

STAKEHOLDERS OF THE PRO- AND ANTI-TOBACCO ARENA

Tobacco control is a multi-actor field. In addition, the anti-tobacco community has to fight one of the world's wealthiest and most powerful industrial lobby, the tobacco industry and its allies.

This chapter briefly takes into account main Hungarian actors of both sides.

5.1. Pro-tobacco stakeholders

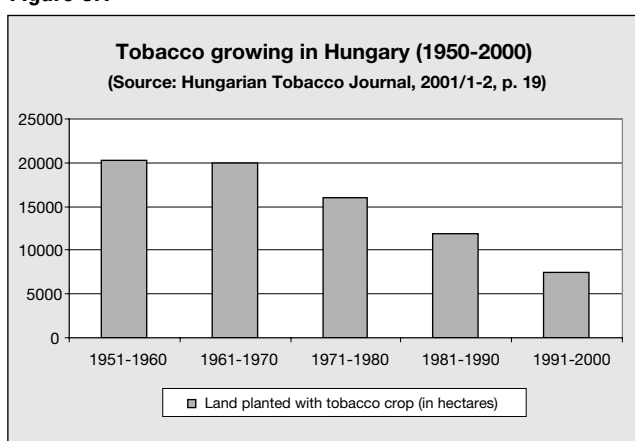
5.1.1 Tobacco growers

The international tobacco control community increasingly recognises the potential of including farmers in the anti-tobacco coalition, in part through providing assistance to their efforts of diversification from tobacco to other crops. (McNamara, 1997) But in Hungary, tobacco growers are still among the most important allies of tobacco companies.

Evidence suggests, however, that mainly manufacturers profit from this interdependence. According to a study (Altman et al, 1996) from every dollar spent on tobacco products manufacturers and wholesalers receive 63 cents, while growers only 3 cents. Tobacco companies exploit growers and their organisations if that is in their interest. For example, the International Tobacco Growers' Association (ITGA) was established by the companies themselves to act as mouthpiece of their views.

Hungary's experience is similar. While tobacco companies are thriving, Hungarian tobacco growers are facing increasing difficulties in remaining in the business. In spite of the fact that tobacco growing is a traditional farming activity in Hungary, the land used for tobacco growing has shrunk substantially since the end of WW II. (Figure 5.1) Today around 0.13% of the arable land is being used for tobacco growing, making tobacco an insignificant component of the total agricultural output. According to 2002 data of the Tobacco Product Council, there were 2,816 farmers engaged in tobacco growing, principally in the poorer Eastern regions of the country.

Figure 5.1



A deepening crisis of the sector resulted in tobacco farming becoming a loss-making activity in the 1990s. Cigarette consumption patterns alone cannot fully explain this crisis of tobacco farming. Increase in production costs, the lack of support schemes promoting tobacco growing and last but not least, the abolition of import duties on raw tobacco might have contributed to the escalation of this crisis. Abolition of import duties, what TTCs have heavily lobbied for with the active consent of agricultural and finance portfolios, led to the fact that more than 60% of raw tobacco used for cigarette manufacturing in the country today is being imported.

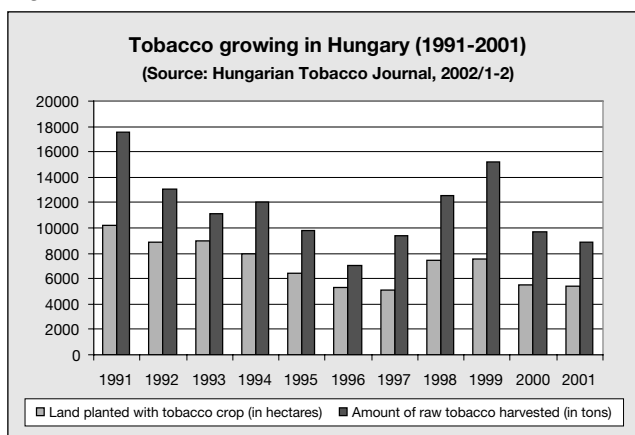
The struggle for maintaining local tobacco growing continues despite more funds are being channelled into the sector by both the government and the tobacco sector. In 1993 the Tobacco

Fermenting Ltd of Nyíregyháza (Nyíregyházi Dohányfermentáló Rt) launched a ten-year project to provide both loans and non-refundable assistance in a total value of HUF 1.87 billion to tobacco farmers. In 1995 the government followed suit injecting HUF 150 million capital in tobacco farming and, since then, it has been providing a regular support of around HUF 300 million a year to growers under the coordination of the Tobacco Product Council (Dohány Terméktanács).

Unwillingly, but recognising that this sacrifice is needed to limit regulatory attempts of the government, PM suggested to other companies the creation of a special fund, the "development and stabilization fund for tobacco growing". It was a wise tactic aimed at "softening" the cigarette tax policy contemplated by the government in 1996. In that year the four Hungarian TTCs established and put HUF 550 million into this fund. In exchange, the government contended with a compromised, but smaller tobacco tax raise than it was originally planned.

The sector's output increased again after these stabilization efforts (**Figure 5.2**). But in spite of the fact that tobacco farmers, through their interest groups, successfully lobbied the government to pursue a quota of 12,355 tons of raw tobacco during the negotiations with the EU, this output would not even be fulfilled: since 2000 the overall production of tobacco leaf fell under this quota.

