



PROTECTING CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS FROM PUFF-LIKE DISPOSABLE E-CIGARETTE
 Expert consensus on regulation measures within 3 weeks with a newly developed *fast-track Delphi* process

Olivier DUPERRERX*, Camille VELARDE CREZE, Luc LEBON, Vincent FAIVRE, Myriam PASCHE, Jacques CORNUZ - Unisanté, Lausanne, Suisse – olivier.duperrex@unisanté.ch DOI: [10.53738/REVMED.2023.19.812.181](https://doi.org/10.53738/REVMED.2023.19.812.181)

Introduction and objectives

Discreet, single-use and with a high addictive potential, new puff-like disposable electronic cigarettes raise public health concerns.

Four disposable e-cigarettes (arrows), among various pens and highlighters



To support a rapid and informed political decision, we used our new *fast-track Delphi* approach to **develop consensual agreements amongst tobacco control experts** on the following target question:

« What are the aspects on which new puff-like disposable electronic cigarettes should be regulated, and in what way? »

Consensual agreement reached Median ≥ 7 on the 1-9 Likert scale (*agreement*) and interquartile range (IQR) ≤ 3 scale points (*consensus*)

Material and methods

Mid-may 2022

Invitation sent to 38 experts

Selection and recruitment of 38 thematic experts from the French-speaking part of Switzerland



Step 1

June 17, 2022

Group meeting - adapted version of Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

- Phase 1: individual ideas generation
- Phase 2: pooling of ideas through successive rounds of discussion
- Phase 3: clarification + structuring thematic proposals
- Phase 4: prioritization vote

13 experts (34%)
 28 proposals generated
 17 selected



Step 2

June 20-26, 2022

E-questionnaire (REDCap® + R code)

23 experts (60%)
 21 statements (3 reached consensual agreement)

Opinion quantification (9-points Likert scale) and expression on thematic statements, formulated from the proposals selected at the end of step 1



Step 3

June 27 – July 4, 2022

E-questionnaire (REDCap® + R code)

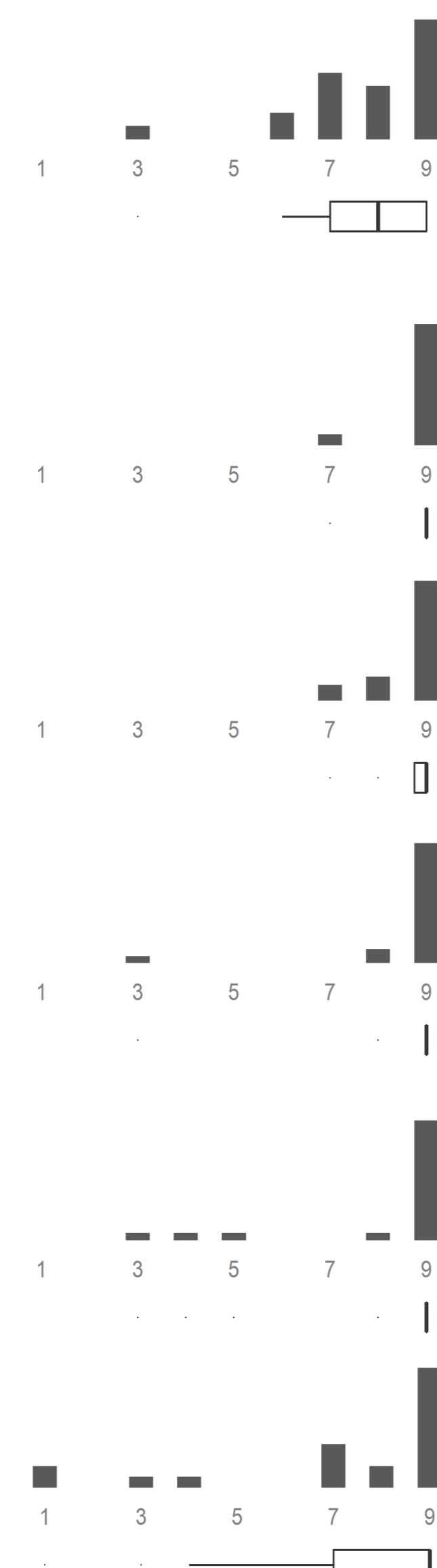
21 experts (91% of step 2 respondents)
 23 statements (18 reached consensual agreement)

Opinion re-quantification and expression on thematic statements that have not reached consensual agreement at the end of step 2, and reformulated based on comments from experts

Results 21 statements out of 26 (80%) reached a consensual agreement between tobacco control experts

