

7th ENSP

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
ON TOBACCO CONTROL

ABSTRACT
BOOK

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The Network



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for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention



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Aim & Scope

Tobacco Prevention & Cessation, (Abbr: Tob. Prev. Cessation; ISSN:2459-3087) is an open access, peer-reviewed online journal that encompasses all aspects of tobacco use, prevention and cessation that can promote a tobacco free society. The aim of the journal is to foster, promote and disseminate research involving tobacco use, prevention, policy implementation at a regional, national or international level, disease development - progression related to tobacco use, tobacco use impact from the cellular to the international level and finally the treatment of tobacco attributable disease through smoking cessation.

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TOBACCO CONTROL: A WAY FORWARD TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

Smoke-Free La Graciosa: PMI's Greenwashing in a Spanish island and the Smoke-Free Culture Certificate

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Background

PMI, in its attempt to greenwash its public image, is persuading the governments of certain localities with a high ecological value and also leisure-related companies (hotels, restaurants, etc.), to get the 'Smokeless Culture' certificate from the certifying company TÜV Austria.

Objective

Our objective was to break the agreement between PMI and La Graciosa local Government. Explain the case of La Graciosa sin Humo, in the Canary Islands, Spain, and the requirements of the Smoke-free Culture certification in order to expose how close they are to the tobacco industry's arguments.

Methods

An international sign-on letter was organized by Nofumadores.org, CNPT, ICO, ASH, and STOP, and addressed to the Spanish Government and the Mayor responsible for La Graciosa. It was signed by 151 organizations from 53 countries calling for the break of the agreement and the interruption of the campaign.

Results

Due to the national and international pressure on the local Government, it announced the end of the agreement with PMI and the close of the website where the La Graciosa sin Humo campaign was publicized.

Conclusions

The Tobacco Control Community needs to be alert about the industry's greenwashing tactics and avoid industry interference by joining forces and educating the public administration about Article 5.3 of the FCTC.

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Highlighting the environmental impact of tobacco: WHO FCTC Secretariat partnerships, campaigns and resources

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This year's theme for World No Tobacco Day is 'Tobacco: a threat to the environment' with a focus on the immense environmental damage caused by tobacco cultivation, production, distribution,

consumption and waste, such as cigarette butts and electronic waste. Globally, more than six trillion cigarettes are produced annually, each containing filters, or butts, that are mainly composed of microplastics known as cellulose acetate fibers. Tobacco product waste (TPW) such as cigarette butts are the most common pollutants globally and pose a significant threat to human health and ecosystems due to the release of microplastics and hazardous chemicals. An estimated 0.77 million metric tons of cigarette butts are deposited annually into the environment. Tobacco's total environmental footprint is comparable to that of entire countries and its production is often more environmentally damaging than that of essential commodities such as food crops. For the six trillion cigarettes manufactured annually, 32.4 Mt of green tobacco are cultivated on 4 million ha of arable land and are then processed into 6.48 Mt of dry tobacco worldwide. Globally, the tobacco supply chain contributes almost 84 Mt CO₂ eq emissions to climate change, 0.49 million tons of 1,4-DB eq to ecosystem ecotoxicity levels, over 22 billion m³ to water and 21 Mt oil eq to fossil fuel depletion annually. Additional pollution from novel products including e-cigarettes and vapes will increase the amount of electronic waste in cities and communities and lead to higher clean-up costs. To mitigate and reduce the amount of tobacco product waste, tobacco producers should ultimately be responsible under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for liability, economic costs, and providing information on environmental impacts of tobacco use. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) has 182 Parties and is the first public health treaty negotiated under the auspices of the World Health Organization. Article 18 of the WHO FCTC addresses the need for due regard to the protection of the environment and the health of persons in relation to the environment in respect of tobacco cultivation and manufacture whilst Article 19 on liability touches on holding the tobacco industry liable for its abuses. This session, proposed by the WHO FCTC Secretariat, aims at presenting to delegates the serious impact of tobacco value chain on our environment, providing them with information to build a case for advocacy initiatives, and sharing success stories at regional and national levels.

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COVID-19 AND TOBACCO

Impact of COVID-19 lockdown on smoking habits in Italy: Results from the 'Lost in Italy' study

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Background

During the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, several countries imposed a nation-wide lockdown, inevitably resulting in changes in lifestyles and addictive behaviors.

Objective

The aim of this work is to investigate the impact of lockdown restrictions on smoking habits in Italy using data collected within the 'Lost in Italy' project.

Methods

A cross-sectional study on a sample of 6003 subjects, representative of Italian adults aged 18–74 years was carried out. Subjects were recruited from 27 April to 3 May 2020 and respondents were asked through a web-based interview to report changes in smoking habits before the lockdown and at the time of the interview.

Results

The prevalence of smoking decreased by 6% during the lockdown, but 16% of smokers increased their smoking intensity. In total, the lockdown increased by 9% cigarette consumption. Improvement in smoking habits during lockdown was associated with younger age, occasional smoking and unemployment. On the other hand, worsening in smoking habits was associated with mental distress, with an increase in cigarette consumption more frequently reported among those worsening their quality of life (OR=2.05; 95% CI: 1.49–2.80), reducing sleep quantity (OR=2.29; 95% CI: 1.71–3.07) and increasing anxiety (OR=1.83; 95% CI: 1.38–2.43) and depressive symptoms (OR=2.04; 95% CI: 1.54–2.71).

Conclusions

The Italian stay-at-home order during the COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on smoking consumption, with an increase in cigarette consumption due to increased mental distress. These results suggest an urgent need to take into account and reduce mental health distress symptoms in smoking cessation services.

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Do female tobacco smokers fear COVID-19 more than male smokers?

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Background

Widely published observations confirm that tobacco smokers can be at higher risk of severe course of coronavirus disease. Polish National Quitline notes increased interest since the beginning of the pandemic, which pushed the epidemiologists from the National Research Institute of Oncology to search for the reasons for this state.

Objective

Our objective was to analyze whether and how the COVID epidemic affects smokers' behaviors, especially in terms of gender differences.

Methods

A carefully designed survey was performed on the Polish National Quitline clients since March 2020 (the time when first COVID-19 related measures were nationally introduced). Answers from 3165 questionnaires from April to December 2020 were analyzed using MsExcel 2010.

Results

In most cases, the COVID-19 pandemic just accelerated the decision of quitting, for many however the real feeling of danger pushed them to attempt to quit smoking. Men more often than women declared that the pandemic impacted their decision of quitting reckoned on the fact that the current circumstances made them realize how big a health threat smoking really is (67% vs 58%, $p<0.001$). However, it was females who more often than males feared getting infected (25% vs 15%, $p<0.001$) and having a serious course of disease (17% vs 14%, $p=0.035$) and therefore wished to quit smoking. Both men and women declared to do their best to maintain abstinence after the pandemic is over (>90%). Women much more often than men declared to make another attempt to quit smoking after the end of pandemic, should this one fail (57% vs 31%, $p<0.001$).

Conclusions

The results of the study show that the pandemic might have a surprising positive effect on smoking and quitting behavior. It also sends an important message to the smoking cessation clinics and healthcare providers to get prepared in order to respond adequately to the increasing number of people searching for help to quit smoking.

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COVID-19 protective health behaviors among smokers and non-smokers in Armenia

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Background

The emerging literature suggests that smokers are less likely to comply with COVID-19 infection prevention and control (IPC) behaviors.

Objective

Given the high smoking rates in Armenia (28.0% among the general population and 51.7% among males) we aimed to explore the compliance to the COVID-19 protective behaviors among smoker and non-smoker adults in the country.

Methods

A nationwide phone survey was conducted in Armenia in 2021. Two-stage cluster sampling was performed to recruit the study participants. The study instrument included questions on sociodemographic characteristics, COVID-19 knowledge and vaccination status, smoking and COVID-19 protective behaviors. Participants were asked about the frequency (always/usually vs sometimes/rarely/never) of wearing masks, washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, participating in social gatherings and maintaining at least 1.5 m social distance in the past 14 days. Participants were categorized as current smokers (daily/less than daily) and non-smokers (never smokers/quitters). Bivariate and multivariate analyses were performed.

Results

Overall, 3483 participants completed the survey, of which 16.8% ($n=571$) were current smokers, and 71.0% ($n=2472$) were females. The mean age was 49.5 years. Generally, the respondents reported adequate compliance with the examined protective behaviors: washing hands (91.2%, $n=3099$), avoiding social

gatherings (74.2%, n=2515), wearing masks (51.7%, n=1752) and maintaining social distance (42.0%, n=1418). In bivariate analysis, smokers compared with non-smokers were less likely to comply with protective behaviors with a significant difference in wearing masks (45.8% vs 52.9%, $p=0.002$) and avoiding social gatherings (62.0% vs 75.6%, $p<0.001$). However, the multivariate analysis showed no significant associations between those protective behaviors and the smoking status of respondents, when adjusted for the sociodemographic characteristics, COVID-19 vaccination status, and knowledge.

Conclusions

Future studies are needed to further explore the compliance level with the COVID-19 protective IPC behaviors among smokers and non-smokers to appropriately guide public health interventions and targeted health communication campaigns.

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Perceived susceptibility and severity of COVID-19 by smoking status

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Background

There is substantial evidence suggesting that smoking is a risk factor for severe COVID-19.

Objective

We aimed to explore how smoking status affects the perceived susceptibility and perceived severity of COVID-19 among the Armenian adult population, which has one of the highest smoking prevalence in the European region (27.9% among the adult population and 51.5% among males).

Methods

A nationwide phone survey was conducted in Armenia in 2021. The questions on sociodemographic characteristics, smoking, COVID-19 susceptibility, severity, knowledge and vaccination were included in a multi-domain structured survey instrument. Smoking status was categorized as current smokers (smoking every day or less than every day) and non-smokers including quitters). Questions on the perceived risk of contracting COVID-19 (susceptibility) and the perceived severity of COVID-19 disease (severity) were used to calculate COVID-19 perceived susceptibility and severity scores (0–3) and were used in bivariate and multivariate linear regression analyses.

Results

Overall, 3483 people participated in the phone survey of which 16.8% (n=571) were current smokers, 71.0% (n=2472) were females, and 11.6% (393) were vaccinated against COVID-19. In bivariate analyses, current smokers compared with non-smokers had significantly lower scores for COVID-19 perceived susceptibility (1.2 vs 1.3, $p=0.042$) and perceived severity (1.7 vs 1.8, $p=0.002$). In the multivariable analyses, the COVID-19 perceived severity score was negatively associated with being a current smoker ($b= -0.11$, $p=0.034$), when adjusted for age, gender, income level, education level, employment status, place of residence, COVID-19 knowledge and vaccination status. The perceived susceptibility score was not significantly associated with the smoking status in the adjusted analyses.

Conclusions

The study found a negative adjusted association between smoking and the level of perceived severity of COVID-19. This finding coupled with the evidence that smoking results: in severe COVID-19 experience, and emphasizes the importance of targeted interventions to influence adequate COVID-19 severity perception among the smoker population in Armenia.

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Tobacco control and cessation as a global agenda to build back equity and sustainability from COVID-19

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Tobacco intersects with the COVID-19 pandemic not only in terms of health consequences but also in environmental change and planetary health. Tobacco use exacerbates inequalities, causes catastrophic environmental degradation and climate change, and adds a burden to COVID-19-related mortality, which are major challenges to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic has provided a chance to combat tobacco use and accelerate efforts to alleviate these challenges in response. The MPOWER measures introduced by the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) can play a crucial role in COVID-19 recovery to fight tobacco use and contribute to sustainable and equitable development. To accelerate recovery, it is critical to call for actions for governments and policy-makers to strengthen synergies and coordinate policy actions emphasizing tobacco control and cessation across equity, public health, and climate actions, as global authorities pledge to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and net zero emissions targets as part of the Climate Change Conference 2021 (COP26).

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Tobacco use during COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence for health policymakers

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Background

Tobacco use remains one of the key risk factors for increased morbidity and mortality of the population globally. Tobacco prevalence as well as policies implemented differ between countries. Tobacco users are more likely to have a worse outcome

in case of infection with SARS-CoV-2. Additionally, tobacco users have higher chances of hospitalization, admission to intensive care units, and death, after COVID-19 infection compared to non-smokers.

Objective

This study aimed to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in tobacco use.

Methods

This is a scoping review study that was conducted during the period March 2020 – May 2022. Different databases such as Web of Science, Scopus and PubMed were used for the literature research. The keywords used to identify the literature were: tobacco consumption or prevalence, COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, pandemic, tobacco cessation, as well as combinations of them. Only articles written in English were assessed, while articles that presented data before the onset of the pandemic were excluded.

Results

Results of the studies on tobacco consumption during the pandemic varied. Some studies reported an increase in the tobacco consumption prevalence while others supported the contrary. Studies reported that the tobacco increase during the COVID-19 pandemic is associated with mental health problems (stress, depression etc.), quarantine, working from home, an increase of alcohol consumption, gender, age, and education level. On the other hand, several studies report high number of quit attempts during this period.

Conclusions

Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic should guide new targeted interventions and the development of new tools for the provision of tobacco cessation services and strengthen tobacco control policies. The use of technology for this purpose is of paramount importance. Increased awareness and provision of brief advice by the healthcare personnel during on-site or online consultations should be included in standard care.

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TOBACCO ECONOMICS, TAXATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Affordability of cigarette prices among the adult population in Kosovo

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Background

There is evidence that tax/pricing policies that reduce cigarette affordability can help curb cigarette consumption.

Objective

This study investigates the role of cigarette affordability on smoking behavior among adult smokers in Kosovo, using data from the Survey on Tobacco Consumption in Southeastern Europe (STC-SEE) 2019 and the Household Budget Survey (HBS).

Methods

Unit values and disposable household income were used to calculate cigarette affordability. Cigarette consumption was measured using the number of cigarettes smoked per day reported by the survey respondents. After running the diagnostic checks and confirming that the presence of heteroskedasticity is not an issue, OLS methodology was employed to empirically estimate

the relationship. OLS estimates are considered the optimal estimates, particularly in relatively small samples, since they possess optimum properties and have minimum variance in the class of unbiased linear estimators.

Results

The results suggest that lower affordability is related to lower tobacco consumption in Kosovo, and that residents of the capital and largest municipalities in Kosovo smoke less. Furthermore, the results suggest males smoke more than females. But no evidence is found that consumption differs by education level.

Conclusions

This study provides evidence that tax/pricing policies that reduce cigarette affordability can help curb cigarette consumption among adults as well as elderly smokers in Kosovo.

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Trends in individualized affordability of cigarettes: Findings of the 2008–2020 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Netherlands Surveys

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Background

Cigarette affordability, the price of tobacco relative to consumer income, is a key determinant of tobacco consumption.

Objective

This study examined trends over 12 years in individualized cigarette affordability in the Netherlands, and whether these trends differed by sex, age, and education level.

Methods

Data from 10 waves (2008–2020) of the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Netherlands Surveys were used to estimate individualized affordability, measured as the percentage of income required to buy 100 cigarette packs (Relative Income Price, RIP), using self-reported prices and income. The lower the RIP, the more affordable cigarettes are. Generalized estimating equation regression models assessed trends in individualized affordability over time and for the three subgroups.

