methodology for the research. Ipsos undertook the study on behalf of Populus.

About Populus

Populus is a leading research and strategy consultancy and is a trusted adviser to some of the world’s best-known companies, public bodies and brands. We use polling, research, evidence and expertise to provide clients with the critical knowledge they need to succeed. Populus were named the UK’s fastest growing research agency of 2014 by the Market Research Society, and work with clients across a wide range of industry sectors both in the UK and internationally. Find out more at www.populus.co.uk

**For questions regarding methodology, please contact Ben Lloyd, Deputy Managing Director:
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About JTI

JTI is a leading international tobacco company with operations in more than 130 countries. It is the global owner of both Winston, the number two cigarette brand in the world, and Camel outside the USA and has the largest share in sales for both brands. Other global brands include Mevius and LD. With its internationally recognized brand Logic, JTI is also a major player in the e-cigarette market and has, since 2011, been present in the heated tobacco category with Ploom. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the company employs close to 40,000 people and was awarded Global Top Employer for four consecutive years. JTI is a member of the Japan Tobacco Group of Companies. For more information, visit www.jti.com.

Full research data tables available [here](#).

For more information on JTI's view of FCTC COP, visit <https://www.jti.com/our-views/fctc-cop-different-perspective>.

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