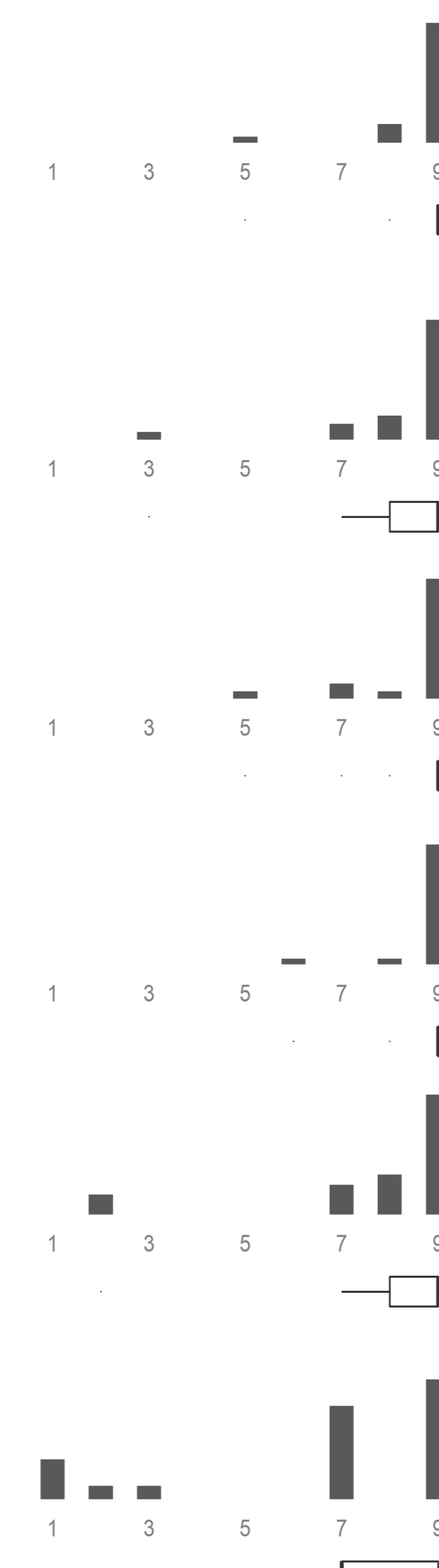
Regulation of product composition and marketing

- Additional warnings in the form of pictograms
- Mandatory publication of the list of components*
- Dual neutrality requirement: packaging and device
- Total ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship
- Strict limitation of flavors
In relation to harmfulness / potentiality of the addiction
- According to marketing aspects



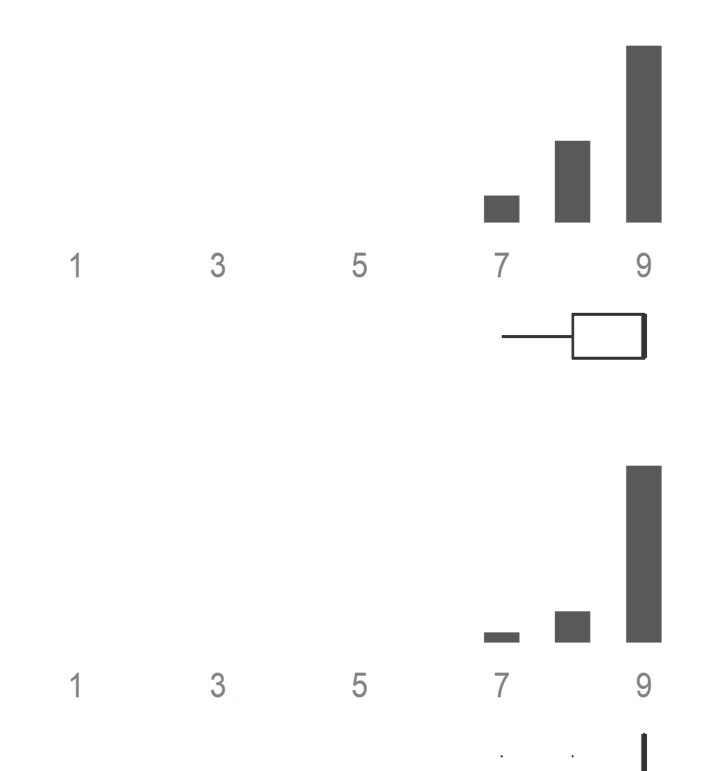
Sales and consumption restrictions and taxation

- Prohibition of sale to minors*
- Sales locations subject to authorization
- Consumption restrictions for public areas*
- Allocation of a portion of the tax to prevention
- Tax proportional to the quantity of nicotine (with minimum tax)
- Selling price \geq conventional cigarettes



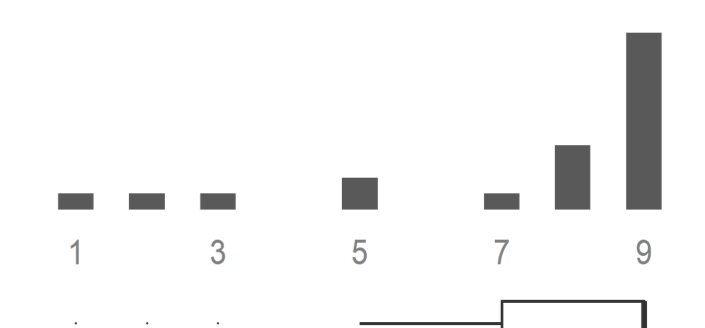
Control measures and data collection

- More controls, with focus on age, advertising and nicotine levels
- Annual collection of consumption data



Sale prohibition

- Total ban on the sale of the disposable product



The expert panel recommends a ban on the sale of the disposable product. As it is not likely, a strict regulation should come into force for various aspects such as product composition and marketing control or sales restrictions – regulations that should go further than the current European directive and the future Swiss law (LPTab/TabPG).

*Provided with the future federal law on tobacco products and electronic cigarettes (LPTab/TabPG; effective in 2024 at the earliest)

Conclusion

The new *fast-track Delphi* process allowed, in an 18-days interval, the development and quantification of consensual agreements between Swiss tobacco control experts on the regulation of puff-like disposable electronic cigarettes. The findings are useful to support and guide political decision making from a public health and environmental perspective, as well as to provide guidance for the development of clinical recommendations and patient counselling.