Results

Affordability decreased significantly over the 12 years, with RIP increasing from 1.89% in 2008 to 2.64% in 2020 ($p < 0.001$), although the year-on-year changes did not increase significantly. Lower affordability was found among subgroups: which on average had a lower income level, were female (vs male), were aged 18–24 and 25–39 years (vs ≥ 55 years), and of low or moderate educated level (vs high educated). Interactions between wave and education level ($p = 0.007$) were found, but not with sex ($p = 0.653$) or age ($p = 0.295$). Decreasing affordability was found for those who were moderately ($p = 0.041$) and highly educated ($p = 0.025$), but not for

those who had a low education level ($p=0.149$).

Conclusions

Cigarettes in the Netherlands have become less affordable between 2008 and 2020, especially for people who had a low education level; yet this was mostly due to the decrease in affordability between 2008 and 2010. There is a need for more significant increases in tax to further decrease affordability.

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Distributional impacts of tobacco tax in Montenegro

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Background

Tobacco tax in Montenegro is progressive and that the poorest population would benefit the most from tobacco tax increases.

Objective

The main aim of this study is to provide evidence to policymakers on the overall high levels of economic, medical, and productivity costs of tobacco use, as well as the significance of tobacco tax progressivity.

Methods

We estimate the impact of a tobacco tax increase on cumulative income gains, due to the years of working life saved, as well as a reduction in tobacco consumption and medical expenses related to tobacco-attributable diseases in Montenegro. An extended cost-benefit analysis (ECBA) is applied to estimate the distributional impacts of tobacco taxes in Montenegro in 2019. ECBA simulates the distributional effect of tobacco tax increases on change in tobacco consumption and expenditures, medical expenditures and earnings.

Results

An increase in taxes by 50% leads to the increase in available income (total net impact) of the low-income group between 1.6% and 1.8% (being lower for the wealthier). Moreover, the number of premature deaths caused by smoking would be reduced between 7.9% and 11.6%. As a result of increased tobacco taxes, cost reductions from lower spending on cigarettes and medical services, as well as those related to premature deaths due to tobacco use, would result in improvements in total population welfare. An ECBA decomposition shows that the benefits of higher taxes outweigh the costs and that the whole net income effect is positive across all income groups.

Conclusions

This work contributes to the analysis of the tobacco tax distributional impact, which was conducted for the first time in Montenegro.

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Estimating the impacts of waterpipe tobacco taxation on demand: Evidence from a subgroup analysis in Lebanon

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Background

Differential demand elasticities for WTPs across various population subgroups and differential response patterns to taxation, need to be considered in tobacco taxation policies.

Objective

This article aims at modelling the demand for waterpipe tobacco smoking (WTS) across various population groups in Lebanon.

Methods

We estimated own- and cross-price elasticities of demand for waterpipe tobacco products (WTPs) using a volumetric choice experiment that yielded waterpipe tobacco purchase data from a nationally representative tobacco survey conducted in 2019.

Results

While own-price elasticities for premium cigarettes are significantly different across two out of three population subgroups, documenting statistically significant differential price responsiveness across different sub-populations for WTPs varies with the cut-off used to define subgroups. We document different price sensitivities towards discounted WTPs between younger (aged 18–45 years) and older smokers (aged >45 years), the latter being significantly more price responsive (elasticities of -1.6 and -2.1, respectively). Our findings also reveal that smokers with high-income levels are significantly less responsive to changes in prices of premium waterpipe café products in comparison to smokers with low-income levels (elasticities of -2.2 and -2.9, respectively). Lastly, we document that light smokers are significantly more sensitive than heavy smokers to price changes of discounted waterpipe café products (elasticities of -2.5 and -1.8, respectively). We additionally examine the impact of waterpipe tobacco specific excise taxation on consumption by simulating various tax scenarios ranging from a 'status quo' scenario reflecting past policy in Lebanon to a tax level amounting to 75% of the total retail price. Our findings suggest that a 75% scenario yields a substantial reduction in waterpipe tobacco consumption ranging from 78% to 95% fewer waterpipe tobacco sessions across population groups. Reduction rates are almost equal for younger and older smokers, and relatively more pronounced for low-income and heavy smokers in comparison with high-income and light smokers.

Conclusions

These findings support the need to account for differential demand elasticities for WTPs across various population subgroups, and the differential response patterns to taxation, when considering tobacco taxation policy.

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Tobacco farming and the effects of tobacco subsidies in North Macedonia

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North Macedonia has a long tradition of cultivating and exporting oriental tobacco, known for its rich aroma. With 26234 tons produced in 2019 (0.4% of world production and 13.9% of European production), it is among the world's 30 major tobacco-producing countries, among the 20 major exporters of raw tobacco, and the second largest producer of oriental tobacco, after Turkey. This research examines tobacco production and the tobacco subsidy policy in North Macedonia and its possible effects, using quantitative (mainly descriptive) analysis of tobacco production, subsidies and related data, and qualitative analysis of observations from interviews with key informants. Tobacco production has been supported by government subsidies for decades, regardless of the political structure. Tobacco receives the largest share of crop subsidies, comprising on average a quarter of total agricultural subsidies for the period 2008–2019. This is justified by the government mainly by the large number of families whose main income is from tobacco production. In addition, tobacco and tobacco product exports account for one fifth of the total export value of agricultural and food products. However, despite high subsidies, tobacco farmers' average monthly income is lower than the country's average net monthly salary. The evidence shows that generous tobacco subsidy might affect the market adversely. Subsidies often generate market distortions by 'blurring' market signals – farmers often decide to grow crops only because of the subsidies. On the other hand, North Macedonia spends significantly more money on food imports than it generates from tobacco exports. One of the major ongoing challenges of the trade deficit is that much of it comes from importing processed food products. Despite agricultural subsidies, North Macedonia is a net food importer. Hence, it is a relevant question whether funds allocated to tobacco production support could be used more efficiently to stimulate food production instead.

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Revision of the EU Tobacco Tax Directive

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Background

In 2018, the European Commission started a process of evaluating the current Tobacco Tax Directive 2011/64/EU (TTD). The Commission published its report on the TTD, together with an external study in 2020. The report highlights the reduced effectiveness of the TTD. In 2020, the Council adopted its conclusions, inviting the Commission to draft a legislative proposal highlighting that consumption of tobacco products remains one of the greatest avoidable and preventable health risks.

Objective

We aim to raise awareness of the target audience about the aim and key objectives of the TTD revision and update on the current status of the file, and to discuss practical steps for target audience to engage and support the advocacy and communication campaign on the revision of TTD.

Methods

SFP together with a group of experts developed a position paper on EU tobacco taxes that presents a comprehensive policy proposal based on the most recent economic data. The recommendations aim to fill in the gaps and loopholes of the current Directive.

Results

The revision of the TTD should explicitly recognize that, and in

addition to improving the functioning of the Internal Market, EU tax legislation should strive to achieve the highest possible level of health protection and contribute to achieving Europe's Beating Cancer Plan 2040 target. The EU TTD should also aim to achieve upwards convergence of taxes and prices of tobacco products in the EU internal market by decreasing the price differentials between Member States.

Conclusions

The EU TTD should: 1) ensure a consistent increase in taxes across the EU and all product categories aiming to decrease the difference in prices, 2) achieve upwards convergence of taxes on all tobacco products with those of cigarettes and roll-your-own, and 3) introduce a tax category for raw tobacco and relevant intermediate products for monitoring.

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HEATED TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND E-CIGARETTES CHALLENGES

Correlates and transitions between smoking and smokeless tobacco product use among adults in Bangladesh: Longitudinal findings from the ITC Bangladesh Surveys

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Background

Cigarettes, bidis, and smokeless tobacco (SLT) are popular in Bangladesh and many tobacco users may transition between products or/and use them concurrently.

Objective

The aim of the study is to longitudinally track transitions of tobacco use within different subgroups of users (i.e. cigarettes, bidis, and SLTs) and explore factors related to transitions between them and to cessation.

Methods

Four waves (2009–2015) of the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Bangladesh Survey with a sample of 3245 tobacco users were utilized to examine changes in tobacco product use and transitional patterns among Bangladeshi adults over time. Generalized estimating equation (GEE) models were utilized to evaluate socioeconomic correlates of transitions from exclusive use of cigarettes, bidis, or SLT, to the use of other tobacco products or quitting, from the first to the last wave.

Results

Exclusive cigarette users in rural areas were more likely to transition than urban respondents to bidi use (OR=3.02; 95% CI: 1.45–6.29), to SLT use (OR=2.68; 95% CI: 1.79–4.02), or to quitting (OR=1.57; 95% CI: 1.06–2.33). Transitions for exclusive bidi users seemed to be more frequent. Higher SES was related to quitting (OR=4.16; 95% CI: 1.08–13.12) and less likely to transition to cigarette use (OR=0.49; 95% CI: 0.24–0.99). As for exclusive SLT users, quitting was more likely among younger

respondents (OR=2.94; 95% CI: 1.23–6.9), and less likely for those in rural areas (OR=0.52; 95% CI: 0.3–0.86) compared to urban residents.

Conclusions

Complex transitional patterns were found among different types of tobacco product users over time. These findings can inform more comprehensive and multi-faceted approaches to tackle diversified tobacco use in Bangladesh.

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The impact of electronic cigarette and heated tobacco products on conventional smoking: A prospective cohort study from Italy

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Background

Debate continues about whether electronic cigarettes (e-cigarette) and heated tobacco products (HTP) reduce or increase the probability of smoking, with many studies compromised by stated or unstated conflicts of interest.

Objective

Taking advantage of a large prospective Italian cohort study, we evaluated the impact of novel (tobacco) products on conventional smoking behavior.

Methods

A total of 3185 participants in a representative sample of the general Italian population aged 18–74 years provided baseline (April–May) and follow-up (November–December) responses in 2020, reporting smoking status and use of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTP). We tracked transitions over that period and report odds ratios (OR) and corresponding 95% confidence intervals (CI) for changes in smoking in relation to baseline use of e-cigarettes and HTPs.

Results

Never cigarette smokers who used e-cigarettes at baseline were much more likely to start smoking compared with never users (OR=10.98; 95% CI: 6.62–18.23) and current HTP users (OR=6.92; 95% CI: 3.96–12.09). The 17.2% of ex-smokers who relapsed at follow-up were more likely to be e-cigarette users (OR=7.05; 95% CI: 3.30–15.05) and HTP users (OR=9.78; 95% CI: 3.62–26.49). Among current smokers at baseline, those who had quit smoking at follow-up were 14.6% overall, but only 6.7% among current e-cigarette users and none among current HTP users.

Conclusions

Both e-cigarette and HTP use predict starting smoking and relapse and did not increase – and may even have reduced – smoking cessation among current smokers. These findings do not support the use of e-cigarettes and HTPs in tobacco control, at least in Italy, and reinforce the importance of regulating novel (tobacco)

products the same way as conventional cigarettes.

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Smoking and use of electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products among medical students

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Background

Up-to-date research regarding the prevalence of consumption of tobacco products is needed for appropriate health promotion.

Objective

This study assesses smoking, use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and heated tobacco products (HTP) among medical students, giving special attention to the influences of the COVID-19 pandemic on them.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was performed using an on-line anonymous questionnaire during the university year 2020/2021 among 743 medical students from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Cluj-Napoca, Romania (457 Romanian students and 286 international students).

Results

Half of the students have smoked at least once during their lifetime, around one-third have used e-cigarettes and one quarter has tried HTP at least once during their lifetime. Regarding consumption in the last month, smoking was present among one-third of the students; e-cigarette was used by less than 4% of students, while consumption of HTP was declared by 6% of Romanian students and 13% of international students. During the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, 35% of Romanian students and 40% of international students consumed at least one of the three products. With regard to the declared influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on behavior, among Romanian students both for smoking and e-cigarette use the percentage of those who declared a decrease in consumption (decreased the frequency/quantity, tried to quit or even succeeded to quit) was higher than the percentage of those who increased consumption (started to use or increase frequency/quantity), while for HTP was the inverse. Among international students, the percentages of those who decreased smoking or increased smoking during the pandemic were similar; for e-cigarette a tendency to decrease was noticed for more students, while HTP consumption increased for a higher percentage of students.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic had consequences on smoking and the use of novel tobacco products, which should lead to appropriate measures of tobacco control.

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Nicotine pouches market in Poland: A sale analysis

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Background

The use of tobacco products is a significant public health problem

also due to the constantly expanding catalog of new tobacco and nicotine products. Nicotine pouches, a new form of oral nicotine products, are smokeless and do not contain tobacco, consist of a cellulose matrix containing nicotine, placed inside a fiber bag. Nicotine pouches are similar in appearance and usage to snus, but do not contain tobacco and can further reduce the harmful effects of smoking. In Poland, nicotine pouches appeared on sale in 2020.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the market and sales forecasts for these products in Poland.

Methods

Euromonitor International data on the tobacco products market share in Poland were used for the analysis.

Results

In 2020, the leader on the nicotine pouches sales market in Poland was the brand 77, followed by the Killa brand and other smaller brands jointly. Euromonitor International forecasts an increase in the value of the nicotine pouches market in Poland by nearly 97% by 2025. At the same time, a 3% decrease is forecast for the overall tobacco market in Poland by 2025.

Conclusions

In the next few years, the expected increase in nicotine pouches sales in Poland is predicted. Given that nicotine pouches can appeal to a wide variety of user groups, from novice to experienced, in terms of taste and nicotine content, it is important to research and incorporate these new tobacco products into research, use control policy and practice.

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The price elasticity of heated tobacco products and cigarette demands

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Background

The market for heated tobacco products (HTPs) has grown exponentially in recent years and many governments have started to tax HTPs to regulate their use. Currently, the evidence on how prices and taxes of HTPs impact tobacco use behaviors (e.g., the own price elasticity of HTP demand and cross-price elasticity that reflect how HTP and cigarette costs would influence the consumption of each form) is lacking.

Objective

In order to fill in this evidence gap, this study uses novel HTP price and tax data to assess own price elasticity for HTP demand, as well as cross-price elasticity between HTP and cigarette consumption.

Methods

We use a unique database on quarterly retail prices of Marlboro-branded heated tobacco units and cigarettes from 2014 to 2022, developed by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, in all countries where both HTPs cigarettes are sold. We link them to quarterly sales data obtained from PMI's investors' reports for cigarette and heated tobacco and estimate own- and cross-price elasticity of cigarette and HTP demand using a seemingly unrelated regressions model.

Results

We find that HTP demand is very elastic to HTP prices, with own-price elasticity ranging between -1.6 and -2.3 in preferred specifications. By contrast, though cigarette demand responds significantly to price changes, the own-price elasticity of cigarettes is much smaller, ranging between -0.4 and -0.6.

Conclusions

The cross-price elasticity is not symmetric between products. While changes in the price of cigarettes significantly affects HTP demand, HTP price changes have no significant impact on cigarette demand.