Figure 5.2

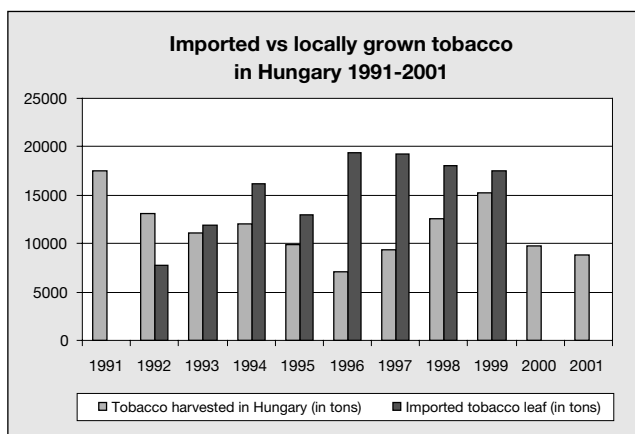


A recent study (Udovecz, 2002) estimates that growers will face a loss of HUF 2.5 billion in 2004 alone, provided no further support is offered by the government. The external affairs minister and socialist party leader László Kovács seems to have promised some "extra funding" to tobacco growers immediately after he took office in June 2002. This support would expectably be materialized after the country's accession to the EU. According to sources from the agricultural ministry the accession would result in a HUF 3.8 billion increase of subsidies provided to Hungarian tobacco farmers in 2004. (Vajda L, 2003)

An example of tobacco companies' conduct on issues related to tobacco growing in Hungary can be explained by their effort to lower or abolish import duties on raw tobacco. A PM representative even called Hungarian tobacco growing "the main

impediment to meeting our objective". The more tobacco leaf is imported from abroad the less Hungarian tobacco will be used for cigarette manufacturing. Thus, in this case, TTCs neglected interests of their natural ally. Eventually, in the last few years around 60% of tobacco leaf manufactured in the country originates from import. (**Figure 5.3**)

Figure 5.3



In spite of being exploited by tobacco companies, tobacco growers still accept to act as a well-organised and influential lobby group for the companies' interests. Regular conferences, a print periodical (*Magyar Dohányújság*), active leaders, well-established channels of collaboration with other groups from the pro-tobacco sector and decision makers, and lately, formation of formal growers' groups able to manage forthcoming EU tobacco subsidies are proofs for their high level of organisation. The Tobacco Product Council, which keeps a record of all farmers growing tobacco in Hungary, is involved in managing the provision of state subsidies for tobacco farmers. It also acts as vocal supporter in debates around tobacco control policies on the side of TTCs.

5.1.2 Tobacco processing companies

There are two processing plants in Hungary, one based in Nyíregyháza (Nyíregyházi Dohányfermentáló Rt, NYIDOFER) – since 1993 owned by United Leaf Tobacco – and the other in Szolnok (Budapesti Dohányfermentáló Rt, DOFER). The two companies process 21,000 tons of tobacco in a year, which exceeds local needs by 1/3.

Processing companies buy up raw tobacco from farmers, with whom they are in contractual relationship. Further development of tobacco farming is in their interest; to help this, companies established a development fund in the support of tobacco farmers (see above). On the other hand, processing companies conclude so-called "buy-up agreements" with tobacco companies: manufacturers use 80% of processed tobacco, the remaining 20% is being exported.

5.1.3 Tobacco manufacturers in Hungary

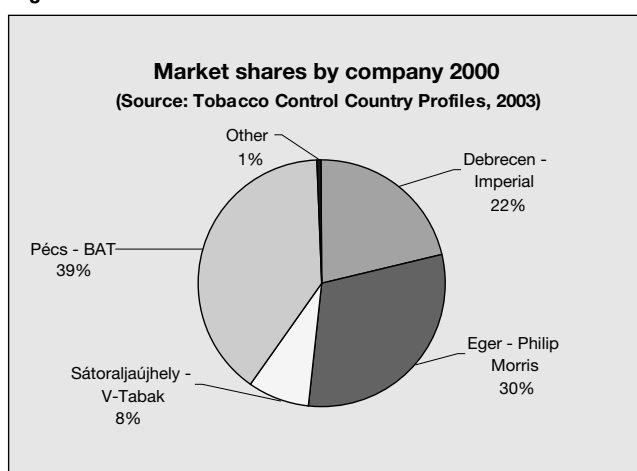
The four factories of the former Hungarian Tobacco Monopoly were among the first Hungarian companies privatized in early 1990s. Some of them already owned license agreements for the production of "Western" brands (e.g. the Egri Dohánygyár has been producing Marlboro since 1978, while Camel and Winston have been produced in Debrecen since late 1980s). This collaboration determined patterns of tobacco manufacturing plants' privatization: there were no open tenders and factories found their buyers through "spontaneous privatization".

Since investors were found by the factories themselves, influential "supporters" in high positions paved the way for their "smooth" privatisation. Internal industry documents indicate that the State Property Agency (SPA), responsible for managing the Hungarian privatization, "*received instructions*" from the finance ministry to conclude the privatization agreements with tobacco multinationals "*as quickly as possible*". Buyers succeeded in negotiating the purchase prices well below the market value of the factories. In addition to that, the then ruling democrat government provided transnational tobacco companies with tax concessions for a period of ten years, along with the prospect of easy withdrawal of their profits from the country in hard currency.

PM (in 1991), BAT (with the Austrian Tobacco Company in 1992), Reemtsma (in 1992)* and RJ Reynolds (in 1992) bought interests in Hungarian tobacco manufacturing plants. After RJR withdrew from the Hungarian market in 1998, its interests were bought by V-Tabac Dohánygyár Rt, the only Hungarian tobacco company, which now owns the tobacco factory of Sátoraljaújhely. According to the HACM, the four international companies have invested around \$US 300 million in the modernisation and development of their Hungarian plants.

The share of companies present on the Hungarian market is given in **Figure 5.4**.

Figure 5.4

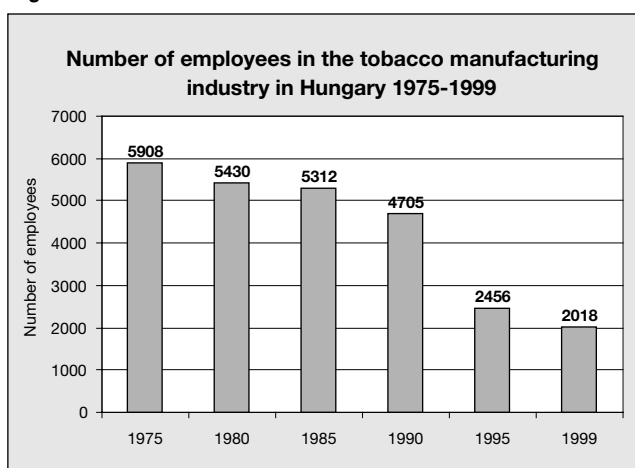


One of tobacco industry strategies applied to preventing the government from controlling tobacco is to mislead the society about its economic importance. In fact, the tobacco sector provides only 3% of the Hungarian government's total tax revenue. In 1999, 2,018 persons were employed by the tobacco industry, about 0.3% of total number of employees of all manufacturing sectors and 0.02% of Hungary's population of 15 years or more.

