

## Response to Reviewer 1

I would like to thank Reviewer 1 for very detailed and useful comments which will definitely improve our manuscript.

Comment 1. Is the omission of any items referring to experience/use of eCigarette/vaping. Thus it is unclear if students may be nicotine addicting by alternative means to tobacco smoking.

Response 1. There was a question related to electronic devices (eCigarettes) but we missed to add this data. Only 0.5% of participants used eCigarettes or similar devices. We added this sentence in the section Results.

Comment 2. Lack of analysis of second-hand smoke exposure. Specifically, whether exposure increases risk of smoking. Correlations do not confirm causality. It is likely that students who smoke actively seek roommates who smoke, and students who do not smoke seek roommates who do not smoke. Thus, exposure alone offers little information about the role of second-hand smoke and "contagion."

Response 2. It has been showed that higher exposure to secondhand smoking increased the risk of smoking. The multivariable logistic regression analysis showed that variables such as secondhand smoke at home, secondhand smoke at faculty, and secondhand smoke at public spaces can determine whether students smoke or not. It is also obvious that non-smokers avoid being in closed smoking places, but this was not subject of this study.

Finally, I found it disturbing that medical school faculty tolerate student smoking at all. This is contrary to accepted public health policy internationally. Healthcare providers who smoke provide a bad example to their patients - giving the impression that smoking is not dangerous. The link between smoking and reduced life expectancy has been shown to be causal. This result calls into question the university's curriculum addressing the very many diseases associated with tobacco smoking - most of which reduce life expectancy. This is the opposite of health promotion one expects from all healthcare providers - especially physicians.

Your comment is very logical. Cigarette smoking, sedentary life-style and obesity are the major public health concerns, particularly in the Balkan region. This was a reason that we have provided some additional comments and recommendations for further actions at the very end of the Discussion section.