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Particle emissions of heated tobacco products

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Tobacco industry claims that combustion does not occur in heated tobacco products (HTPs), thus the vapors contain only the evaporation products. However, many works report the emission of carbon monoxide, carbonyl compounds, and particulate matter. These are products of incomplete combustion, indicating that combustion does occur in HTPs. The first part of this work will synthesize the previous works reporting particle emissions from heated tobacco products. The second part will present the results of the test carried out in four different HTPs found in the Greek market, Glo, iQos, Lil, and Pulzze, using sticks of 6, 9, 5, 4 different flavors, respectively. The particle emissions were determined using a DustTrack and an Ethalometer; the first determines PM₁, PM_{2.5}, PM₄, PM₁₀ and total PM; the second determines the black carbon fraction of those particles. Different combinations of puff duration, duration between the puffs and device on/off between the puffs are used. The results show that all devices/sticks emit particles. These emissions start after 3 or more puffs, as the heat of the first puffs are used to evaporate the humectants of the sticks. There is a great difference between devices and sticks. The repeatability of these measurements is not very high, probably due to the high content of humectants. The part of black carbon is a very low percentage of the emitted particles.

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Conflict of interest in research on heated tobacco products: A systematic review

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Background

Tobacco companies are investing massive amounts of money to support research on heated tobacco products (HTP).

Objective

We quantified the proportion of HTP research funded by the tobacco industry and assessed any association with how authors

interpreted findings.

Methods

We conducted a systematic review of the literature through 25 February 2020 in Pubmed/Medline, Embase and the Cochrane Library, to identify all publications focusing on HTPs (PROSPERO 2020:CRD42020137394). For each study, reported tobacco industry related conflict of interest (COI) was identified based on authors' affiliations, acknowledgements, funding, and COI disclosure. Two trained reviewers, blinded to information on authors, independently evaluated the conclusions of the abstracts to categorize them as providing either a favorable, neutral, or unfavorable conclusion on HTPs and tobacco harm reduction (THR).

Results

We retrieved 211 studies, of which 122 (57.8%) had tobacco-related COIs. No studies with a declared COI were among the 42 studies assessed as against or strongly against HTPs, with 13 among 42 neutral studies (30.9%), and 109 among 127 studies evaluated as in favor or strongly in favor (85.8%). The multivariate odds ratio of being supportive of HTPs was 23.1 (95% confidence interval: 7.3–71.5) for studies with a COI.

Conclusions

The existing body of published research on HTPs is dominated by studies conducted or supported by the tobacco industry, with evidence of bias. The large majority of COI-free studies oppose HTPs. There is an urgent need to fund and sustain independent research on novel tobacco products.

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REGULATING TOBACCO PRODUCT FLAVORS

Standardization for chemical analysis of tobacco products

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International organizations such as ISO, CEN, or WHO TobLabNet, national standardization organizations, as well as industry associations, each produce standards for operating procedures for the chemical analysis of tobacco products. The interactions between different entities are complex and not always easily traceable. The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) favors the application of methods developed by WHO TobLabNet for the implementation of Article 9 and 10 of the FCTC. Additionally analytical measurements shall be performed in the frame of official tobacco control in accredited laboratories by application of well-characterized analytical procedures. Hence, the goal has to be that official tobacco control obtains quick access to reliable analytical methods for controlling tobacco products placed on its market. However, the timely development of suitable analytical methods for the official control of novel tobacco products is challenging with regard to the fast growing and dynamic market. The presentation will give a concise overview on the organization of standardization and will inform about available standard operating procedures for the chemical analysis of tobacco products, with a focus on novel tobacco products. The process of standardization will be discussed as well as possibilities for a potential improvement with regard to distribution of workload and use of resources. Examples will be

provided both from the area of tobacco products as well as from adjacent consumer protection areas.

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Tobacco companies' exploitation of loopholes in the EU menthol ban

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Background

After the EU menthol ban, a substantial proportion of adolescents and young adults in Denmark still smoke menthol cigarettes. This may be due to tobacco industry tactics to circumvent the ban.

Objective

We aim to: 1) give insights into the response of the tobacco industry to the implementation of the EU menthol ban in Denmark; 2) identify loopholes in the EU characterizing flavour ban; and 3) discuss how to make bans on menthol-flavored tobacco most effective.

Methods

We employ screening of tobacco products using online tobacco stores. We analyze samples of cigarette packages, tobacco flavor accessories, and menthol-flavored cigarette-like products purchased between December 2019 and January 2022.

Results

The products identified and analyzed in our study reveal that tobacco companies and retailers use a variety of strategies to undermine the EU menthol ban:

- Continued use of menthol as an ingredient in cigarettes (The EU TPD only bans menthol as a characterizing flavor).
- Cigarettes without menthol flavor but with menthol-like qualities (cooling effect and fresh feeling).
- Tobacco flavor accessories that enable users to customize their cigarettes with menthol and sweet flavors.
- Recessed cigarette filters with a hollow section that allows inserting smaller menthol filter tips.
- Menthol flavored cigarette-like products (cigarillos, heated tobacco etc.).
- Cigarette pack design and brand descriptors insinuating menthol-like qualities.

Conclusions

To be efficient, bans on flavored tobacco products should prohibit menthol and other additives with flavor properties, as ingredients. Ingredients that produce a cooling effect should also be banned. Legislation should prohibit flavored tobacco accessories and filter modifications which may enable tobacco companies to circumvent the flavor ban. Legislation should encompass all tobacco products to avoid the substitution of one product with another. Attention should be given to plain packaging of tobacco products as a tool to support a menthol ban.

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Flavor accessories: Increasing tobacco products' attractiveness drop-by-drop

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Background

In recent years, accessories that can add flavor to tobacco products

have been developed and marketed. These flavor accessories may increase attractiveness of tobacco products, particularly for inexperienced users.

Objective

The RIVM aim was to assess the range of flavor accessories available on the Dutch market, how they are used and marketed and what aspects make them attractive to users.

Methods

Information was acquired from Google and scientific search engines using relevant combinations of keywords. To obtain prevalence and user data, a questionnaire was disseminated among 3562 adult smokers. Sales data of tobacco products and accessories were obtained from the research agency NielsenIQ.

Results

We identified 10 types of flavor accessories on the Dutch market, including flavored filters, cards, and sprays. All were available in menthol flavor, while some were also available in (a range of) other, mostly sweet, flavors. Approximately 11% of adult cigarette smokers were current users of flavor accessories and 21% had ever used one. Three-quarters of ever users of flavor accessories opted for a product with a menthol flavor. After the ban on menthol cigarettes in May 2020, sales of flavor accessories increased by 10%. All flavor accessories make smoking more attractive, but it is not clear whether the sales of flavor accessories have led to an increase in smoking prevalence overall or in specific subgroups of smokers.

Conclusions

Flavor accessories are on the rise and potentially increase tobacco product appeal. We propose to restrict advertising and sales of these products in order to support tobacco control policies.

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Illicit purchasing and use of flavor accessories before and after the EU menthol cigarette ban: Findings from the 2020–2021 ITC Netherlands Surveys

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Background

In May 2020, the European Union (EU) banned menthol as a characterizing flavor in cigarettes. Tobacco industry strategies to undermine the ban have included claims that it will increase illicit trade and lead to new products, such as flavor accessories.

Objective

This study aimed to examine pre-post ban changes in illicit purchasing and to assess prevalence and correlates of using flavor

accessories among a sample of Dutch smokers.

Methods

Cohort data come from the ITC Netherlands Surveys among adult smokers before the menthol ban at Wave 1 (February–March 2020, N=2067) and after the ban at Wave 2 (September–November 2020, N=1752) and Wave 3 (June–July 2021, N=1721). Those lost to follow-up were replaced with a replenishment sample of smokers. Bivariate and logistic regression analyses were conducted on weighted data.

Results

Overall, reported purchasing of cigarettes that may have been smuggled remained low from Wave 1 (2.4%, 95% CI: 1.8–3.2) to Wave 2 (1.9%, 95% CI: 1.3–2.7) and Wave 3 (1.7%, 95% CI: 1.2–2.5). At Wave 3, 4.4% (95% CI: 3.5–5.5) of smokers reported using any flavor accessory (i.e. flavor cards, frustasticks, filters, drops, and/or another product). After adjusting for gender, age, education level, and flavor of usual brand, those aged 25–39 years were significantly more likely to use accessories compared to those aged ≥55 years (AOR=3.16; 95% CI: 1.53–6.52). Unsurprisingly, menthol smokers were much more likely to use accessories than non-menthol smokers (42.5% vs 3.0%, AOR=17.33; 95% CI: 9.33–32.19).

Conclusions

Despite industry arguments, the EU menthol ban did not result in increased use of illicit cigarettes. While use of flavor accessories was generally low among smokers, this was higher among young adults and menthol smokers, and warrants continued monitoring. Policy makers should be encouraged to adopt flavor bans. Impact may be maximized by also including flavor accessories, if feasible.

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Illicit cigarette purchasing after implementation of a menthol ban in Canada: Findings from the 2016–2018 ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Surveys

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Background

Canada was one of the first countries to ban menthol cigarettes between 2015 and 2017. Tobacco companies argue that menthol bans increase the illicit cigarette market.

Objective

This study examines illicit cigarette purchasing trends following implementation of menthol cigarette bans in seven Canadian provinces between 2016 and 2018 through analysis of cigarette brand purchasing among menthol and non-menthol smokers.

Methods

Analyses compared pre- and post-ban purchases of illicit menthol cigarettes among 1098 non-menthol smokers and 138 menthol smokers in Canada who completed the ITC Four Country Smoking and Vaping Survey in 2016 (pre-ban) and 2018 (post-ban). Weighted survey logistic regression models generated population level estimates.

Results

Among pre-ban menthol smokers (n=138), 19.5% reported still

smoking menthols (n=36) after the ban. However, based on reports of brand smoked, nearly half were not actually smoking menthols; 7.5% were instead smoking a non-menthol brand and 1.5% were smoking a 'menthol replacement' brand (blue). Thus, only 10.5% (n=17) were smoking a verified menthol cigarette brand, and 7.9% (n=13) last purchased a menthol cigarette brand after the ban. Among those who purchased menthol cigarettes at both pre- and post-ban (n=9), there was no difference in purchasing from a First Nations reserve before versus after the ban (51.2% vs 51.2%). There was no change in First Nations purchases among non-menthol smokers at both pre- and post-ban (n=1024; 9.1% vs 8.7%, p=0.7), nor among all smokers who purchased cigarettes at both pre- and post-ban (n=1086; 9.7% vs 9.2%, p=0.6).

Conclusions

Brand analysis demonstrated lower rates of post-ban menthol smoking compared to post-ban self-reports of smoking menthols. Purchasing illicit cigarettes did not increase among either menthol or non-menthol smokers after Canada's menthol ban. These findings provide real-world evidence casting doubt on tobacco industry claims that a menthol ban will increase the illicit trade market.

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Updates in the state of play from the Technical Group on tobacco product flavors

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The European Union (EU) Tobacco Product Directive bans tobacco products with characterizing flavors, within this process the independent advisory panel (IAP) is tasked with issuing opinions on whether a tobacco product has a characterizing flavor and as appropriate, the panel shall request input from a technical group of sensory and chemical assessors. The approach for specifying the methodology for whether a tobacco product imparts a characterizing flavor is based on a comparison of the smelling properties of test products with those of reference products through sensory analysis, complemented by a chemical assessment of the product composition through chemical analyses. Within this framework and in the past year, the Technical Group has maintained a high level of operational expertise, with over 1500 training and test samples assessed during >150 evaluation sessions, with >50 different flavor compounds tested. Within the next timeframe, the skills and behaviors of the sensory assessors will continue to be monitored and improved so as to maintain the current high level of operations needed to support IAP in its decision-making process.

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Updates from the Independent Advisory Panel on tobacco product flavors

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According to TPD, member States shall prohibit the placing on

the market of tobacco products (cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco) with a characterizing flavor. For the determination of a characterizing flavor, Member States and the Commission may consult an Independent Advisory Panel (IAP). The tasks of IAP are: that IAP shall provide opinions as to whether test products have a characterizing flavor, and to further specify and update the methodology for the technical assessment of products as set out in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/786. In addition, the Commission may consult the panel on other matters relating to the assessment of characterizing flavors. IAP is assisted for the tests from a Technical Group. IAP has established a methodology for the determination of a characterizing flavor in tobacco products. Since the publication of this methodology, IAP evaluated the products that have the suspicion of having characterizing flavors and delivers its opinion on these products.

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SMOKING CESSATION

Outcomes of an intensive smoking cessation program implemented in general practices in the Netherlands

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Background

General practitioners and practice nurses can play an important role in guiding patients who want to quit smoking. The Dutch smoking cessation guideline for general practitioners indicates that with a standard intensive intervention in combination with pharmacotherapy, quit rates of approximately 20% can be achieved. More effective approaches are needed to improve smoking cessation treatment.

Objective

Our aim was to evaluate the outcomes of a multidisciplinary smoking cessation program implemented in 14 general practices in the region of Almere, the Netherlands.

Methods

From 2019, an intensive smoking cessation program was gradually implemented in 14 general practices in the region of Almere, the Netherlands. Key elements of this program include the active attitude required from the patient (reading a self-help book, making a smoking quit plan), guidance by practice nurses specialized in smoking addiction, and the long counseling period focused on relapse prevention during one year. Patients were guided in both individual and group sessions.

Results

From 1 January 2019 to 10 May 2022, 663 patients enrolled in the smoking cessation program, of which 528 patients continued the program after the intake. Mean age was 52 years (range: 18–86 years), and 48% were male. Of all patients with complete follow-up (N=370), 38.6% reported smoking abstinence at least 12 months after entering the program. A sensitivity analysis, where patients without follow-up were coded as smokers, showed a quit rate of 28.3% after at least 12 months.

Conclusions

An intensive smoking cessation program, including a long

counseling period of one year, can be worthwhile to improve smoking treatment in general practice.

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Are low socioeconomic status smokers less willing to quit? Factors associated with desire to quit smoking, plan to quit and quit attempts in France in 2021

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Background

Findings on the associations between socioeconomic status (SES) and quit intention and quit attempts (QA) are mixed. In France, in 2014, no association was found between SES and neither desire to quit, nor QA in the last 12 months. Smoking prevalence has decreased since then and it is important to update these observations in order to adapt smoking cessation interventions, particularly in the context of major psychological changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Objective

To study the factors associated with desire to quit, plan to quit in the next 6 months and 7-day QA in the last 12 months, in France, in 2021.

Methods

The analysis is based on the Santé publique France Health Barometer, a general population survey carried out by phone using random digit dialing. Factors associated with outcomes variables were assessed using logistic regressions on 4733 daily smokers aged 18–75 years, adjusting on nicotine dependence.

Results

Desire to quit was associated with being a male (AOR=1.2; 95% CI: 1.1–1.4, $p<0.01$), aged 35–54 years (AOR=1.4; 95% CI: 1.2–1.6, compared with those aged 18–34 years, $p<0.001$) and major depression in the last 12 months (AOR=1.4; 95% CI: 1.2–1.7, $p<0.001$), but not with SES. Plan to quit in the next 6 months was less frequent among manual workers (AOR=0.8; 95% CI: 0.6–1.0, compared with professional workers, $p<0.05$). QA were associated with being a male (AOR=1.4; 95% CI: 1.2–1.6, $p<0.001$), aged 18–34 years, a high school graduate (AOR=1.3; 95% CI: 1.1–1.5, compared with lower grade, $p<0.05$) and major depression (AOR=1.2; 95% CI: 1.0–1.5, $p<0.05$). Alcohol use was negatively associated with all outcomes.

