Reviewer’s report

Title: Who calls the shots in tobacco control policy? Policy monopolies of pro and anti-tobacco interest groups across six European countries.

Version: 3 Date: 15 May 2019

Reviewer: Jennifer McKell

Reviewer's report:

My thanks to the authors for the substantial work done to respond to my earlier reviews. In particular, the way in which the more complex situations within Belgium and the Netherlands have been incorporated has been deftly handled. I also welcome the much clearer distinction between the dominant frames in Belgium and the Netherlands, and Italy and Germany being the difference between frames being tied to anti-paternalistic liberal-conservative political parties, and the society-wide belief that tobacco use is a personal issue only, respectively. I also accept the authors' response to my suggestion to move descriptions of efforts to introduce display bans in respective countries to the findings section, and agree that it is preferable to only include findings here that are based on data collected by the authors.

Regards the authors response to my suggestion, that they outline what the the theory of policy monopolies adds, I understood, even implicitly, the value of the interest group approach. What isn't clear from the text is the value of using the theory of policy monopolies. The authors response to my suggestion, however, does set out the value of this theoretical approach: that the theory of policy monopolies 'posits that institutions are associated with the relative power of interest groups'. This was instantly illuminating and I think simply adding this explanation or something similar would be very helpful to understanding the approach taken.

Overall, however, I would recommend this manuscript for publication as I think it makes an important contribution to our understanding of influences on tobacco control policy-making.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
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No

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Yes

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