In its communication campaigns the tobacco industry portrays itself as the attentive employer; in fact, mechanisation and automation of cigarette production and the chasing of higher profitability left more than 50% of the tobacco sector's workforce unemployed. Due to redundancy programs implemented by TTCs in early 1990s, tobacco employment in 1999 was only 43% of that in 1990. (**Figure 5.5**)

* Soon after its merger with the Imperial Tobacco Group (UK), in January 2004 Reemtsma Ltd announced that it would discontinue production in Hungary due to the restructuring of its European manufacturing operations. Some sources from the tobacco sector blamed above the inflation rises in cigarette taxes as one of the reasons for factory closure.

Figure 5.5



After arriving in Hungary TTCs used a wide variety of strategies and tactics aimed at increasing their profits and achieving early returns of their investments. Formerly secret internal industry documents, available today for the public and researchers, also provide information on tobacco industry's efforts to enter the Hungarian market and strategies aimed at creating a supportive business environment and a less restrictive legal framework for tobacco and smoking*.

Fight for acquiring bigger share in the discount, low and medium price segments by lobbying to keep tobacco taxes low and initiating price wars, "accommodating" smokers or coming to smokers' assistance by impeding the adoption of rules on the creation smoke-free environments, exploiting holes in the tobacco advertising legislation are only highlights of TTCs' efforts aimed at increasing profits in their new market.

Hungarian tobacco companies were capable of high level of collaboration if that was in their interest. In 1994, they established the Hungarian Association of Cigarette Manufacturers as the main industry front-group (see below), which coordinates the industry's efforts to prevent new and strong legislative measures related to tobacco.

5.1.4 Hungarian Association of Cigarette Manufacturers (HACM, Magyar Dohányipari Szövetség)

The national manufacturers association was established on 19 July 1994 to represent interests of cigarette manufacturers. On that day, the membership of the organisation consisted of four companies (BAT, PM, Reemtsma and V-Tabac) and nine legal persons working for one of these four companies. Mark Jennings, general director of BAT was elected as first president of the HACM. On 3 October 1994 the Court of Registration refused the registration of the organization arguing that only civil organizations might form an 'association'.

Eventually, the organization was registered as an 'association with legal personality'. On 22 November 1999 an economist, András Patai took over the position of President and representative of the organisation. HACM's office, only a stone's throw from the building of the Hungarian Parliament and from that of the Ministry of Agriculture, has an excellent location which facilitates the immediate intervention in case of any political development related to tobacco.

The HACM interferes with the process of policy development, communicates with the media, commissions studies and research to support the industry's position, organises or partners with other organisations in launching 'anti-smoking campaigns' for young people and orchestrates 'accommodation' campaigns for smokers. But what even more important is that the HACM usually communicates the industry's position in the wake of parliamentary debates of regulations related to tobacco and its consumption.

5.1.5 The advertising industry

A number of advertising agencies interfered with the tobacco or health debate in the past few years, but none of the agencies tried to protect the interest of citizens against tobacco companies. In the wake of parliamentary debates of the advertising law in years 1997 and 2000, the **Hungarian Division of the International Advertising Association (HIAA)** and its numerous member organisations have proved to be vocal supporters of tobacco industry positions. Complicate personal interconnections might be detected by reviewing the composition of governing bodies of particular advertising agencies. For example, Mr László Lábod, external affairs manager of BAT Eastern Europe and Mr Örs Megyer, president of SRAB are also members of the board of HIAA.

The **Self-regulatory Advertising Board (SRAB, Önszabályozó Reklám Testület)** is the premier promoter of "self regulation" of the advertising sector in Hungary. The organisation was established in March 1996, a few months before the launching of the parliamentary debate of the advertising bill. The SRAB, as vocal supporter of self-regulation within the advertising sector, claims that self-regulation

* The author of the present paper spent one year in Australia and joined the document research group of Professor Simon Chapman; four papers analysing the behaviour and practice of TTCs in Hungary have been elaborated as a result of this research programme.

provides more effective and flexible solutions to the regulation of the advertising industry itself and to the control of conflicts between the industry and the public. Its principal aim is 'to protect its members from unsubstantiated expectations and unmerited attacks' as advertising practice is concerned.

Foundation documents in the file of the SRAB indicate that both BAT and PM were among the founding members of the organisation, along with advertising agencies with close links to tobacco companies. Furthermore, in fact both BAT and PM have had their representatives elected as members of the SRAB's governing bodies.

Since its existence the organisation has never attempted to serve the interests of "consumers" of tobacco advertisements: in no clashes between the interests of the public and of tobacco companies the organization stood for the public interest. On the contrary, during the parliamentary debate of the 1997 advertising act, the SRAB actively participated in echoing tobacco industry's arguments in an attempt to maintain tobacco advertising unrestricted. In 2000, again, the SRAB stepped up as vocal opponent of any further restrictions of tobacco advertising. When their attempt failed to prevent MPs from voting for a comprehensive ban on tobacco marketing, SRAB was one of those six HIAA member agencies, which signed the letter to President Ferenc Mádl trying to persuade him not to proclaim the new law.

After failing to prevent the implementation of the ban, the SRAB orchestrated the development of "different interpretation" of what point-of-sale (POS) advertisement means. According to the agreement between tobacco companies and advertising agencies posters and cigarette boxes placed in shop windows, light boards displayed on portals of shops and grocery stores are to be considered POS advertisements which are not forbidden by the law. While this practice has now been declared illegal by the criminal court, the SRAB has been instrumental in delaying the clean-up of public places from tobacco advertisements.