Conclusions

While desire to quit smoking was independent of SES, manual workers were less likely to plan to quit in the next future and lower educated smokers were less likely to try to quit. Associations with alcohol use and depression were observed. These results are useful to guide the design of future prevention interventions.

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Determining the feasibility of a pharmacist-delivered smoking cessation intervention for rural smokers in partnership with independent community pharmacies

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Background

Tobacco use disparities exist despite the widespread dissemination of evidence-based tobacco cessation interventions. Pharmacists are under-utilized community resources to address tobacco control, given their centralized placement in the community, clinical expertise and frequent patient interactions; however, pharmacists rarely provide tobacco cessation services to their customers due to a lack of standardized, reimbursable programs.

Objective

The goal of this study was to determine the feasibility of delivering a smoking cessation intervention through independent pharmacies in rural communities that uses a standard documentation and billing system for pharmacy reimbursement of services.

Methods

Twenty-four rural smokers were randomized in a fully crossed factorial design to: 1) QuitAid, a pharmacist delivered novel 5 session intervention (Yes vs No); 2) Combination nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) Gum + NRT Patch (vs NRT patch alone); and/or 3) 8 weeks of NRT (vs standard 4 weeks). The primary outcomes were the feasibility of the approach, as measured by feasibility of recruitment, randomization, and retention.

Results

Participants were recruited within 7 weeks using an ask-advise-connect method (66%) at a local independent pharmacy, while the rest were self-referred from store signage (16%), prescription bag advertisements (4%) and word of mouth (16%). Over 82% of the QuitAid sessions were completed, and 83% of participants were retained at the follow-up at 3 months. Overall, participants felt that the program was a good fit (Means: 3.69–4.62) and NRT was useful (Means: 4.38–4.46) on 5-point Likert scales. The community pharmacists reported that the QuitAid intervention was straightforward and well received by participants.

Conclusions

A smoking cessation intervention that utilizes a standard documentation and billing platform could provide a highly disseminable avenue for pharmacist-delivered smoking cessation for hard-to-reach smokers. Because smoking cessation medications are primarily available through pharmacies, a unique opportunity exists for pharmacists to become the recognized community resource for providing smoking cessation medication support.

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Identifying facilitators and barriers to translating the QuitAid pharmacy-delivered smoking cessation program in Poland

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Background

Smoking in Poland remains one of the most important public health challenges. Roughly a quarter Polish adults report current smoking. The rate of smoking among Polish females is high,

leading cancer, and lung cancer in particular, to rise in this group. Thus, there is a need for novel approaches to promote cessation in Poland.

Objective

The aim of the study was to examine facilitators and barriers to translating the QuitAid intervention, a pharmacy-delivered smoking cessation program developed in the United States, in Poland.

Methods

In the current study, we explored key factors necessary for adaptation and implementation of the QuitAid program in Poland and identify next steps and future directions. The QuitAid program is a 5-session pharmacist-delivered smoking cessation medication management intervention.

Results

There is a lack of data on utilizing pharmacists to deliver smoking cessation services in Poland. However, current data suggests that pharmacists are perceived as a source for smoking cessation advice by smokers. Additionally, most Polish pharmacists (79%) report sufficient knowledge to provide tobacco cessation counseling. Barriers to implementing the QuitAid intervention include a need for pharmacists to receive reimbursement for providing smoking cessation and providing pharmacotherapy at no cost to smokers interested in quitting. Other factors which will likely impact on the implementation of QuitAid in Poland include standardized training for pharmacists, a well-developed network of pharmacies and pharmacy outlets in Poland which can support the implementation of the intervention, and a standardized documentation and billing system for providing both pharmacotherapy and the QuitAid intervention.

Conclusions

Using available resources, such as pharmacists, more effectively, through a community-based approach, is critical to reduce the burden of cancer associated with smoking in Poland, particularly among females.

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Mois sans tabac: How to re-create a key interest for tobacco cessation after 6 years of the program

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Background

Mois sans tabac (MST) is a social marketing operation, inspired by the British Stoptober. Organized every November in France since 2016, it aims to encourage smokers to stop smoking for 30 days. Smokers are invited to register on a website. Between 2016 and 2019, annual registrations ranged from 158290 to 243579. Since 2020, these figures have been steadily decreasing (112933 in 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic is part of the explanation in 2021, but the loss of momentum of MST leads to rethink the device.

Objective

Our aim was to re-create engagement for MST.

Methods

Three brainstorming sessions were organized by Santé publique France with stakeholders: the project team, communication

contractors, and experts involved in MST (tobacco cessation, social marketing, field actors; n=21). The objectives were to generate new ideas to help smokers to quit tobacco. Three focus groups of low socioeconomic status smokers were conducted (15 men and 11 women) with the same objectives but also to test the ideas from the previous brainstorming sessions. An external observer attended all sessions and analyzed the results.

Results

All data concluded that MST should be maintained, as an annual event supported by public authorities. New ideas have been raised: expectations from a wider mobilization of public authorities and civil society, a strengthened support system to choose between different quitting tools, to humanize and individualize the support, the need to emphasize the collective approach and to reward smoking cessation. Differences according to the profiles of participants were observed.

Conclusions

Ideas were discussed within the project team and led to a redefinition around four axes in 2022: the reaffirmation of the collective ambition of MST, the pedagogy of the device and the quitting tools, the possibility to have a tailor-made cessation program, and the creation of a mobilizing event to reaffirm the momentum of MST.

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Transferring model of nicotine dependence treatment in University of Virginia Cancer Center to National Research Institute of Oncology

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Background

The health benefits of quitting smoking after cancer diagnosis are indisputable. Apart from disease site and stage, abstinence from smoking is considered the strongest predictor of survival in cancer patients who have ever smoked. The evidence is strong enough to incorporate tobacco dependence treatment into routine cancer care, but in Central and Eastern Europe only few cancer care institutions utilize systematic and consistent mechanism to foster cessation among patients with cancer. In contrast to CEE countries, a good example of standard smoking cessation service for cancer patients could be observed at the cancer center in The University of Virginia (UVA). A tobacco treatment program to help meet the needs for cancer patients includes medication management with the 7 FDA approved medications and individual counseling. Medications may be combined in many different ways to reduce physical withdrawals and improve rates of success. The structure of treatment is a standard developed to offer a balanced approach to meet the needs of the patient while managing their physical and mental quit journey.

Objective

The aim is to assess a possible transfer and adaptation of solutions developed at the cancer center of University of Virginia in the United States in 2021 in the Polish National Research Institute of Oncology.

Methods

Analysis of the systematic solutions toward smoking cancer

patients implemented in cancer center at University of Virginia. It includes procedures and materials given to patients and their families.

Results

Treatment at the University of Virginia has been integrated into the electronic health records and workflow of staff. Every patient is asked about tobacco use and encouraged to think about cessation. If a patient is interested, they are referred to a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist to discuss an individualized plan to work towards tobacco cessation. The program has developed a manual to assist other departments with implementing the program features in work flow through a standardized approach. Patients receive multiple sessions for medication management, cognitive behavioral counselling, and continued motivational interviewing.

Conclusions

Despite many differences between the American and Polish populations, the specificity of nicotine addiction is similar among smokers almost all over the world. Given the importance of smoking and its impact on cancer treatment outcomes, there is a strong need to research and implement best practices such as that of the University of Virginia.

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E-cigarettes and quitting smoking

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The big debate on e-cigarettes and quitting smoking is a major challenging subject for practitioner and cessation specialized offices. In my presentation I discussed the arguments in favor or against using e-cigarette for quitting smoking. I am using the recent information regarding this competition with traditional cessation drugs for quitting smoking and also I underline the new tactics of the tobacco industry to promote this new offer for smokers.

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Changes in the prevalence and profile of ex-smokers in Catalonia, Spain

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Background

Over the last few decades, smoking prevalence has been progressively decreasing both in Catalonia and in Spain as a whole. This trend is the result of a decrease in the number of young people and adolescents who start smoking, premature mortality, and smoking cessation by smokers. It is estimated that 60% of global smokers want to quit smoking and 40% try each year, despite the fact that only 30% of global smokers have access to adequate cessation services.

Objective

Our aim was to show the annual evolution of the prevalence and profile of ex-smokers among the general population of Catalonia (Spain) based on a series of population-based health surveys.

Methods

The Catalan Health Survey is a household survey carried out

periodically on random samples representative of the general population aged ≥ 15 years. We analyze responses from subjects who declared themselves to be ex-smokers between 1994 and 2021, in order to calculate changes in the prevalence of ex-smokers, their sociodemographic profile and other variables of interest.

Results

In 1994, 30.34% of the population (41.9% of men and 20.4% of women) reported themselves as daily or occasional smokers, and 14.78% (23.8% of men and 6.9% of women) as ex-smokers. By 2021, smokers had decreased to 22.6% (26.6% of men and 18.8% of women) and ex-smokers reached 26.0% (32.2% of men and 20.0% of women). The prevalence of ex-smoking has been changing over time, not only according to gender, but also with respect to other variables such as age, education level and social class.

Conclusions

Smoking cessation has contributed significantly to the reduction of smoking prevalence in the Catalan population. However, the unequal distribution of smoking cessation contributes to increasing social and gender inequalities in health.

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National scale-up of the TITAN Greece and Cyprus Primary Care Tobacco Treatment Training Network: Efficacy, assets, and lessons learned

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Background

European Tobacco Treatment guidelines recommend that all primary care providers be prepared to deliver evidence-based treatment to address tobacco use in their patients.

Objective

The TiTAN Greece and Cyprus Project aim was to support and evaluate the national scale-up of a training-based intervention and clinical tools for tobacco treatment among primary care

practitioners (PCPs) in Greece and Cyprus.

Methods

A pre-post evaluation was conducted with measurement occurring before, immediately following and at 6 months following exposure to the training intervention. All PCPs in five geographical regions in Greece (Crete, Athens, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Kerkira) and Nicosia (Cyprus) were invited to participate in partnership with the regions medical school and local health authority. Participating PHC were exposed to a 1-day training program, a 3-hour booster training session, and toolkit to assist with integrating evidence-based tobacco treatments into their clinical practice routines.

Results

A total of 300 people (58% of eligible PCPs) participated in the training intervention. High-levels of satisfaction were reported for the training-curricula, speakers, and clinical tools. Significant increases in PCPs' knowledge, self-efficacy, intentions, and rates of tobacco treatment delivery (5As) were documented following exposure to the intervention. Pre-post rates of tobacco treatment were: Ask, pre 76.7% vs post 86.9% ($p=0.02$); Advise, pre 53.2% vs post 76.0% ($p<0.001$); Assess, pre 48.5% vs post 59.7% ($p=0.03$); Assist, pre 27.8% vs post 56.2% ($p<0.001$); and Arrange, pre 22.4% vs post 53.3% ($p<0.001$). Among the 47 PCPs who reported current smoking at baseline, 31.9% reported they quit smoking at the follow-up at 6 months.

Conclusions

The TITAN Greece and Cyprus training program, toolkit and dissemination model used was very well received by the PCP community and was effective in increasing rates of tobacco treatment delivery. Sustaining such training networks is warranted and requires further attention. Lessons learned and training assets may be of value for other European countries.

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TOBACCO OR HEALTH

Relationship between smoking and health outcomes in menopausal women in the district of Vlora, Albania

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Background

Every woman will experience menopause at middle age, but those who smoke will have it much sooner. Previous studies have also shown that smoking can modify the health outcomes of menopausal women.

Objective

We investigated whether smoking is associated with earlier age at menopause and adverse health outcomes among menopausal women in the district of Vlora, Albania.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted with a randomly selected sample among 350 women aged 30–60 years who visited primary health center No.4 in the city of Vlora for non/gynecological reasons, during the period April–September 2021. The severity of menopausal symptoms was measured using the menopause rating scale (MRS). The WHO STEPS Instrument was used to

assess the risk profile of menopausal women. Regarding 'smoking status', 'smokers' were defined as those who currently smoked or 'past smokers', and 'non-smokers' as those who never smoked. We used the statistical program SPSS, version 20.0 for data analysis.

Results

The mean age of menopause was 48.3 ± 3.98 years, with 3.1% of the women experienced premature menopause and 8.3% early menopause; 39% of participants are smokers. Smoking was significantly associated with early menopausal age ($OR=2.35$, $p<0.05$), vasomotor symptoms ($p<0.001$), and elevated blood pressure ($p=0.041$).

Conclusions

Smoking affects early menopause and worsens health outcomes of participants. Increased awareness on adverse effects of smoking in the menopausal population should be a priority of public health in the district of Vlora.

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A global analysis of the association between cigarette taxation and neonatal and infant mortality

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Background

Although tobacco taxation has been shown to improve infant survival in high-income countries, evidence on the impact of different taxation levels and structures at a global level is lacking.

Objective

To explore longitudinal associations of cigarette taxes with neonatal and infant mortality globally.

Methods

We conducted country-level panel regressions using annual mortality data and biennial WHO tobacco taxation data (2008–2018) to explore the association between type of taxes (i.e. specific cigarette taxes, ad valorem taxes, and other taxes, import duties and VAT) and neonatal/infant mortality. Covariates included other WHO recommended tobacco control policies, socioeconomic, healthcare, and air quality, variables.

Results

In a total of 159 countries, we found that a 10 percentage-point increase in total cigarette tax as a percentage of the retail price was associated with a 2.6% (95% CI: 1.9– 3.2) decrease in neonatal mortality and a 1.9% (95% CI: 1.3–2.6) decrease in infant mortality globally. Based on the above, we estimated that a global 10 percentage-point increase in total tax would have prevented 77946 (95% CI: 49555–106130) infant deaths including 64177 (95% CI: 46570–81653) neonatal deaths in 2018. A 10 percentage-point increase in specific tax and ad valorem tax

was associated with a similar level of reduction in neonatal (2.3% vs 2.5%, respectively) and infant mortality (1.7% in both cases).

Conclusions

Increasing cigarette taxes was associated with lower neonatal and infant mortality across 159 countries. Hence, meeting the WHO recommendations for tobacco taxation (at least 75% of the retail price) could provide great benefits, especially in countries with low taxation levels and high infant mortality.

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Smoking and pregnancy

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Background

Tobacco use does not cause problems only to users but also to others around them. A critical problem is tobacco use during pregnancy. This attitude could affect not only the health of the mother but also that of the fetus.

Objective

This study aimed to evaluate the level of smoking in pregnant women and the connection of smoking with problems to the fetus.

Methods

This was a cross-sectional study conducted in the city of Vlora, Albania, over the period June 2019 – June 2021. Two healthcare centers located in the city of Vlora (urban area) were selected for data collection. In each, questionnaires were distributed only to primiparous women during the time they presented for checks, but interviews were conducted with mothers who gave birth during this period and visited for routine checks.

Results

In total, 1330 women participated in the study, of which 940 women were pregnant and 390 who had given birth. Of these, 28% were smokers before pregnancy, and 8% did not quit smoking while pregnant, and 3% reported that they started smoking with the onset of the pandemic. In all, 5% of the women smokers had a miscarriage, while 10% of women who smoked gave birth to babies of low birth weight, and 6% of the women who smoked gave birth prematurely. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and placenta previa occurred in 2%. Mothers who reported having less breast milk and were smokers were 9%.

