

**NEW REPORT SHOWS TOBACCO POLICIES BEING CONSIDERED BY EUROPEAN COMMISSION CARRY
“SIGNIFICANT RISK” OF INCREASING CRIME IN EUROPE**

Milan, April 3rd, 2012. A new report published today by Transcrime, the Joint Research Centre on Transnational Crime, warns that policy options being considered by the European Commission as part of the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) carry a significant risk of increasing crime and the illegal trade in tobacco.

The report by Transcrime uses a widely endorsed *crime proofing* methodology that assesses opportunities for crime inadvertently created by regulation. Analyzing all the proposed policy options for the revision of the TPD, Transcrime found three major policy areas which are likely to increase crime: generic packaging for tobacco products, implementation of a “polluter pays principle” and a ban on the display of tobacco products at the point of sale.

“The crime proofing exercise we have conducted has shown that some of the policy options envisaged by the European Commission carry significant risks of creating unintended opportunities for the illicit trade in tobacco products. In particular, there is a high risk that a measure such as generic packaging may increase the counterfeiting of tobacco products and make it difficult for consumers to distinguish legitimate products from illegitimate ones” said the report’s author, Professor Ernesto Savona.

Available information on the currently on-going impact assessment for the revision of the TPD indicates that the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection (DG SANCO) paid almost no attention to the potential impacts on the illegal trade in tobacco products.

“Contrary to their own guidelines, European policymakers rarely consider the crime risk implications when drafting new legislation and the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive by DG SANCO seems to confirm this,” continued Professor Savona.

In the report, Transcrime emphasizes the need for further research and attention by policy makers to assess, among the many consequences, also the crime impact of proposed tobacco policy measures, something that has been systematically overlooked so far.

“Regulation should be thoroughly proofed against the risk of creating opportunities for criminals. We know that the EU tobacco market is already extremely vulnerable to illicit trade and so greater caution should be exercised when considering the introduction of new policy measures in the tobacco market.” concludes Professor Savona.



The report “Crime proofing of the policy options for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive” is available online: <http://transcrime.cs.unitn.it/tc/537.php>.

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About Transcrime:

Transcrime (www.transcrime.it) is the Joint Research Centre on Transnational Crime of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan and the Università degli Studi di Trento. Founded in 1994, its Director is Ernesto U. Savona, Professor of Criminology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. Transcrime analyses criminal phenomena and strategies for preventing and combating crime and identifies innovative solutions for improving the efficacy and effectiveness of policies to prevent and combat criminal activities at local, national and international level.

Transcrime’s initiative to conduct crime proofing research on potential tobacco policy was welcomed by Philip Morris International who agreed to contribute financially to the research. Transcrime retained full control and stands guarantor for the independence of the research and its results.

About crime proofing of legislation:

Crime proofing is a scientific approach used to assess the impact of legislation on crime, a key element of which is Crime Risk Assessment.

The Crime Risk Assessment consists of three steps:

1. The Initial Screening based on a checklist of 7 risk indicators revealing legislation requiring further assessment.
2. The Preliminary Crime Risk Assessment identifies crime risks unintentionally created by regulation, focusing on the vulnerability of the market and the possible risks arising from specific options
3. The Extended Crime Risk Assessment provides an analytical assessment based on a set of indicators that assess the likely impact of the possible policy options on the crimes, the perpetrators, the victims and the social costs.