Another lobby group by the side of the industry is the **Hungarian Advertising Association** (HAA, Magyar Reklámszövetség). Its president, Ádám Levendel, also serves as director of one of leading Hungarian public opinion poll institutes. The Szonda Ipsos Media, Opinion and Market Research Institute is popular with tobacco companies; it performs marketing research studies and public opinion polls commissioned by the HACM. In 2003-2004, Szonda Ipsos fulfilled the role of moderator of the 2nd round of the "social dialogue" of BAT. Levendel is also a vocal opponent of the tobacco marketing ban. During the parliamentary debate of the amendment of the advertising act in 2000, he publicly questioned the importance of advertising ban in tobacco control saying that *"it is not the communication one has to fight against, but smoking."* (Csákó, 2001)

5.1.6 Other industry partners and affiliates

5.1.6.1. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (formerly known as Ministry of Agriculture)

The position of the agricultural portfolio seems to be ambivalent with regard to local tobacco growing. On the one hand, it supported, against the interests of Hungarian tobacco growers, the reduction of import duties on tobacco leaf and tobacco products from 1991 on. On the other hand, it consequently stands for preventing the government from introducing effective tobacco control measures allegedly for the protection of local tobacco farming.



5.1.6.2. Ministry of Economy and Transport (formerly known as Ministry of Economic Affairs, MEA)

It is responsible for developing and enforcing rules related to tobacco advertising. The Ministry can also grant exemption from the tobacco advertising ban in the case of worldwide sporting events. Since 2001 that has been the case with the Hungarian F1 race ("Marlboro Hungarian Grand Prix"). **(Picture 5.1)**

Picture 5.1 (Marlboro ad published in the time period when exemption from the advertising ban is in place around the Formula-1 Hungarian race in 2002.)

5.1.6.3. General Inspectorate for Consumer Protection

It functions under the control of the MEA. The institution is responsible for enforcing the 1999 anti-smoking law and the regulations on tobacco advertising.

In the case of tobacco advertising, the Inspectorate stood by tobacco companies in interpreting the 2000 advertising act in a "liberal" way. The Inspectorate admitted the interpretation developed by tobacco companies in conjunction with the SRAB regarding the definition of POS advertising.

A series of court cases resulted when the National Smoke-free Association (NSFA) sued the Inspectorate for failing to enforce the advertising regulation. It turned out that the Inspectorate had been instructed by a high level official from the MEA to apply tobacco companies' interpretation. The Court repeatedly ruled that outdoor advertisements should be immediately removed, and also instructed the Inspectorate to take adequate action against the illegal practice.

5.2 Anti-tobacco stakeholders

5.2.1 Government based agencies

***"In order to implement a tobacco control strategy that is successful... strong leadership at governmental level and an integrated approach involving all relevant policy areas and the civil society is needed."
(Tobacco Control in EC Development Policy, A Background Paper for the High Level Round Table on Tobacco Control and Development Policy, Brussels, 3-4 February 2003)***

The experience of many countries which successfully implemented comprehensive tobacco control programmes indicates that within the fight against tobacco the government should take responsibility for:

- developing and implementing a comprehensive national tobacco control strategy and programme;
- creating a regulatory framework conducive to or supporting people to follow a smoke-free way of life;
- establishing a centre to coordinate the country's tobacco control initiatives;
- the setting up of an intersectoral body to coordinate the involvement of ministries, various government-based agencies and other sectors into tobacco control activities;
- establishing financial mechanisms to provide secure, long-term and sustainable funding for community-based tobacco control efforts.

Apart from creating a quite comprehensive set of legal and regulatory measures and lately elaborating a national tobacco control action plan, successive Hungarian governments have failed to meet the majority of these requirements. However, a number of government-based agencies are involved in planning and implementing tobacco control activities funded from public money. These are as follows:

The Public Health Department of the Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs

The Department is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the national tobacco control action plan, which runs as part of the ten-year Public Health Programme. It also coordinates efforts to continue the development of the national framework of tobacco control legislation by making policy recommendations, including those which refers to the adoption of FCTC by Hungary, to the development of tobacco policy alternatives and to lobbying for their promotion at government level.

The National Public Health and Medical Officer Service (NPHMOS)

The local branches of the National Public Health and Medical Officer Service are responsible for enforcing the smoke-free legislation (the ban on smoking in public places) all over the country. There are health education departments within the institution, which are qualified to organize community-based tobacco control programmes, such as the so-called "health days", which also involve smoke-free messages. While their activities concerning the enforcement of smoke-free legislation are being financed from their general budget, they do not receive any additional funding for community-based tobacco control programmes. For example, in spite of being government agencies, they have to bid for funds dedicated to tobacco control programmes in co-operation with NGOs. Fortunately, this rule also facilitates the creation of public-civil partnerships at local level.

Rarely, some of these departments also provide research on various smoking-related topics. The Budapest branch of NPHMOS joined forces with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of Atlanta (Georgia, US) to gather data on the smoking behaviour of schoolchildren in secondary schools in Budapest in 1995 and later in 1999. Another research of the department of young people's health referred to the prevalence of passive smoking among schoolchildren (see **Chapter 1** for details).

National Center for Health Development

The institute has two programmes aimed at controlling tobacco. One of them is a kindergarten-based smoking prevention initiative. Except for a few anecdotal reports on the attempts to reach kindergarten pupils with information about smoking, there is no international experience on smoking-related health education programmes among children of kindergarten age. The Hungarian programme, after a pilot phase in 1992-1994 was launched in 1995, but still lacks to provide solid evidence on its efficiency. A pilot programme on smoking prevention in primary school has been developed recently by the department.

The institute hosts the centre which coordinates the Hungarian network of some 100 smoking cessation clinics. These institutions, spread all over the country are usually staffed with committed family doctors and pulmonologists and provide expert advice for those who decide to quit observing guidelines developed by a small group of experts. The weak marketing of the network (only 4,000 out of 3.5 million Hungarian smokers seek advice from the network in a year) and the insecurity of funding for the maintenance of its daily operation limit also the impact which otherwise it could have on promoting a smoke-free life.

The Semmelweis University of Medical Sciences

Departments of public health and of behavioural sciences of the University have been involved in some tobacco control efforts for years. The Hungarian 'Quit and Win' campaigns have been coordinated by the public health department since years. The department also co-ordinates some Hungarian initiatives implemented within the frame of the WHO's CINDI project. The Department of Behavioural Sciences has successfully launched a peer-based school health education programme to spread the word about the health effects of tobacco use among schoolchildren. Lately, a newly established health policy department of the University aims at participating in the postgraduate training of professionals interested or working in tobacco control.