Conclusions

This study confirms that there is a connection between fetal complications and maternal smoking. Quitting smoking significantly reduces the health risks of the fetus and newborns and minimizes fatalities. Since smoking causes serious health problems for both mother and baby, it is necessary to have more consulting sessions with smoking mothers. It is also recommended that smoking should be stopped at the moment of conception or at any moment during pregnancy. Education of future mothers from healthcare personnel for tobacco cessation should be a priority of healthcare systems.

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How healthy are public health service delivery workers? A mixed method study comparing the health and well-being of public health workers with the general

population in England

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Background

Whilst it might be anticipated that those working in health promotion roles exhibit an improved personal health profile, or exhibit healthier lifestyle choices, research has shown that the healthcare workforce exhibits the same health behaviors as the general population. There has been a substantial amount of research in relation to health professionals in general and very little research conducted with those working in public health.

Objective

To examine and review the health and wellbeing of health professionals employed by a private provider of public health delivery services and compare it to the general population.

Methods

A mixed method design was employed, consisting of a survey and semi-structured interviews. A total sample of 63 employees completed an online survey and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 of those participants.

Results

The mean BMI and percentage of those overweight or obese were significantly different and lower than those of the general population: BMI (24.79 vs 27.5, $p < 0.0001$), overweight/obese (34.4% vs 63%, $p < 0.0001$). The smoking prevalence, mean number of fruit and vegetable portions consumed per day and percentage of those meeting 'active' physical activity status were also all better and significantly different to the general population: smoking (1.6% vs 17%, $p < 0.0001$), fruit and vegetables (7.354 vs 3.7, $p = 0.0001$), percentage 'active' (98% vs 73%, $p < 0.0001$). The mean units of alcohol consumed per week were better but not significantly different (10.31 vs 12.3, $p = 0.3268$). Thematic analysis of the interviews highlighted five key themes: environment, social support, knowledge, motivation, and perceived health; with multiple subthemes.

Conclusions

Those working in public health delivery services are more inclined to 'practice what they preach' in terms of their own health and wellbeing, when compared to other health professional groups and are significantly healthier than the general population.

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Chronotype and smoking: A systematic review

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Background

Humans' natural inclination to be more or less active at a certain time during the day is known as chronotype. Three main phenotypic variants of chronotype exist: morning, evening, and neither. These features are known to be connected with stimulant consumption (e.g. alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco) and nowadays research is focusing on the relationship between chronotypes and tobacco smoking or vaping.

Objective

The aim of this systematic review was to evaluate the scientific evidence on the associations between human chronotype and tobacco smoking or vaping.

Methods

On 29 April 2022 a systematic search of the scientific literature was performed on three different databases (PUBMED, Web of Sciences, Scopus). Studies assessing chronotype and its relationship with tobacco smoking or vaping were included. Any type of study design, in English, sampling any age group from all over the world was considered. Quality assessment was performed with Joanna Briggs Institute Critical Appraisal tools.

Results

The search yielded 538 articles, of which six (one retrospective case-control and five cross-sectional studies) were included in the review. Despite differences in quality, participants' characteristics and the lack of studies on vaping, most of them reported a relationship between tobacco smoking and chronotypes. In particular, smokers tend to be more of an evening type, have larger coffee and alcohol consumption and greater differences in waking up time between weekdays and weekends (Wittmann et al. 2010, $p=0.001$).

Conclusions

This review aims to systematically characterize the smoking effects on a specific chronotype. Albeit that this topic has potential, a small number of studies were published. This review underlines the importance for future studies to focus on this field, mostly considering the fact that adjusting smoking cessation treatment based on an individual's chronotype attitude, could increase smoking cessation and psychological well-being.

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Training general practitioners in Greece in 'Very Brief Advice' on smoking: The FRESH AIR Project

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Background

Greece has the highest rates of smoking in the European Union. However, smoking cessation advice and treatment is limited, especially in primary care.

Objective

This pilot study explored whether training in 'Very Brief Advice (VBA)' on smoking results in changes in VBA confidence and delivery among general practitioners (GPs) in Crete, Greece.

Methods

A mixed-methods, pre-post evaluation study was undertaken. The 1-day VBA training developed by UK's National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training was locally adapted and delivered to a purposively selected sample of GPs. GPs' self-efficacy (1–5 scale), self-reported practice behaviors related to VBA (ASK, ADVICE, ACT) and satisfaction with the training were assessed through questionnaires before, immediately after

and one month following the training. Changes in outcomes were explored through Cochran's Q tests with post hoc McNemar's test, or Friedman's tests with post hoc Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted to assess training acceptability and feasibility.

Results

Twenty-nine GPs participated in the pilot training [62.1% male, median (IQR) age: 44.5 (5.8) years]. The majority (79.3%) reported that the training improved their skills and that they would recommend it to others (93.1%). Statistically significant increases were found pre vs post training in GPs' self-efficacy in advising patients on the best methods to quit [median (IQR) score: 3 (1) vs 5 (2), $p=0.002$] and providing cessation support [median (IQR) score: 3 (0) vs 4 (2), $p=0.030$]. Qualitative interviews indicated that the training increased GPs' persistence in addressing smoking and improved their communication style. However, further training is needed to enhance skills in addressing smoking with patients with low motivation/confidence to quit.

Conclusions

The VBA training was well-received by participating GPs and increased self-efficacy and rates at which they addressed smoking. Training GPs in VBA may offer a low cost and promising strategy for addressing tobacco use, when tailored to local contexts.

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Crowding-out effect of tobacco consumption in Serbia

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Background

Although smoking prevalence and intensity in Serbia have decreased in recent years, expenditures on tobacco products still represent a significant portion of household budgets. As households have limited resources at their disposal, consuming tobacco means that they spend less on other items such as food, clothing, education, and health care. This is particularly true for low-income households, for whom the pressure on the household budget is even higher.

Objective

We estimate the effect of tobacco consumption on other consumption items.

Methods

We use an approach that includes a combination of seemingly unrelated regression and instrumental variables. Besides estimating the overall effect, we analyze the differences in effects between low-, medium- and high-income households.

Results

Expenditures on tobacco reduce consumption on food, clothing, and education and increase the budget shares spent on complementary consumption items such as alcohol, hotels, bars, and restaurants. In most cases the effects are more pronounced for low-income households than for other groups. The results suggest that aside from the negative effects of tobacco consumption on health, it also distorts the household consumption structure, while affecting intra-household allocation and future health and development of other household members. The results from this research underline the negative effect that tobacco expenditures have on consumption of other products. The only

way for households to decrease expenditures on tobacco is to stop smoking, as the demand of those who continue smoking changes less than cigarette prices.

Conclusions

To ensure that households stop smoking and instead direct their expenditures towards more productive purposes, the Serbian government should adopt new policies and strengthen enforcement of existing tobacco control measures.

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QUIT SMOKING FOR VALENTINE'S DAY! Awareness campaign targeting young people and focusing on smoking related risks, and benefits of quitting

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Background

Considering their ability to reach a large number of people, social media and particularly Instagram, due to its characteristic to spread image-based communication, are increasingly being used to promote health. UNITAB, the Tobacco's Science Unit of the University 'Sapienza' in Rome, Italy, organizes awareness-raising campaigns directed to young people, with the aim to increase their awareness on tobacco related issues and to encourage cessation.

Objective

To increase the number of interactions of young people with UNITAB Instagram page.

Methods

On Valentine's Day, a campaign was launched on Instagram, targeting young people and focusing on the topic of love, tobacco and positive outcomes achieved after quitting. Two stories and 27 posts were published: 14 with a common layout, and 13 with non-specific graphics and different communication techniques, but sharing the same logo. The chosen images deliberately contained positively expressed messages showing the benefits of quitting, rather than the possible negative effects of smoking.

Results

The campaign was from 14 to 28 February 2022, and according to data collected on UNITAB Instagram profile on 12 May 2022, reached 1093 accounts (940 of those were non-followers of the profile). This number was reached through views of both posts and stories, corresponding to a +351% increase in views compared to the previous quarter (before the campaign). In addition, there were 41 new profile subscribers and 10 drop-outs, a gain of 31 new followers. There were 364 visits to the Instagram page, corresponding to a +29.9% compared to the previous quarter period.

Conclusions

The campaign on Instagram has considerably increased users' interactions with the UNITAB Instagram profile. Health promotion, focusing mainly on the advantages and benefits of smoking cessation, seems to be a key point for increasing young people's interest in quitting.

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JOINT ACTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

Work Package 5 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: EU-CEG data and enhanced laboratory capacity for regulatory purposes

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Background

JATC2-WP5 is somewhat the legacy of the previous Joint Action on Tobacco Control (2017–2020). It focuses on tobacco and related products from the point of view of their characteristics as reported into the manufacturers' notifications through EU-CEG, the EU Common Entry Gate, or analyzed by independent laboratories. In this work package, by acting as a focal point between end users and European Commission, WP5 partners aim at strengthening cooperation, providing relevant tools and sustainable support to Member States (MS) Competent Authorities (CA) to use EU-CEG data and product analyses for effective enforcement of the regulation.

Objective

Specific objectives of WP5 include: 5.1 To support MSCA in EU-CEG data handling and propose improvements to enhance user experience; 5.2 To assess tobacco and related products information as submitted via EU-CEG; and 5.3 To facilitate increased technical, analytical and laboratory capacities to support, in particular, compliance enforcement and assessment.

Methods

Starting from the needs of MSCA regarding EU-CEG data handling, WP5 partners are developing a set of procedures and a dashboard tool, based on open-source software, to integrate raw EU-CEG XML data into a workable database for further processing: quality and compliance assessment, curation, mapping with external sources, analyses and visualizations. This WP5 will also build a merged European dataset with shared EU-CEG data for a cross-country analysis. Regarding laboratory activities, developing a common standard operating procedure (SOP) for untargeted analysis of e-liquids is a concrete opportunity to strengthen the collaboration between the members of this network.

Results

Nine months since the start of this 3 years' project, the first building blocks of the program have been set. All the end users from MSCA and laboratories are identified and have been informed about the goals and their involvement. They have access to a secure and sustainable Extranet platform (EU CircaBC) to download resources such as, tools, procedures, user guides or get support through a helpdesk forum. Listening to their needs, establishing the legal and technical framework for data sharing, providing ready-to-publish EU-CEG data files and showing how to deal with thousands of XML product submissions are the first outcomes achieved by the WP5 partners for the benefit of MSCA.

Conclusions

By the end of the JATC2 project, and thanks to the tools and the work provided by WP5 partners, all MSCA, whatever their initial experience about EU-CEG data or their current access to laboratory resources, will reach a minimum standard of skills and a better knowledge on the tobacco and related products placed on their market.

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Work Package 6 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Enforcement of the Tobacco Products Directive through the establishment of a knowledge sharing hub network

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Background

As it is stated in the problem analysis of the JATC2 project proposal: It is time to re-strategize and develop a collective approach to improve the implementation of the TPD and develop endgame strategies.

Objective

The general objective of WP6 is to strengthen the EU Member States' capacities in the enforcement of tobacco product regulation at the EU Member States and EU-wide level through the sharing of common experiences, challenges and solutions.

Methods

In WP6 specific objectives are to map all EU authorities within the field of tobacco regulation, in order to establish a network of tobacco regulation authorities. The purpose is to enhance knowledge sharing between enforcement authorities across the EU. Knowledge is shared in knowledge hub meetings, and later on a knowledge-sharing platform in order to create a knowledge hub network. Knowledge Hub Meetings are a space for member states to teach and to learn. The purpose is an open and active dialog concerning everyday issues regarding tobacco enforcement. The aim is to give participants concrete and valuable tools they can use. The purpose of creating a Knowledge Hub Platform is to create an archive, which will serve as a knowledge database on tobacco enforcement. The archive will be accessible to all relevant EU authorities.

Results

We have identified and mapped almost all the relevant EU authorities, which is now in use as a contact list. We have also hosted the first of six Knowledge Hub Meetings. The topics were menthol in cigarettes and tobacco surrogates, with presentations from different member states, where the participants had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions. The next meeting will be in October/November.

Conclusions

WP6 activities are progressing.

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Work Package 7 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Health impact and regulatory implications of e-cigarettes and novel tobacco products

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Background

A growing number of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes enter the European markets. These products vary considerably in their properties, which results in different health impacts to users. Moreover, these products continue to evolve at a speed that may outpace current regulation.

Objective

In Work Package 7 of JATC 2, we aim to develop a better understanding of the properties, health impact and regulatory implications of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes, to support effective information and regulation.

Methods

To gain insight into the variation of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes between countries, and we will explore and compare product level data from the European Common Entry Gate (EU-CEG). We prepared a questionnaire about availability and regulation of these products, which was shared among EU regulators. Further in WP7, the use, abuse potential and health risks of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes will be evaluated. In addition, we will collect information on the reporting of adverse incidents associated with the use of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes across the EU. We aim to create a harmonized approach to collecting these data. Finally, we will produce information sheets and host a webinar to inform regulators about our findings.

Results

Research questions and approaches have been defined for EU-CEG data processing and evaluation of health effects. Information on availability and regulation of novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes was collected from 21 countries. As expected, due to the collective implementation of the Tobacco Products Directive, we found mostly similarities and few differences between countries. More elaborate results of this questionnaire will be presented at the symposium.

Conclusions

WP7 activities are progressing and further outcomes will be shared throughout the duration of the project. Our results will support EU Member States' training, capacity building and information sharing on novel tobacco products and e-cigarettes.

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Work Package 8 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Smoke-free environments and tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) legislation in Europe

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Background

Among the WHO regions, Europe has the highest prevalence of tobacco smoking among adults (28%) and one of the highest prevalence of tobacco use among adolescents. The second Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2 (JATC2) aims to cultivate a community of knowledge-sharing across Member States. It will harvest the value of best practices concerning the enforcement and market surveillance in order to improve the implementation of the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD), the Tobacco Advertising Directive (TAD) and develop endgame strategies to protect their citizens from secondhand smoke (SHS) and aerosols.

Objective

The objectives are to outline and disseminate best practices for addressing upcoming challenges to aerosol- and smoke-free environments implementation (Framework Convention on Tobacco Control FCTC Art.8 and Art.18) and to assess the implementation and impact of tobacco advertisement, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) (FCTC Art.13) in Europe.

Methods

Qualitative and quantitative analysis of information on barriers, opportunities and best practices for achieving aerosol and smoke-free environments. The results of the consultation will be further discussed with the experts at a symposium to reach a consensus on best practices identification. A consultation to experts on how to address challenges for the application of the EU bans on cross-border and internet TAPS will be conducted.

Results

A harmonized approach to establishing aerosol and smoke-free environments including but not limited to outdoor areas and some private settings disseminated via: 1) Weight of evidence paper, 2) webinar, 3) Web-based repository, and 4) Position paper. A recommendation to update the applicable rules on TAPS undertaken by Member States and develop weight of evidence for a new TAD.

Conclusions

Collaboration and cooperation between Member States is vital for the success of the project to develop sustainable policy recommendations for the expansion of aerosol and smoke-free environments and comprehensive research on the applicability of TPD and TAD.

