

Covid19: Spanish citizens smoke in outdoor dining areas and streets while kids are forced to wear a mask in schoolyards and outdoor areas

Nofumadores.org claims that Spanish kids are second-class citizens

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The Spanish government debates today whether to maintain the mandatory mask in outdoor public spaces, a measure that was implemented in mid-December in full fury of the sixth covid-19 wave. During all this time children over 6 years of age have been required to wear a mask all the time in the schoolyard, while smokers have been able to remove their mask to smoke, a situation that irritates parents, because it makes a distinction between first-class citizens, smokers and vapers, and **second-class citizens, children. Fernández Megina, President of the NGO [Nofumadores.org](https://nofumadores.org) (Nonsmokers.org), says “kids are easy to control because they do not vote, they abide, while they have to observe as adults smokers do not respect health covid 19 laws”**

This situation highlights how tobacco has had, and still has, a privileged treatment during all the covid pandemic. While children could not go out to play in the children's areas and were forced to stay at home for more than a month, not having an excuse to leave home in the toughest moments of the lockdown, becoming this way second class citizens, smokers had the freedom to get out to buy cigarettes.

In the present situation children are forced to wear a mask, even in the outdoor schoolyard, and when they have been exemplary by going to childhood vaccination and the 55% of the Spanish population under 12 years already has the first dose of the Covid19 vaccine, a percentage that's even higher in regions such as Galicia to 82%, and in Asturias to 72%. On the other hand, the smokers remove their mask wherever and whenever they please to smoke while neither the national nor local Governments do nothing to avoid it. The president of Nofumadores.org argues that “it is not fair to force children to wear masks at all times in schools while a privileged sector of the population, smokers, continue to attack others with carcinogenic smoke and possible carrier of the covid19”

The Spanish Society of Pulmonology and Thoracic Surgery (SEPAR) warned recently that tobacco smoke on outdoor seating makes these areas unsafe for its users due to the possible transmission of Covid and also the carcinogenic substances of cigarettes when smoked at less than eight meters away. For this reason, it is essential that smoking and vaping be banned on the terraces.

In this regard civil and health organizations requested in a letter to the Councilors of several Spanish regions, Madrid, Catalonia, Andalucía, Extremadura, the Basque Country and Navarra the adoption of regional laws that declare restaurants and pub terraces into smoke-free and vapor-free areas, following the example of other seven regions as Balears Islands, Canary Islands, Valencian Community, La Rioja, Aragón, Cantabria, Asturias and Galicia. The letters also recalled that the current Covid19 law in Spain (Real Decreto-ley 30/2021) does not consider smoke or vape as an exception to wearing a mask in outdoor spaces.

nofumadores.org

Por el derecho a vivir sin humo de tabaco

Nofumadores.org está inscrita en el Registro Nacional de Asociaciones con el número 172.478

The letter, which has the support of fifteen health and civil rights associations, demands that the transformation of bars and restaurant terraces into spaces without tobacco smoke or electronic cigarette aerosols be permanent beyond the Covid-19 pandemic, as a public health measure, with the idea of avoiding passive exposure to tobacco smoke and guaranteeing the right to breathe smoke-free air.

Smoke-free terraces have broad support from Spanish society, as shows the 154,000 signatures delivered by Nofumadores.org to the Minister of Health, Carolina Darías, requesting that all outdoor dining areas become tobacco free areas and claiming the freedom to enjoy a meal or a drink without being exposed to the harmful and carcinogenic substances of tobacco smoke and e-cig aerosols.

Nofumadores.org is an Spanish organization that defends the freedom of a life without tobacco smoke, and in particular the right of children not to breathe tobacco smoke from adults, for which it has launched the [ENDGAME DECLARATION OF TOBACCO IN SPAIN 2030](#), with the goal that Spain achieves to have a smokers rate below 5 % by 2030 and its first tobacco free generation by 2025 (those born since 2007 would never be able to buy tobacco legally, measure supported by 97% of parents who declared, in a poll with 5.000 surveyed, that they never wanted their children to start smoking).

You can download the press release here in pdf

Nofumadores.org, is a non-profit association, leader in Spain in the defense of passive smokers, member of ENSP (European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention)

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