5.2.2 Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

"any tobacco control policy can only be successful if it involves the civil society and if an organized movement against smoking is in place."
(Tobacco Control in EC Development Policy, A Background Paper for the High Level Round Table on Tobacco Control and Development Policy, Brussels, 3-4 February 2003)

The Preamble of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control admits *"the special contribution of nongovernmental organizations and other members of civil society not affiliated with the tobacco industry, including health professional bodies, women's, youth, environmental and consumer groups, and academic and health care institutions, to tobacco control efforts nationally and internationally and the vital importance of their participation in national and international tobacco control efforts"*.

The civil sector, which took up the leadership in tobacco control in many countries with successful tobacco control policies, is increasingly active in Hungary, too. However, the range of their commitment expressed by the time spent on activities related to tobacco control, on the amount of funding they dispose of, and their approaches to tobacco control vary.

Some outstanding activities implemented by NGOs active in tobacco control include traditional health education programmes, promotion of new tobacco control legislation, training of emerging tobacco control advocates as well as media advocacy efforts to counter the misleading communication of tobacco companies. A few attempts were made in the last few years to allow more visibility to tobacco control by organizing street actions; these could rather attract the attention of the media and decision makers.

In spite of the existence of common goals, there are a couple of impediments which so far prevented NGOs working in the tobacco field from creating a strong partnership. Firstly, these NGOs compete for limited financial resources* and thus, are counter-interested in collaborating or sharing their experiences or future plans. As a result, overlapping and similarities of programmes are common (e.g. many of them implement school-based 'health education' programmes aimed at informing teenagers about the harmful effects of smoking); this also makes the use of otherwise scarce resources even less effective.

Secondly, NGOs implementing tobacco control programmes are in general severely understaffed. There is none full-time tobacco control professional working in Hungary. Tobacco control advocates' working time is shared between various tasks, tobacco being only one of them. Due to limited resources available for being spent on daily operation by NGOs, in many cases their staff (if any) is not paid at all. Thus, to cover their living expenses, tobacco control advocates should work full-time elsewhere and they are able to spend only limited time to networking or seeking new partnerships.

Thirdly, very limited resources are being spent by NGOs on the professional development of those working in tobacco control. Thus, the level of knowledge on the positive role of working in partnership of various stakeholders is still insufficient.

As policy advocacy is concerned there is still insufficient collaboration between government-based agencies and the civil sector. In fact, civil servants only rarely seek advice from the NGO community on tobacco related issues. The government invites only a limited number of experts to participate formally in the development of plans to strengthen tobacco control policies; their person, again, is decided based on many factors, experience in tobacco control being only one of them. Thus, a formal way of collaboration between government-based agencies involved in tobacco control and the NGO community working on the issue must be established if the improvement of the health of people through effective control of tobacco is at stake.

A comprehensive review of NGOs working in tobacco control as well as their main activities were reviewed by Dr Tibor Szilágyi in 2002 and published in a book on primary prevention of cancers in Hungary. (Döbrössy, Gyárfás, Szilágyi, 2002) **Table 5.1** gives a brief overview of activities of the leading Hungarian NGOs working in tobacco control. Further details are provided below.

Fodor József School Health Association

The organization established a core group of peer educators to increase awareness on smoking and health issues by reaching secondary school pupils. Students of the medical faculty of the Semmelweis University of Budapest not only act as peer educators and perform lessons in secondary school classes, but they also train younger teenage students from these schools to become messengers of the smoke-free life. Some activities of the Association were taken over by the Foundation of Medical Students of Budapest on Peer Education (Budapesti Orvostanhallgatók Kortársoktató Alapítványa) as of 2000.

Health 21 Hungarian Foundation

Established in 1999 as a public service corporation, it aims at improving communication and collaboration among stakeholders working in tobacco control and enhancing their participation in policy advocacy efforts. It also works to improve advocacy and professional skills of tobacco control advocates through performing research and disseminating its findings, organizing training programmes and publishing literature on tobacco control.

The organization has become increasingly active in the CEE region as well. According to the American Cancer Society, the organization is *"one of the premier tobacco control organizations in the region"*. The Foundation publishes Filter Online, an English language electronic newsletter for colleagues from the CEE region (<http://filter.tobinfo.org>) and manages two listserves to improve communication among tobacco control advocates: one in Hungarian for Hungarian tobacco control advocates and the other for colleagues working in the region.

Hungarian Alliance for Tobacco Control

Established in 1999 by the health ministry, the Alliance comprises 12 NGOs who plan and implement tobacco control programmes. It serves as vocal supporter of strong tobacco policy measures. The organization's scientific and media works help to keep tobacco on the professional and legislative agenda.

Hungarian branches of WHO networks

Hungarian organizations belonging to networks managed by the WHO (Healthy Cities Network, Health Promoting Schools and Health Promoting Hospitals) also plan and implement programmes in the field of tobacco. These include prevention and cessation programmes and street activities aimed at raising awareness on the importance of living smoke-free.

* For example, in 2003 – the first year of implementation of the newly adopted ten-year public health programme and its tobacco control subcomponent – HUF 24 million was distributed to NGOs implementing tobacco control programmes on a competitive basis. In the same year, the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development provided HUF 320 million subsidies to tobacco farmers.

There are some anomalies around fund distribution as well. Reportedly, in some cases, attribution of public funds by government based agencies is based on the political assessment of the competing organizations rather than on the scientific content of proposals or on individual organizations' past experience and achievements in tobacco control.

Hungarian Cancer League

The organization, in collaboration with other partners created a number of successful community-based tobacco control programmes, especially for children. Lately, the League promoted the idea of smoke-free schools through organizing a contest for schools which commit themselves to going smoke-free.

National Smoke-free Association (NSFA)

Since 1988 NSFA participates actively in mobilizing communities to take adequate actions against tobacco and in advocating for the development of the legislative framework protecting the rights of non-smokers. Having more than 300,000 individual members it is the largest and best known NGO in the field. Provided with an office by the health ministry the organization contributes actively to the public debate of bills regarding tobacco control. They have developed and cultivate strategic relationships with a number of MPs sympathetic with tobacco control as well as parliamentary committees.

Lately, they took up the responsibility for the enforcement of the country's comprehensive tobacco advertising ban, by monitoring illegal activities and initiating legal actions against law breakers. It is their merit that the Court of Budapest and the Court of Appeal, as well as the ombudsman declared POS advertisements visible from outside shops illegal. Also, in a precedent court case the organization succeeded in having the court declared illegal the depiction of smoking on a billboard not published by a tobacco company.