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Work Package 9 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Best practices to develop an effective and comprehensive tobacco endgame strategy

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Background

In 2021, the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan established a 'Tobacco-Free Generation' goal where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040 in Europe. The work package WP9 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2 (JATC2) aims to provide tools to put forward actions in line with this goal and supports the implementation of the 'Global Strategy to Accelerate Tobacco Control: Advancing Sustainable Development through the Implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) 2019–2025 and 'Making tobacco a thing of the past: Roadmap of actions to strengthen implementation of the WHO FCTC in the European Region 2015–2025'.

Objective

Specific objectives are: a) To identify and assess tobacco endgame strategies and forward-looking tobacco control policies for the European region; b) To explore best practices in the development, implementation and evaluation of tobacco endgame strategies and forward-looking tobacco control policies; and c) To promote best practices and facilitate the development of national tobacco endgame strategies in Europe, in synergy with WP4 and other WPs.

Methods

WP9 synthesizes information from existing global tobacco control databases and collects new information on advanced and innovative measures with a questionnaire (in collaboration with WP4) and through key stakeholder interviews. The integration of tobacco cessation support to national tobacco endgame strategies will also be assessed. A literature review will be conducted to assess the available evidence.

Results

Our results to date include a Workshop for key policy makers, regulators and researchers to discuss traditional and forward-looking approaches (Milestone 9.2). It was organized as an online pre-COP9 (Conference of the Parties of the WHO FCTC) event in November 2021. The workshop was attended by over 60 participants and together with other WP9 activities it forms the basis for the deliverables, which include a report of tobacco endgame strategies for the European region, recommendations for research and an online toolkit to disseminate best practices.

Conclusions

The workshop provided valuable insights and supported the development of a tobacco endgame framework to guide the work in the WP9, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and networking for tobacco endgame. Activities are progressing and synergies with other WPs are reviewed regularly.

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Work Package 4 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Sustainability and cooperation across Europe

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Background

The general objective of the WP 4 of JATC 2, is to ensure that the activities of the Joint Action 2 are developed and continue after the end of the project, through sustainable resources and the further development of the EU cooperation on tobacco control activities. A close collaboration with vertical WPs is ongoing in

order to achieve the identification of best practices, to ensure the sustainability of the activities and to organize webinars for strengthening the cooperation among EU Member States.

Objective

Specific objectives are: a) To promote collaboration with other EU MS and national, regional and international bodies and organizations involved in tobacco control and regulatory science and policy; b) To facilitate the exchange of knowledge and to identify best practices related to the TPD and TAD through production of guidance documents and a core questionnaire; and c) To identify and provide linkages between JATC 2 actions and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.

Methods

Webinars are planned on the following topics: NCD reduction and links to the Europe's beating Cancer Plan, tobacco industry interference, SHS and TAPS, Tobacco endgame strategies, and Sustainability. Documentation and literature review for the Guidance documents in collaboration with WP8 and WP9. Preparation of documents related to identification of linkages between JATC2 activities and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the frames of cooperation with EC.

Results

The Guidance documents: How to identify best practices and Core module questionnaire to identify potential best practices (Milestone 4.3 and 4.4) were finalized. These documents provide a common basis to be adjusted for WP8 and WP9-specific questionnaires. Milestones 4.1: Identify a list of topics and deliverables of the JATC 2 that could facilitate the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, and 4.2: Identify the frames of cooperation with the European Commission concerning possible contribution to Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, were also prepared.

Conclusions

WP4 activities are progressing and other material will be produced throughout the duration of the project in collaboration with other WPs.

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Work Package 3 of the Joint Action on Tobacco Control 2: Evaluation of the Action

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Background

WP3's purpose is to support the project coordinator, WP leaders and all project staff with all aspects of project implementation, output production and the achievement of outcomes in terms of utilization of outputs.

Objective

The main objectives are: a) The optimization of the implementation of project activities with a special focus on the communication and cooperation within and among WPs; b) The monitoring of the timeliness and quality of project outputs; and c) To assess if the outcomes of the JATC2 meet the needs of the project's target group regarding their utility.

Methods

The Evaluation is internal, combines process and outcome evaluation and uses a responsive approach. Mixed Methods are used to answer the following evaluation questions. Process evaluation: a) What are the planned project outputs?; b) Which of them are

'key' in terms of dependencies of other outputs?; c) Are outputs submitted in time? and in case of delays, Which factors account for them and how can those be influenced?; d) How satisfied are the people involved in the project activities with the quality of project implementation in general, and in particular of outputs?; and e) To what extent do the outputs meet the needs of people involved in the implementation of project activities? How can they be optimized?. Outcome evaluation: a) What are the projects 'main' outputs that should be used by the stakeholders?; b) To what extent are main outputs being used by their intended addressees?; c) Which factors influence utilization?; and d) How do the users of the outputs assess their utility/usability? How can they be improved?.

Results

The Evaluation plan (D3.1) and its corresponding Milestones (M3.1, M3.2 and M3.3) have been finalized.

Conclusions

The Evaluation activities are ongoing and will feed into the main outputs: Interim Evaluation Report (D3.2) and the Final Evaluation Report (D3.3).

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Dissemination of information and results of Joint Action on Tobacco Control (JATC-2) to the target audiences: Public, regulators and researchers

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Background

One of the main goals of JATC-2 is to strengthen cooperation between European countries in the area of tobacco control and facilitate dissemination of knowledge regarding best practices for tobacco control and enforcement of Tobacco Products Directive, Tobacco Advertising Directive and the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, contributing also to the new European Cancer Action Plan.

Objective

The general objective of Work Package 2 (WP2) is to maximize

the impact of the action by supporting the consultation with stakeholders and the dissemination of the project's processes, updates, results, and recommendations of JATC 2 to the target audiences.

Methods

We will: a) create JATC-2 visual identity and communication tools (new logo, project leaflets, templates, e-newsletters, website and social media accounts); b) create a dissemination plan for the development and reporting of all dissemination activities for promoting health literacy in the field of tobacco; c) perform a Stakeholders Analysis aiming at mapping the stakeholders involved in tobacco control in all partner Member States including existing networks and EU-funded or international projects, policy makers, professionals, other stakeholders and a wider audience at EU level; and d) participate in EU level dissemination events and organize the JATC-2 final conference.

Results

Logo and templates were finalized to be used by all project partners, and social media accounts and dissemination plan were created. First project leaflet, website and stakeholder analysis are being prepared.

Conclusions

WP2 activities are progressing throughout the project in collaboration with other WPs to stimulate the interest and the attention of the scientific community and policy makers at national and European level as well as to help general public to gain knowledge regarding various aspects referred to tobacco consumption.

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TOBACCO ENDGAME SYMPOSIA

The challenge of an end game scenario in a context of health inequalities in Belgium

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Background

In Belgium, much of the reduction in the prevalence of tobacco use can be attributed to long-term policies, most of them adopted during the last twenty years at federal and regional level. Implementing the FCTC MPOWER model, restrictive legislation on accessibility to tobacco products, protection of non-smokers at work place and in indoor public spaces, adoption of neutral packaging, total ban on advertisements, protection of minors in cars, support of tobacco-dependence services through quit lines and first line assistance centers, and gradual increase in taxation, has been the main achievement of tobacco control policies.

Objective

To denormalize tobacco use across all income groups.

Methods

A social process to denormalize tobacco use has been implemented that produced results. However, new measures and strategies are required to cover all income groups.

Results

In the region of Wallonia, smoking prevalence is currently at 18.8% (daily smokers) while in the northern part of the country the

prevalence is even less at 13.4%. Nevertheless, in an apparently favorable context, the prevalence rate of tobacco use between 1997 and 2018 remained steady in Wallonia in the lowest income group (>500 and <1380€), fluctuating between 29.7% and 31.5%. It fell substantially from 21.6% to 13.4% in the highest income group (>3800€). The prevalence gap between the lowest and the highest income groups more than doubled in twenty years, from 8.1% to 18.1%.

Conclusions

Denormalization of tobacco use is not a reality for all, as measures taken in the past seem to have been ineffective in reducing a widening gap between income groups. Despite good results for high/middle SES populations, will efforts of denormalization allow the target of <5% in adult smokers by 2037, as the Belgium Alliance aims, without new measures and strategies to cover all income groups?

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TOBACCO DENORMALIZATION: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ACCELERATE TOBACCO CONTROL (FRANCE ACT SESSION)

Denormalizing tobacco: An innovative approach to accelerate tobacco control

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Each year, 8 million people worldwide die from smoking. And this industrial pandemic is caused by an industry whose products kill half of its consumers. If smoking prevention actions aimed towards smokers remain essential to ensure the emergence of the first tobacco-free generations by the next decades, it is necessary to renew these actions with additional measures led by the civil society. The notion of 'denormalization' of tobacco, first developed on the other side of the Atlantic in the early 2000s, offers a new way to develop tobacco prevention campaigns by shedding light on the sources of this major public health pandemic: the tobacco industry itself and the unknown consequences of its activities, especially on the human rights and the protection of the environment. Deploying a combination of communication tools traditionally used by the tobacco industry (public relations, influence marketing and advocacy actions) and through the renewal of the storytelling around tobacco consumption and its industry, tobacco control organizations can change the social perception of tobacco products and the industry, in society. Organizations like ASH or Partn'air are leading at a European and international level innovative actions contributing to this objective of denormalization. France has some of the highest rates of youth smoking in Europe. In 2019, 36% of those aged 15–24 years were reported as daily and occasional smokers, which was the second highest in Europe. To combat this, urgent changes are needed concerning the country's prevention approach, which is the main objective of Alliance Contre le Tabac (ACT). This French NGO, a coalition of major associations for tobacco control in France financed by the French fund against addictions, has been implementing since 2020 the first denormalization program in France. ACT's campaigns seek to change the French prevention paradigm by moving away from a purely health-based approach to

an overall societal one, engaging young audiences who are usually less receptive to preventive messages based on health warnings. The ACT will present the results of its two first mass media campaigns that have been released so far with success: 'Free Women' in 2021 and 'Change their future' in 2022. The ACT and its partners, besides public health institutions, are committed to the tobacco End Game and the emergence of the first tobacco-free generations in France.

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TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE & TOBACCO AND WAR

Tobacco Industry Interference Index, Poland 2021

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Background

Tobacco industry interference weakens public health policy across the globe. It is important to monitor tobacco industry activities to strengthen defence.

Objective

To assess the influence of tobacco industry companies on the government's public health policies in Poland.

Methods

This study makes an assessment of the intensity, frequency, and severity of incidents of tobacco industry interference reported in Poland in 2020 and the government's response to these incidents. The research is based on a questionnaire developed by SEATCA for its Tobacco Industry Interference Index (TIII) and scoring guidelines. To complete TIII of 20 indicators under seven key themes for Poland, five reviewers separately searched for evidence. This report was written by a scoping review of: the legal basis, Polish media websites, the Polish government and local government websites, and social media of tobacco industry companies.

Results

Tobacco companies had an impact on the act on excise duty and certain other acts (*Ustawa o zmianie ustawy o podatku akcyzowym oraz niektórych innych ustaw*), they took part in discussions and their proposals were taken into account. This act was signed by the President of Poland on 8 April 2021. Tobacco industry received a tax delay on e-cigarette liquids in 2020. The delay in introducing the tax coincided with the presidential election. The government cooperates with the tobacco industry in obtaining data concerning illegal tobacco trade. The tobacco industry contracts research companies to research this topic and passes the data on to the government.

Conclusions

The results of the study suggest that tobacco companies have a considerable impact on public health policies. In Poland, which currently has no specific regulation constraining tobacco industry

lobbying, implementation of the provisions of WHO FCTC Article 5.3 is needed to limit interactions between the government and the tobacco industry, ensure transparency of such interactions, and foremost, denormalize tobacco industry interference with policymaking. Government should be independent from the tobacco industry when it comes to illegal tobacco trade analyses.

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How tobacco industry shapes tobacco control policies to its advantage: Methodological and ethical aspects of the investigation

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Researchers of the Smoke-free Life Coalition investigated how tobacco industry (TI) conveys its messages and interests to decision-makers in Bulgaria and distorts the country's health policies in its favor. Investigated messages include: denial and undermining of anti-tobacco measures, including FCTC; constructing an appealing image of TI; opposing of increased tobacco taxation; and promoting smokeless tobacco products as 'less harmful'. The study reveals a complex mechanism, involving third-party intermediaries who receive funding, grants and donations from TI. They formulate policy recommendations and statements to the industry's convenience, which are then submitted to institutions, shaping tobacco control policies. Identified intermediaries funded by TI include: law firms, a National Patient Organization, a health conference organizer/publisher, high-profile think tanks, as well as other prominent academic institutions, charitable foundations, and mass media. The end recipients include MPs, the ministries of economy and finance, the Customs Agency among other institutions and individuals who formulate or implement the state's tobacco control policies. The operational model of this mechanism is observed in specific cases, such as: government debates over tobacco taxation (including heated tobacco products) and its alleged impacts on illicit trade; a proposed National Council for Coordinating the Implementation of the FCTC; TI-sponsored grants, projects and corporate social responsibility, whitewashing the industry's public image. This study looks analytically at the methodological, data-gathering and analytical approaches employed, and discusses critically the lessons learned by the investigators, including but not limited to: field work methods, access to sources and information, and ethical and professional dilemmas including safety, identity, credibility, communicating and effective use of the findings.

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How Big Tobacco is leveraging reduced risk products to delay the adoption of WHO-FCTC policies and addict youth

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Background

The so-called Reduced Risk Products (RRP), e.g. Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs), e-cigarettes, and oral nicotine pouches (ONP), are aggressively advertised on the internet and social media by multinational tobacco companies as a safer alternative to traditional combustible tobacco products like cigarettes. Tobacco companies are also leveraging these products to position themselves as part of the solution to the global tobacco epidemic.

Objective

CTFK has reasons to believe that Big Tobacco is exploiting these products to confuse and distract policymakers, influencers, and the public, and delay the adoption of effective science-based WHO-FCTC policies. We also believe Big Tobacco, through these new products, is trying to addict a new generation of young users. The aim is to present case studies to affirm this belief.

Methods

The presentation will feature a global overview and case studies in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Ukraine.

Results

The case studies show that multinational tobacco companies leverage so-called Reduced Risk Products to addict young people, confound decision-makers, and slow down the approval of WHO-FCTC policies.

Conclusions

Countries and regional international organizations like the European Union should consider banning the online marketing of these addicting products.

