
World No Tobacco Day: Kyriakides (EU Commission), “giving it up can save lives”. Our goal is “a smoke-free generation by 2040”

“Tobacco use is the single largest avoidable health risk. It is the leading cause of preventable cancer, with 27% of all cancers attributed to tobacco”. European Commissioner for Health, Stella Kyriakides, said this on World No Tobacco Day. Under Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, the Commissioner explained, we are “proposing bold and ambitious actions” to reduce the use of tobacco. Our objective is to “create a smoke-free generation in Europe, where less than 5% of people use tobacco by 2040”. Today’s proportion is about 25%. “With no tobacco use, nine out ten cases of lung cancer could be avoided”, Kyriakides said. Smokers also have a higher risk up to 50% of developing severe disease and death from the virus, as also emerged in relation to the COVID crisis, which effectively drove “millions of people to want to quit smoking”. The decision to quit may be encouraged by a stricter enforcement of “EU tobacco legislation” as regards sales to minors and campaigns on giving up smoking, and by increased control over “new tobacco products entering the market”. “My message is simple”, the Commissioner ended: “Quitting is saving your life: every moment is good to quit, even if you have been smoking forever”.

Valentina Bombelli