Pápai Páriz National Association of Health Education

The organization organizes and participates in community-based programmes aimed at decreasing smoking. It is also active in tobacco control policy advocacy.

Smokebusters' Association

The organization, established in 2002 is led by an investigative journalist committed to tobacco control. Today, it is among the most vocal organizations against tobacco in Hungary. Its main activity fields include advocacy, enforcement of tobacco related rules and keeping the issue 'alive' in the media. Street demonstrations, petition writing, initiation of legal actions against government agencies which do not obey to smoke-free regulations are all in the repertoire of their actions.

Associations of health professionals

Organizations of nurses and district nurses are increasingly becoming involved in prevention programmes, including tobacco control. Training programmes for health professionals are being sponsored by the government; lately, district nurses have been trained on how to reach pregnant women with smoke-free messages.

Unfortunately, only very few medical organisations have made their voices heard on matters related to tobacco control. The Hungarian Association of Pulmonologists is one of the exemptions. On the other part, individual medical doctors took the initiative in becoming the most vocal advocates of advanced tobacco control policies.

Association for a Healthier Workplace

It has been created as an umbrella organization of private enterprises committed to deal with and improve health status of their employees. The association promotes smoke-free workplaces as a choice to follow.

Groups active in kindergartens

The National Network of Health Promoting Kindergartens and the Smoking or Health Hungarian Foundation created a network of kindergartens which run smoking prevention programmes.

5.3 The private and business sectors

5.3.1 Enterprises partly state-owned

Some tobacco control initiatives have been undertaken by enterprises in which the state is still a shareholder. The most relevant among them are measures taken by the Hungarian Airways Company (Magyar Légiforgalmi Vállalat, MALÉV) and the Hungarian State Railways (Magyar Államvasutak, MÁV).

In November 1997, among the first companies in Europe, MALÉV banned smoking on its all short and long flights. Since then MÁV, as a response to its customers' requests and in line with the provisions of the 1999 anti-smoking act, has introduced a ban on smoking on all passenger trains for which the scheduled distance between the stations of departure and destination does not exceed 100 kilometres as of 2 June 2002.

5.3.2 The private sector

The World Bank estimates that those who quit smoking would spend the amount saved by not smoking to purchase other goods and services. Thus, other private and business sector actors might be interested in the effective control of tobacco.

Unfortunately, this interest has not been manifested so far in visible and vocal support of tobacco control interventions by any private business. Some promising effort has been made by the Association for Healthier Workplaces (Egészségesebb Munkahelyekért Egyesület) in order to disseminate the concept of smoke-free workplaces among enterprises. Under the organization's guidance tobacco control programmes have been launched in a number of private businesses which are members of the Association.

It is tobacco control advocates' duty to mobilize other sectors, which traditionally do not play an active, supportive role in controlling tobacco in their jurisdiction.

5.4. Communication, collaboration, networking and coalition building in tobacco control

The creation of networks and coalitions became integral part of successful tobacco control programmes. Both networks and coalitions are tools for working together for a common goal. Networks are more informal, *"decentralised and egalitarian, while coalitions tend to be centralized and hierarchical"*. (The Advocacy Institute) By working together tobacco control advocates could increase their chances to counter the tobacco industry successfully, promote, implement and enforce tobacco control policies.

There are a couple of positive examples for these efforts in Hungary as well. Today, the Health 21 Hungarian Foundation is the most important Hungarian stakeholder, which promotes communication and collaboration among various agencies interested in tobacco control. The Foundation established and maintains a listserv (the local branch of the international tobacco control network, Globalink) of more than 50 tobacco control advocates (individuals or belonging to government-based agencies and NGOs), a basic tool for information sharing.

In 2000, an informal network of dedicated individuals and organizations was initiated by the Foundation ("National Forum for Tobacco Control"). The network encouraged some unconventional tactics in promoting tobacco control policies, such as letter writing campaigns to reach decision makers and media representatives. The 20 participants of the 1st Forum meeting (**Picture 5.2**) held on 6 October 2000 adopted a joint position in the support of the FCTC, which, at that time was under negotiation. The 2nd Forum held on 6 December 2000 called on MPs to support Mihály Babák's amendment on the advertising bill requesting a total ban for the promotion of tobacco products. The Forum was able to indicate the strength of the Hungarian tobacco control community, and the fact that committed individuals are ready for joint action when the need emerges. The more specifically the objective of a network gathering can be determined the higher the likelihood is that network members remain focused on the topic and that the network would meet the expectations.



Picture 5.2

A formal, permanent coalition of NGOs involved in tobacco control was founded in 1999. The idea of creating a solid basis for joint work of various professional (health) agencies and charities comes from the staff of the "Tobacco and Alcohol Policy Development Programme", led by scientific coordinator Dr Tibor Szilágyi. The Hungarian Alliance for Tobacco Control was eventually established by the health ministry, and still participates actively in the development and implementation of the national tobacco control programme, which fits into the new Hungarian public health strategy.

The role of networks and coalitions would expectably increase with the ratification of the FCTC by Hungary and coming into force of this legally binding treaty. The NGO community should take up the role of "watchdog" in monitoring the implementation of the treaty's recommendations, of the national tobacco control programme and of efforts of the tobacco industry aimed at countering effective tobacco control measures.

5.5 The role of high level political actors in tobacco control

5.5.1 The government

The Hungarian government consists of a number of ministers; the number and nature of government portfolios vary in every four-year term. In the past three parliamentary terms, the economic and finance portfolios were extremely powerful, while health and environment protection received less attention just as funding.

The government decides on the political agenda, on what and when must be approached through legislative means. Consequently, how the government and its portfolios think about providing solutions to the tobacco problem remains the primary determinant of tobacco control efforts. International developments and influences of various lobby groups might interfere with the development of the political agenda.

In Hungary four freely elected governments took office since the fall of the communism. The democratic government (1990-1994) assisted to buying up factories of the Hungarian Tobacco Monopoly by TTCs and provided them tax concessions for up to a decade. The socialist-liberal government (1994-1998) led by a heavy smoker prime minister failed to develop an effective legal framework for controlling increasingly recognized health damages related to tobacco. Also, it liberalized tobacco advertising and sponsorship, helping tobacco companies to tempt to lure increasing number of new, especially young consumers to the habit.