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International tobacco companies fund Russia's war against Ukraine

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Since the invasion of Ukraine began, almost 1000 companies have curtailed operations in Russia. Huge corporations can turn down profits in Russia because their reputation is more valuable than their earnings for many of them. But some of them remain. The tobacco giants continue to operate in Russia and fill the budget of the Russian state with taxes. It shows once again that windfall profits have always been more important to Big Tobacco than human lives. The head offices of tobacco companies in official positions condemn the war against Ukraine. They also stated that they would reduce their presence in the Russian Federation, but it didn't go any further. The largest foreign companies that remained in Russia, excluding banks, pay about \$20 billion annually to the Russian budget. Almost 30% of this amount (\$5.73 billion) are owed to tobacco giants. Philip Morris International (PMI) – the tobacco giant, which has created about 4000 jobs in Russia, is one of the largest taxpayers, continues to work in Russia. In 2020, PMI paid 216 billion rubles (\$2.59 billion) to the Russian budget. Another tobacco giant – Japan Tobacco International (JTI) company produces the biggest share of tobacco products, making up almost 35% of the Russian market. 4500 people work in three Russian factories. The company continues to operate in Russia and in 2020, the company provided 1.4% of the federal budget of Russia Federation income, which is 262 billion rubles, (\$3.8 billion). Rudimentary estimates shows that in 2020, these two tobacco giants paid 478 billion rubles to the budget of the the Russian state – which is \$5.73 billion. It should be noted that

under pressure from the international community, the rest of Big Tobacco left the Russian market. British American Tobacco announced the intention to leave Russia, although 16 days after the start of the war against Ukraine, BAT continued to pay taxes to the Russian state. One of the obvious reasons why companies are in no hurry to leave the Russian Federation is the loss of income. For example, Adidas has calculated that exiting the Russian market will cost them 250 million euros, Apple is losing \$3 million daily, and McDonald's will lose \$50 million monthly. For tobacco companies, the numbers will be commensurate. We call for maximum pressure on Japan Tobacco International (JTI) and Philip Morris International (PMI) companies and to boycott their products. They continue to operate in Russia and pay taxes, with which the Russian government is financing its military actions against Ukraine. The actions of British American Tobacco (BAT) and Imperial Tobacco (IT) need careful attention as well, despite their statements about leaving Russia, they continue to work and pay taxes, thus potentially sponsoring hostility against Ukraine.

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Tobacco, war and politics: A look at historical facts, political science and public health

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Background

Russia's war against Ukraine and its regional and global consequences raises a question on current and future threats for tobacco control and public health. In longer time perspective, this can have an impact on tobacco use and attitudes toward tobacco control policies, in particular in countries where the war consequences would be the biggest.

Objective

To briefly review the available historical facts on association between tobacco, war and politics and to make an attempt of explanation how war, political conflicts and its psychosocial and economic consequences influence on tobacco use, smoking behaviours and attitudes and tobacco control policies.

Material and method

Brief narrative review of major historical, political, sociological and public health books, scientific papers and research reports on the impact of war, political conflict and their various consequences on tobacco epidemic and public health. The long-term search was made on Google Scholar, WorldWideScience, Medline, PubMed and on the Directory of the Open Access Journals as well as on major websites dedicated both to political conflicts and tobacco control.

Results

In political sciences, a phrase on tobacco wars is mostly used in the context of political conflicts that have been made or continued for protecting of tobacco business, tobacco consumers or their rights. In economic terms, it may in general concern the wars between tobacco companies on market share or on manipulating the market by aggressive, based on false content, advertisement. In public health, tobacco wars mean the struggle of governments,

health organisations and tobacco control advocates against tobacco industry (TI) and its lobbyists for health protection. In the past years, this is also a society's war for ending the tobacco epidemic and reducing the environmental threats through tobacco control. This paper gives examples of such conflicts and briefly describes how these conflicts may influence on tobacco epidemic both at country, regional and global level. It includes the impact of adapted changes in strategy of tobacco industry in war conditions or in politically unstable regions, accessibility and affordability to tobacco products during war and post-war period, tobacco tax and price policy at that time, reduced access to smoking cessation service, limited support for tobacco control NGOs and advocates. It also refers to the impact of political ideology on smoking behaviours and attitudes toward tobacco control policies.

Conclusions

There is no doubt that tobacco epidemic has also grown up as a consequence of global political conflicts such as Crimean War, First or Second World War. It is partly proved by historical records, partly by time-specific analysis of the tobacco epidemic in the past century and partly by analysis of TI business and strategy during war, political conflicts or in politically unstable regions. Most of social studies show on the role of psychological stress and changes in social perception of tobacco during war and in post-war years as main factors that substantially influence smoking behaviours. Other, mostly economic studies, indicate on the role of free access to tobacco products for soldiers and other social groups. However, there is a very little known how the war or political conflicts influence on tobacco control policies and services. There is one of the gaps that should be closed by new research studies, also in the context of the current military conflict between Russia and Ukraine and its consequences to public health.

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PATIENT PERSPECTIVES ON TOBACCO CONSUMPTION EFFECTS

Cancer Patient organisation involvement in cancer policy and EU Cancer Plan priorities

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Cancer is the 2nd leading cause of mortality in EU countries after cardiovascular diseases. Health system resilience has been rising in the political agenda throughout the last decade, becoming a key political priority. Before Europe's Beating Cancer Plan was launched, Europe has been working on tackling cancer for decades, but despite the efforts, cancer remains one of the leading challenges of our time. Europe's Beating Cancer Plan aims to improve the prevention, detection, treatment and management of cancer in the EU and reduce health inequalities between and within the Member States. The plan sets forth actions that can support, coordinate and supplement the efforts of Member States within the remit of the EU in health care. The Plan places the interests and wellbeing of patients and the population at its centre, every step of the way. This approach together with the improvement of health literacy, equal access to medicine and innovations, is a promising reform of European cancer policy

that is needed now more than ever. Cancer Patient Organisations working on policy and advocacy have the ability to affect the prioritization of health policy ideas, raise attention to healthcare issues, lobby and provide consultative services to policymakers both in European but also on national level.

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Allergy and airways diseases: Strategies to reduce effects of tobacco and smoking on patients' health

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The European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA) is the umbrella organisation representing the voice of patients living with chronic respiratory diseases such as allergy, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The control of tobacco and related products in the EU region ranks among EFA's key advocacy priorities, given the strong association of these products with harmful effects on human health and, in particular, the respiratory system.

When it comes to diseases such as allergy, asthma and COPD, scientific research has clearly demonstrated causal links between smoking and negative health outcomes, including the onset of the diseases in previously healthy individuals. In patients, tobacco use is typically associated with more symptom exacerbations, increased hospitalisations and visits to the emergency department, and higher mortality. In light of this compelling scientific evidence, EFA calls on the EU to take steps, including legislative measures, to further reduce tobacco consumption. Examples include encouraging smoking cessation programmes and exchange of best practices among Member States; and supporting dissuasive campaigns against industry practices. To attain a tobacco-free generation by 2040, as per Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, the EU framework on tobacco control must be strengthened through, among other things, stricter legislation on packaging, alignment of rules among conventional tobacco and novel products such as electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs), and stronger tax-related measures. All along this process, patient perspectives must be integrated and included in decision-making. Another key aspect is the exposure to second-hand smoke (SHS). Tobacco smoke represents a major pollutant, mostly linked with decreased indoor air quality but affecting outdoor settings as well. There is extensive evidence showing that the exposure to SHS of tobacco bears serious risks for respiratory health, including declined lung function and increased disease symptoms. In addition, recent evidence strongly associates exposure to SHS from e-cigarettes and other novel (non-)tobacco products, such as HTPs, with worsening respiratory health. Therefore, it is important to ensure the expansion and proper implementation of 100% smoke-free environments at the national level, in line with the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). This includes public outdoor settings such as parks and beaches, as well as indoor spaces such as bars, restaurants, sport facilities, hospitals and educational establishments. The upcoming update of the Council recommendation on smoke-free environments presents a key opportunity to advance in this direction.

Overall, EFA wishes to see a stronger EU tobacco control framework that prioritises public health, protects vulnerable

groups and reduces the health burden associated with the use of tobacco and related products, as well as the exposure to SHS. Together with the restriction of conventional tobacco use, the EU must tackle the re-normalisation of smoking through novel products such as e-cigarettes and HTP, and step-up research on the effects of novel tobacco and related products on respiratory health.

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Raising awareness of the importance of smoking cessation for the public and people living with lung conditions

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The Healthy Lungs for Life campaign is run by the European Lung Foundation (ELF) and the European Respiratory Society (ERS). The campaign is aimed at everyone whether they have a lung condition or not. It focusses on four key themes to raise awareness of the best ways we can keep our lungs healthy and reduce the amount lung disease experienced by people worldwide. One of the key topics is #besmokefree. This presentation will outline the need and vision of the HLfL campaign, including how free lung function testing is used as a tool to inform and educate individuals about the importance of lung health and how moving the campaign into schools can help communicate the message that damage to the lungs in early life can result in lung disease much later. We will also briefly outline previous activities with the “Exsmokers are unstoppable campaign”. The HLfL campaign invests heavily in primary prevention, but it also looks at secondary prevention to ensure that individuals living with lung conditions are able to prevent further damage to their lungs. To support the need, the findings of an ELF study on why people with lung conditions may continue to smoke and what can we learn from this will be presented.

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Organizational collaborative advocacy

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Principles of Collaborative Advocacy combines highly effective communication strategies, facilitative behaviors, interest-based problem-solving skills, and most importantly, a collaborative approach to empowering organizations effectively face all challenges and barriers, as well as in the same time use available opportunities. ENSP encourages patient organization to give equal consideration to measures that reduce the demand for tobacco, in particular Article 14 (offer help to quit tobacco use). Tobacco cessation support is a key component of a comprehensive, integrated tobacco control programme. Offering tobacco users support for their cessation efforts will reinforce other tobacco control policies by increasing support for them and increasing their acceptability. patient’s organizations, being the closest and working to protect the rights of patients of all kinds. Since smoking and tobacco use have an impact on the health of the individual, especially patients with different diseases, it is necessary for us to form partnerships between ENSP and patient organizations. The drive to increase cooperation between ENSP and patient

organizations is particularly evident with regard to the challenge to public health of all people’s categories, especially the patient category.

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YOUTH AND TOBACCO

#WhatTheSmoke: The power of popular influencers on TikTok and gaming platforms to keep youngsters away from cigarettes

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Background

Tobacco use among youngsters has declined in recent decades, but research shows that still 1 in 20 Flemish youth aged 12–15 years smokes regularly. Among youngsters in vocational education, this number is significantly higher (16.3%). Efforts to prevent adolescents from taking up smoking remain essential, but youngsters are hard to reach with traditional awareness campaigns.

Objective

Create a campaign that does appeal to youth aged 12–15 years (target group: youngsters in vocational education since smoking rates are highest amongst them), that makes smoking less cool within the target group and empowers youngsters to say no to cigarettes.

Methods

We employ an approach that includes: 1) qualitative research of target group and their media consumption; 2) development of creative concepts and a corresponding media plan; 3) qualitative evaluation of the developed concepts by the target group; and 4) launching of campaign followed by quantitative evaluation and adjustment.

Results

In 2021, we launched a campaign in collaboration with popular Flemish gaming and TikTok influencers who disseminated messages on the negative consequences of smoking on their own channels. A campaign by youngsters for youngsters. Everything happens in their own world and interests, via their favorite social media channels, in their own language. Evaluation of the campaign revealed that both #WhatTheSmoke (the campaign on TikTok) and #RIProken (on gaming platforms) were much appreciated by the target group. Respectively, 75% (#WhatTheSmoke) and 66% (#RIProken; ‘roken’ = smoking) rated the campaign as good to very good. Furthermore, 73% of the target group indicates that the campaign makes smoking less cool and 70% thinks it can convince youngsters not to start smoking. Based on the evaluation, the campaign will be adjusted and relaunched in 2022.

Conclusions

Collaboration with influencers resulted in a successful campaign to keep youngsters from smoking but the challenge is to reach a sufficiently large audience since information on social media is overwhelming.

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Adolescents’ tobacco use perception and their attitude toward anti-smoking

campaigns

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Background

Researchers agree that smoking by adolescents causes a range of significant and long-lasting health issues, including a negative effect on brain development. According to the WHO, most smokers have had their first cigarette or were already addicted by the age of 18 years. The increased popularity of e-cigarettes seems to be shifting the known paradigm of smoking addiction especially among young people.

Objective

The objective of the presented research is to describe and understand adolescents' perception of tobacco use. The focus is given on indicating attributes related to traditional cigarettes and e-cigarettes, and on the differences in mode of use of both. Utilizing the results, we aim to formulate a set of guidelines supporting creation of an effective anti-smoking campaign focused at young people.

Methods

We use qualitative research, utilizing focus-group interviews. The sample included six focus groups, consisting of smokers and non-smokers, situated in three different cities in Poland. The interviewees were young adults aged 16–18 years, coming from a variety of backgrounds. Interviews were transcribed and further analyzed using the template analysis approach.

Results

The conducted analysis indicates a clear distinction between the attributes assigned to traditional cigarettes and e-cigarettes. Peer pressure still plays a significant role on the decision to start smoking despite the type of cigarette. Yet, e-cigarettes are perceived principally as entertainment and are associated with youth. Although the respondents are aware of the health-related consequences of smoking, knowledge about e-cigarettes is limited and the motivation to quit is low. The immediate comfort provided by smoking seems to overwhelm the health issues, which are perceived postponed in time.

Conclusions

The research provides a new perspective on perception and use of e-cigarettes among young adults. Based on the results, it might be speculated that addressing the campaigns for different age-levels, focusing on factors influencing smoking behaviors at each stage, as well as following the 'youth culture', may provide better results.

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Marketing of tobacco products among Polish youth: Results of the PolNicoYouth survey

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Background

The use of tobacco products is a significant public health problem, especially among adolescents and young adults.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the exposure to various types

of marketing activities of these products during the last 30 days among Polish youth.

Methods

The cross-sectional study was carried out in 2020 on a sample of secondary school students aged 15–18 years (n=16712), representative of the Polish population, using the CAWI method. In order to estimate the relationship between the independent variables and the outcome variables, the Bayesian multivariate logistic regression was used in the R program using the brms library.

Results

It was observed that a very significant relationship [$\ln(\text{BF}) < 2.3$] with exposure to tobacco marketing activities among Polish adolescents differs depending on the type of product. Exposure to promotional activities of traditional cigarettes has a very significant gender relationship [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 9.22$]. Girls were more exposed than boys. However, in the case of heated tobacco, it is the age [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 16.69$] and the size of the place of residence [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 23.59$]. The oldest respondents and residents of cities over 0.5 million inhabitants were most often exposed. Other factors, such as the type of school attended by young people and the province of residence, were not related. In particular, a very significant relationship between gender and exposure to promotion by celebrities or influencers of regular cigarettes [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 2.69$] and e-cigarettes [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 5.39$] was demonstrated, and a significant relationship in the case of heated tobacco [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 2.07$].

Conclusions

Despite the limitations in promoting tobacco products, Polish youth are still exposed to this type of practice. It seems that special attention should be paid to marketing activities carried out indirectly through social media. Actions are needed to more effectively limit this type of action towards young people.

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Teenagers' perceptions of risk from cigarettes and e-cigarettes

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Background

Perception of risk deters teenage smoking but less is known about e-cigarettes and risk perception.

Objective

To examine the degree of risk that teenagers perceive from cigarette and e-cigarette use. To describe gender differences in perceived risk.

Methods

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) surveyed 1967 students, born in 2003, in a nationally stratified random sample of 50 schools in Ireland. Variables included perceived risk of harm from occasional smoking, smoking a pack of cigarettes or more per day, and using e-cigarettes once or twice. Descriptive and bivariate analyses were performed using Stata version 16.

