

More Norwegians sniff at cigarettes, preferring snuff

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More Norwegians use "snus"—a form of snuff particular to Nordic countries—instead of cigarettes for their nicotine fix, official figures showed for the first time Thursday. © 2018 AFP

The preference for snus in Norway, is certain to revive debate over the [health effects](#) of the product, a moist powder tobacco that is popped under the lip.

Though its sale is illegal across the EU, it is manufactured and used in Sweden, which has an exemption, and Norway, which is not an EU member.

According to Norway's statistics office SSB, 12 percent of Norwegians used snus daily in 2017, compared with 11 percent who smoked [cigarettes](#) every day.

Under Oslo's ambitious anti-tobacco policy, Norway became one of the first countries in the world to ban smoking in [public places](#) in June 2004.

Cigarettes cost around 11 euros (\$13.50) a pack, and Norway adopted neutral packaging last year.

Cigarette smoking has halved since 2007, when daily smokers made up 22 percent of the population.

But snus consumption has taken off, steadily gaining on cigarettes. In 2016, 12 percent were daily smokers while 10 percent used snus, which cost a little over nine euros a box.

The product, which became popular in the 18th century, has become a target for tobacco-busters.

In November, the government won a lawsuit against Swedish producer Swedish Match which refused to sell its snus in neutral packaging. Swedish Match has appealed the ruling.

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