Some important measures were taken by the young democrat-small holders' party government (1998-2002), including the adoption of a more or less comprehensive anti-tobacco law (in 1999) and re-instating a comprehensive ban of promotion of tobacco products (in 2000). However, its move to ask for a delay for the introduction of EU minimum tax on the retail price of tobacco products in the wake of the 2002 parliamentary elections blurred the bright picture of its previous efforts.

The personality of the prime minister, its commitment to tobacco control issues and his smoking habits seemed to have great impact on the overall process of tobacco policy development. For example, Gyula Horn, prime minister of the socialist-liberal government (1994-1998) torpedoed the introduction of an earmarked tax on tobacco products by vocally opposing it in the Parliament. As opposed to Horn, non-smoker Viktor Orbán's moderate right government (1998-2002) introduced some important regulatory measures to control tobacco use.

Not only government leaders' but also various ministries' behaviour on issues related to tobacco influenced the overall set of tobacco control efforts. The research of the formerly secret, internal tobacco industry documents performed by the author in 2001-2002 provided some insight into the behavior of some government portfolios with regard to policies which influence the tobacco sector. Some main findings include:

- In 1991, the Ministry of Finance and Agriculture instructed the State Property Agency – responsible for co-ordinating the Hungarian privatization process – to conclude the transaction of handling the Eger Tobacco Factory to Philip Morris 'as rapidly as possible';
- In 1991, the Ministry of Agriculture was ready to support a reduction of import duties on manufactured tobacco even if this move would harm local tobacco farming; also, the finance ministry 'has instructed the Customs Department' to recommend a revision of tobacco duties;
- In late 1992, after both BAT and PM violated openly the country's tobacco advertising ban, the deputy secretary of state of the Ministry of Trade and Industry agreed to resume talks with the industry on the adoption of a voluntary advertising code instead of a strict enforcement of the country's advertising regulation;
- In 1993, the Ministry of Agriculture, responsible for developing the draft decree on the content regulation and the packaging of tobacco products, invited tobacco companies to prepare draft regulations themselves; companies regarded this a 'unique opportunity' (Picture 5.3);

**Note on meeting to consider draft Tobacco Decree,
Budapest, 23 June 1993**

2.2 Whilst the industry has this "unique opportunity" in formulating this draft, and it is only a draft, it will clearly be difficult for the industry to argue for subsequent deletion of a clause which it has itself proposed.

Picture 5.3

- In 1997, the head of the economic affairs committee of the Hungarian Parliament 'advised' his party fellow health minister 'not to push' too much the adoption of the anti-smoking law.

Taking into consideration that tobacco companies always attempt to interfere with the development of anti-tobacco policies at ministry level, the monitoring of tobacco industry's behaviour and the publication of findings should be pursued in order to decrease social acceptability of the industry.

5.5.2 The President of Hungary

In Hungary, the President is not entitled to directly influence the legislative agenda and the legislative process itself or to have control over the implementation of an already adopted legislative measure.

The President signs and proclaims laws. The President is, however, entitled to refuse the signing of a law already adopted by the Parliament if it might raise constitutional concerns. In such cases, the law could be sent back to legislators to create an alternative version or the position of the Court of Constitution might be requested.

The First Lady is usually involved in charity or activities related to promoting health. The wife of former President Árpád Göncz still supports the work of the Hungarian Cancer League.

Hungarian experience also indicates that the President himself had to express his views on legislative measures against smoking. Dr Lajos Pákozdi, senior Hungarian tobacco control advocate has positive experience in this regard, since President Ferenc Mádl supported his and the tobacco control community's position on the ban of advertising of tobacco products*.

* After the Parliament adopted the comprehensive ban on direct and indirect tobacco advertising, the tobacco industry and its front groups appealed to the President and called him not to sign the law. Mádl became concerned about the ban infringing freedom of speech; on 31 December 2000 he responded positively to Dr Pákozdi's advice and eventually let himself convinced about the reports on the positive impact such legislation would have on the health of Hungarians. He signed and announced the law on 4 January 2001.

5.5.3 Members of the parliament and political parties

Members of the parliament (MPs) have important role in the development and the adoption of further tobacco control policies, therefore, they could help tobacco control advocates to achieve their objectives. They could promote the amendment of regulations related to tobacco. In addition to the individual support they could provide, support or oppose to tobacco control measures by influencing positions of specialized parliamentary committees.

MPs could be accessed by various interest groups, including the tobacco industry. The more skilled a group in lobbying is the higher the success rate. Hungarian experience about the adoption of the anti-smoking law in 1999 (see **Case study 1**) indicates that both the anti-tobacco community and the tobacco industry found their supporters among MPs, and the nature of individual MPs' behaviour on the issue (support or rejection of strict tobacco control measures) was not dependent on her/his party's affiliation. Thus, tobacco control does not only divide the society but also parliamentary factions.

Political parties, especially their health experts and/or working groups on health related matters can help to advise members of their factions for call for supporting strict tobacco control measures.

5.6 The role of the Hungarian media in tobacco control

Media is a key partner in disseminating positions and arguments of both tobacco or affiliated industries and tobacco control advocates. From the tobacco control point-of-view, the print and broadcast media may help to promote tobacco control policies by shaping public debate on issues which need to be regulated, such as smoking in the public, raising cigarette taxes or banning tobacco advertising.

After their arrival to Hungary, TTCs started to use their previously gathered experience in having the media echoing their positions. According to a 1998 study of Századvég Centre for Political Analysis BAT was the company which developed the strongest ties with the Hungarian media. On the other side, the media was interested in a better "serving" of tobacco companies, especially after the tobacco advertising ban was lifted in 1997. Financial support for various media was provided through the publication of paid tobacco advertisements, in form of support for PR-articles and through other, less obvious "ways" of achieving positive coverage in the press (according to Századvég financially influencing journalists either "cannot be excluded"). Based on its findings, the Századvég report also presumes that "companies are probably spending enormous sums to developing connections with the press" (see **Figure 5.3**)

the sector. BAT had a constant opportunity to let the public to know its position, which, however, would be difficult to imagine without some "help" from journalists. This, of course, does not mean financially influencing journalists (although this cannot be excluded), yet one can read signals from some reporters that would presume stronger ties between the journalist and his subject.

All of the companies are probably spending enormous sums on developing connections with the press, but such an extensive and open strategy (connections with almost all of the daily newspapers) can only be seen in the case of BAT. The essence of the communications strategy is to seize every opportunity to get newspapers to report continuously, albeit briefly, about the company.

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Figure 5.3

By mid-1990s Hungarian tobacco control advocates recognized the role of and started to use the media to promote their arguments for tobacco control measures.

Case study 2 gives an insight into the behaviour of Hungarian media in connection with the new regulation on a tobacco issue, namely the adoption of a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising in 2000. This also provides a better understanding of successes and failures of tobacco control advocates in having their positions reflected in, and working with the media.

5.7 Building capacities for tobacco control

***"Our coalition is a small group; but by getting attention in the media, the coalition comes to seem larger and more powerful."
(Shoba John, India – PATH Canada)***

Development of the skills of individual tobacco control advocates as well as the building of a solid basis of capacities aimed at developing and implementing tobacco control programmes seemed to be a more or less spontaneous process in the past years.

Deliberate improvement and development of capacities in tobacco control should have been and still is the duty of the government. No steady commitment of the government to build up a formal, sustainable system of experts, organisations and institutions which could take up the responsibility of drawing, promoting, implementing and monitoring a comprehensive set of tobacco control could be observed. The development of human capacities in tobacco control is a highly neglected area even within the overall set of tobacco control measures.

Latest developments, however, indicate positive change in this regard. Increasing number of training programmes are being organized by various government-based agencies and NGOs using public resources especially in the improvement of knowledge and skills of health professionals on issues related to smoking and health or on how they should provide quitting advice to smokers.

On the other side, this is the area where, since the fall of the communism, international agencies have provided the most help to the Hungarian tobacco control community. A few examples are given below.

In 1997 the "Tobacco and Alcohol Policy Development Project" was launched within the frame of the Public Health Subcomponent of the Hungarian Health Sector Modernisation Project funded by the World Bank. The project, which can be considered the only formal attempt to improve capacities for tobacco control policy development, was discontinued because of political reasons before it could have achieved its scope. In spite of its early conclusion, the project resulted in improved awareness of policy makers on the need for using regulatory measures to curb tobacco use and improving coordination among NGOs and organizations of health professions working in tobacco control through the establishment of the Hungarian alliance for tobacco control.

Some initiatives of the Health 21 Hungarian Foundation aim at continuing initiatives launched or promoted by the World Bank project. These include: organisation of training programmes for emerging tobacco control advocates, publishing scientific volumes in order to improve the policy and media advocacy skills of professionals, providing up-to-date information on local and international tobacco control efforts to various actors involved in tobacco control and promoting communication and collaboration among tobacco control advocates.

These days, increasing number of training programmes for health professionals (such as medical doctors, nurses, district nurses) are being organised by various universities, government agencies and NGOs (Hungarian Cancer League). This would certainly improve health professionals' skills and capacities for advising their patients how to live smoke-free lives.

5.8 Advocacy for tobacco control

***"Advocacy seeks to change upstream factors like laws, regulations, policies and institutional practices, prices and product standards which influence the personal health choices of millions of individuals and the environment in which these are made."
(Prof Simon Chapman, Int J Epidemiology, 8 March 2001)***

Tobacco control is one of the principal issues in public health in which both policy and media advocacy play crucial roles. Remarkable achievements in tobacco control were reached in those countries only, where a handful group of committed tobacco control advocates had their persuasive argumentation accepted by their parliamentarians and media on the need for a strong regulatory framework to control tobacco use.

At the beginning of 1990s, traditional health education – persuading individuals one-by-one not to smoke – was still considered the cornerstone of decreasing tobacco related harm in Hungary. It was not until a handful of tobacco control advocates, mainly with medical

background, have learned the skills necessary to demand, promote and pursue policy interventions in order to control the tobacco epidemic that the first regulations on smoking have been introduced*. **Table 5.2** below enlists advocacy tools already used in Hungary.

But still a lot has to be done in rising the awareness of various possible – non-traditional – partners in tobacco control on the many facets of tobacco control they could help and on mutual gains all sides could have by participating; even health professionals need to be more active in advocating further policy changes in tobacco control.

Case studies 1 and **2** provide further information on advocacy efforts used when tobacco control policies are promoted in Hungary.

Table 5.2

Advocacy tool	Target groups	Issues	Experienced Hungarian organisations
Lobbying: direct communication	Politicians (MPs, high-level ministry bureaucrats – ministers, state secretaries)	Strengthening tobacco policy development and implementation	National Smoke-free Association Health 21 Hungarian Foundation Hungarian Alliance for Tobacco Control Hungarian Cancer League Air Working Group
Lobbying: letter writing campaigns	See above – all actors of the political arena	Particular tobacco control interventions (e.g. advertising ban and its enforcement, strengthening smoking bans in public places, pursuing tax rises, etc.)	National Smoke-free Association Health 21 Hungarian Foundation Hungarian Alliance for Tobacco Control Hungarian Cancer League Air Working Group Smokebusters' Association
Lobbying: demonstrations and petitions	Decision makers, ministry bureaucrats	See above	Smokebusters' Association Health 21 Hungarian Foundation Healthy Cities Foundation
Media advocacy= strategic use of the media	Journalists; indirectly: decision makers and the public	Pro-active or reactive actions on regulatory attempts to control tobacco	National Smoke-free Association Health 21 Hungarian Foundation

* In mid-1990s the NSFA, through perceivable media and policy advocacy efforts succeeded in setting the issue of legal protection of non-smokers higher on the political agenda. They organized letter writing campaigns, participated at parliamentary committee meetings to spread the word on effective tobacco control interventions, approached the media and provided journalists with background materials on the topic – all interventions which need to be part of successful advocacy efforts. The Health 21 Hungarian Foundation soon joined the handful of organizations which participated in tobacco policy advocacy. It became instrumental in promoting the comprehensive tobacco advertising ban by promoting partnership among sectors and orchestrating letter writing campaigns to influence the media and decision makers.

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