Results

Asked about risk from smoking cigarettes occasionally, 12.7% (n=245) reported 'no risk', 34% (n=658) 'moderate risk', 27.4% (n=531) 'slight risk', and 22.7% (n=440) 'great risk'. Males

perceived 'no risk' (15.2%, n=142) more than females (10.3%, n=103) ($p<0.01$), while more females perceived 'slight/moderate' risk. Regarding risk from smoking a pack or more of cigarettes a day, a majority (69%, n=1359) perceived 'great risk', 15.8% (n=306) 'moderate risk', and 6% (n=116) 'no risk'. Statistically significant gender differences ($p<0.01$) were observed with more male (8.6%, n=81) than female students (3.5%, n=35) perceiving 'no risk'. More females (73.7%, n=734) than males (65.7%, n=616) perceived 'great risk' in smoking a pack or more a day ($p<0.001$). Regarding risk from trying e-cigarettes once or twice, almost half (46.3%, n=893) perceived 'no risk', 37.2% (n=718) 'slight risk', and 4.2% (n=81) 'great risk'. More males (51.1%, n=477) than females (41.8%, n=416) perceived 'no risk', and more females (4.5%, n=45) than males (3.9%, n=36) perceived 'great risk' ($p<0.001$).

Conclusions

Teenagers perceive cigarettes to have much greater risk than e-cigarettes. Teenage girls perceive significantly greater risk than boys in both cigarette and e-cigarette use. More clarity is required about e-cigarette risk in health education programs.

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Towards 'Tobacco-Free Generation' in the Nordic countries

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Background

A new Tobacco-Free Generation goal has been launched in Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, aiming for <5% tobacco use by 2040. In order to meet this goal, preventive measures need to be strengthened. Tobacco control has a long history in many Nordic countries.

Objective

We assess the current status of the Nordic countries preventive tobacco policies and discuss possible determinants for similarities and differences in policy implementation.

Methods

The WHO Articles 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 16, were selected for the analysis, in which we assessed the status of the required (core) and recommended (advanced) policies and their application to novel tobacco and nicotine products. Data of strategies, acts, and regulations were searched from global and national tobacco control databases, websites, and scientific articles via PubMed and MEDLINE.

Results

In the Nordic countries, the core policies are mostly in place, ensured by the implementation of the WHO FCTC and European regulations. However, these have also contributed to shared deficiencies that are seen especially in the regulations on smokeless tobacco and novel products. Several advanced policies have been implemented in the Nordic countries, even

among the first countries in the world: point-of-sale display bans (Iceland), outdoor smoking bans (Sweden), flavor bans on e-cigarettes (Finland), plain packaging (Norway), and plain packaging on e-cigarettes (Denmark). Progress has been facilitated by strong national tobacco control actors, but in order to strengthen comprehensive implementation of preventive policies, collaboration and participation in reinforcing the European regulations, resources for national coordination and networking, and national regulations to provide protection from the tobacco industry's interference are needed.

Conclusions

Nordic countries have many strengths, yet more actions and collaboration are needed to achieve the Tobacco-Free Generation goal both at national and Nordic level.

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Attitudes towards e-cigarette use among Polish youth: Results of the PolNicoYouth survey

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Background

The use of tobacco products is a significant public health problem, especially among adolescents and young adults.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the image of e-cigarette use among Polish youth.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was carried out in 2020 on a sample of secondary school students aged 15–18 (n=16712), representative of the Polish population, using the CAWI method. In order to estimate the relationship between the independent variables and the outcome variables, the Bayesian multivariate logistic regression was used in the R program using the brms library.

Results

It was observed that a very significant relationship [$\ln(\text{BF})<2.3$] in the perception of the harmfulness of e-cigarettes compared to regular cigarettes was shown mainly by the profile of the respondents (traditional cigarette users, e-cigarette users, dual users, non-smokers) [$\ln(\text{BF})=384.05$] and gender [$\ln(\text{BF})=155.91$]. E-cigarette users and dual users most often indicated e-cigarettes as much less harmful than traditional ones. Declaring the use of e-cigarettes in non-smoking areas is also very significantly related to the type of smoker [$\ln(\text{BF})=17.22$] and gender [$\ln(\text{BF})=10.05$]. In prohibited places, e-cigarettes are used more often by men and dual users than by e-cigarette users. The parents' opinion about their use of tobacco products declared by the respondents is strongly related to the parents' use of traditional cigarettes [$\ln(\text{BF})=19.68$] and e-cigarettes [$\ln(\text{BF})=8.2$]. Both parents who use traditional cigarettes and e-cigarettes approve the use of tobacco products by their children more often than non-smoking parents.

Conclusions

It seems that educational activities among young people about

the harmfulness of e-cigarette use are still insufficient. Moreover, it seems justified to strengthen educational activities towards parents. Parents who smoke and use e-cigarettes should be made aware that the use of tobacco products at an early age is a strong health risk factor for their children.

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Danish national plan against youth smoking

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Background

Denmark ranked 29th out of 36 European countries in the 2019 Tobacco Control Scale and the smoking prevalence in Denmark is much higher than in the other Nordic countries. From 2013 to 2017, smoking increased in age groups below 35 years, which initiated public and political awareness.

Objective

The aim was to curb the alarming development in Denmark, as youth smoking was rising and tobacco control had come to a halt.

Methods

A broad partnership between private and public organizations to fight smoking was established. Together with WHO and ENSP, we made a capacity assessment on the implementation of effective tobacco control policies in Denmark, which gave key recommendations. The main communication theme of the partnership was protection of children.

Results

The Smoke-Free Future partnership had 275 partners by the end of 2021. 'National Action Plan against Children and Youth Smoking' was agreed upon by a majority of the political parties in 2019 and will be fully implemented in 2022. The plan includes, for example: higher prices of tobacco, smoke-free school-hours, point-of-sales display ban, advertising ban, and plain packaging. About 70 percent of the populations support the elements in the action plan. The sales of cigarettes in Denmark fell by 18% in 2020, and the smoking prevalence in the age group 15–29 years fell to 20%. Negotiations about an Action Plan 2.0 is underway in Denmark.

Conclusions

The approach with a broad partnership, WHO based recommendations, and a communication strategy with focus on children, has been effective in creating public and political support to act on tobacco control.

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LAUNCH OF THE SECOND TOBACCONOMICS SUPPLEMENT

How do prices of manufactured cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco affect demand for these products? Tobacco price elasticity in Western Balkan countries

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Background

Numerous studies have indicated that tobacco taxation is one of the most important policies to reduce tobacco consumption. However, its effectiveness crucially depends on consumer responses to price increases, i.e. tobacco price elasticities.

Objective

We analyze tobacco price elasticity in six Western Balkan countries.

Methods

We estimate the own and cross-price elasticities of manufactured cigarettes (MC) and roll-your-own (RYO) tobacco by using the methodological framework of the two-part model, regional variation in prices, and the 2019 Survey on Tobacco Consumption in SEE countries (STC-SEE). STC-SEE provides uniquely comparable nationally representative data on smoking behavior for adults aged 18–85 years for each country.

Results

The results suggest that higher prices of MC are associated with a lower prevalence of MC use, while higher prices of RYO are associated with lower intensity of RYO use. Furthermore, regions with higher MC prices have a higher likelihood of using RYO over MC, suggesting that RYO is used as a cheaper alternative to MC. Lastly, lower smoking prevalence and intensity are associated with more smoking restrictions and support for tobacco price increases.

Conclusions

To decrease smoking prevalence and intensity, governments should increase excises on all tobacco products. Since RYO are a cheaper alternative to MC, the increase of excises on RYO should be higher, so that after excise increase, the prices of the two products are approximately the same. To further reduce tobacco consumption, governments should combine increasing taxes on tobacco products with non-price measures, such as stricter smoking restrictions and smoke-free regulations.

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Tobacco tax evasion in Western Balkan countries: Tax evasion prevalence and evasion determinants

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Background

There is a need to analyze tobacco tax evasion in six Western Balkan (WB) countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia). Tax evasion is defined on the basis of available information on tax stamps, health warnings, price, and the place of purchase, in accordance

with previous research on tax evasion.

Objective

The aim of this research is to estimate the size of the illicit market and identify the main determinants of tax evasion activities in the Southeastern European (SEE) region.

Methods

Data from 2019 Survey on Tobacco Consumption in Southeastern Europe (STC-SEE) is used. STC-SEE provides a uniquely comparable nationally representative data set on smoking behavior adults aged 18–85 years for each country.

Results

The study finds that 20.4% of all current smokers in WB countries evade taxes on tobacco products, with evasion being much more frequent for hand-rolled (HR) tobacco (86.7%) than for manufactured cigarettes (MCs) (8.6%). While HR tobacco is predominantly illicit in all six countries, MC tax evasion varies significantly, with evasion being significantly higher in Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The results further suggest that tax evasion is higher in the statistical regions where institutional capacities to tackle illicit trade are lower, in municipalities bordering countries with high MC evasion, as well as among smokers with low income, women, and elderly. We also provide evidence that higher tobacco taxes and prices do not increase illicit consumption.

Conclusions

The findings from the research suggest that in order to decrease tax evasion, governments should put additional effort to strengthen institutional capacities to tackle illicit tobacco markets. Furthermore, improving regional coordination prevention of illicit markets is essential in lowering evasion in all WB countries. Finally, WB countries should regulate and enforce excise tax stamp requirements on the HR tobacco market to a much higher degree.

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Price and income elasticity of cigarette demand in Bosnia and Herzegovina by different socioeconomic groups

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Background

Tobacco tax policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) assumes a gradual annual increase in specific excise taxes on cigarettes. However, it is insufficient to significantly reduce consumption.

Objective

We examine the effects of the increase in cigarette prices and disposable income on cigarette demand in B&H by different income consumer groups.

Methods

Based on the Household Budget Surveys and micro-data from 2007, 2011 and 2015, we employed the logit model to estimate prevalence and Deaton's model to estimate intensity elasticity of cigarette demand for a sample of 21424 households (9953 smoking households), by different income groups. We used the obtained elasticities and estimated the impact of tax increase on cigarette consumption and government revenue for three tax increase scenarios.

Results

A 10% price increase would reduce the consumption of low-income households by 14%, as opposed to 9.9% for middle-income, and 7% percent for high-income households. Low-income households would significantly increase the demand for cigarettes compared to high-income households if income increased. Increase in the specific excise tax by 25% would reduce cigarette consumption and increase government revenue, while the low-income group would experience a reduction in tax burden.

Conclusions

Changes in prices have different impacts on tobacco prevalence and consumption of low-income compared to middle- and high-income socioeconomic groups. Low-income households are most responsive to changes in prices and income. Thus, the poor in B&H would benefit from an increase in tobacco excise taxes and price.

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Effectiveness of tax policy changes in Montenegro: Smoking behavior by socioeconomic status

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Background

Tax policy changes may reduce cigarette consumption, especially those with low incomes.

Objective

The main aim of this study was to examine the responsiveness of smoking prevalence and cigarette consumption to price and income changes by income groups, and the effectiveness of tax policy changes to reduce cigarette consumption in Montenegro.

Methods

A two-part model was applied to estimate smoking participation, smoking intensity price and income elasticity. The first part of the model applies logit regression, while the second uses Deaton's model to improve the validity and objectivity of conditional (smoking intensity) elasticity results. A generalized linear model (GLM) was applied to verify robustness. The reason for this is that Deaton's model is commonly used in the analysis of Household Budget Survey (HBS) data, especially when households do not report the market price. Moreover, using this model, it is possible to capture the shading of quality to price change. The analysis used HBS data (2006–2017).

Results

The estimates indicate that tobacco pricing policies had a much higher impact on smoking prevalence in the low-income group (price elasticity of -0.595) relative to the high-income group (price elasticity of -0.344). The same conclusion could be drawn for the smoking intensity elasticity: the high-income group was the least affected by changes in price (price elasticity of -0.258). At the same time, the most affected was the low-income group, with price elasticity of -0.424. Poorer households spent a larger share of their budget on cigarettes. The simulation results confirm that increases in the specific excise taxes of 58.3% on tobacco would reduce total cigarette consumption by 11.25% while increasing government revenue by 8.07%.

Conclusions

Smoking prevalence and consumption are very responsive to price

and income changes, with considerable differences in elasticities between income groups. The taxation policy has a positive impact on changing patterns of consumption and public revenues across each income group. Low-income and middle-income households would benefit the most, while on the other hand, the highest revenue collection was generated from the wealthiest group. Our results align with results obtained so far for other low-income and middle-income countries. This study contributes to the analysis of the smoking prevalence and cigarette consumption responsiveness to price and income changes, which was conducted for the first time in Montenegro.

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INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO CONTROL ACTIONS AND ADVOCACY

Shaping tobacco control advocacy with youth approach: Planned discussion session

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Background

Shaping tobacco control advocacy with youth approach is required to increase the capacity of organizations working in the field of tobacco control on how to engage youth to counter tobacco industry myths and improve tobacco control advocacy processes in the countries. Participants need to learn about youth advocacy approaches and learn how to engage youth in their countries in the process of advocacy as well as implementation of the tobacco control policies.

Objective

To increase the capacity of organizations working in tobacco control and to share approaching methods in order to achieve tobacco control goals together.

Discussion

- One-hour discussion during ENSP conference (60 min) is free, but pre-registration is required;
- Presentation of the youth work in Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 min);
- Sharing 'how to' methods (20 min);
- Discussion on potential of youth engagement in the European region (20 min); and
- Conclusions (5 min).

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A rapid evaluation of the US Federal Tobacco 21 (T21) Law and lessons from statewide T21 policies: Findings from population-level surveys

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Background

On 20 December 2019, the minimum age for purchasing tobacco in the US was raised nationally to 21 years.

Objective

We evaluated this law [Tobacco 21 (T21)] one year after implementation. We also compared states with versus without

T21 policies during 2019, to explore potential equity impacts of T21 policies.

Methods

We examined shifts in tobacco access among 6th through 12th graders using the National Youth Tobacco Survey. To explore equity impacts of state T21 policies among youth and young adults, the associations with tobacco use were explored separately for race and ethnicity by using data from the 2019 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (for persons aged 18–20 years) and the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (for high school students).

Results

The overall percentage of 6th to 12th graders perceiving that it was easy to buy tobacco products from a store decreased from 2019 (67.2%) to 2020 (58.9%). However, only 17.0% of students who attempted buying cigarettes in 2020 were unsuccessful because of their age. In the 2019 BRFSS, those aged 18–20 years living in a state with T21 policies had a lower likelihood of being a current cigarette smoker (APR=0.58) or smoking cigarettes daily (APR=0.41). Similar significant associations were seen when analyses were restricted to only White participants but not for participants who were Black, Asian, Hispanic, or of other races or ethnicities. Consistent findings were seen among high school students.

Conclusions

Greater compliance with the federal T21 law is needed as most youth who attempted buying cigarettes in 2020 were successful. Comparative analysis of states with versus states without statewide T21 policies in 2019 suggest the policies were differentially more protective of White participants than non-White participants. Equitable and intensified enforcement of T21 policies can benefit public health.

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Do high achievers have the same relationship with e-cigarettes as with cigarettes?

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Background

An inverse association between teenage smoking and academic achievement is long established. Little is known about e-cigarettes and achievement.

Objective

To examine associations between teenage academic achievement and lifetime/current smoking, and current e-cigarette use, in the same sample.

Methods

ESPAD (European Schools Project for Alcohol and Other Drugs) has surveyed students since 1995 on substance use, including cigarette smoking. In 2019, in Ireland, 1967 students, born in 2003, were surveyed from a stratified random sample of 50 Irish schools. Variables included student achievement measured by their average grade [categorized from very high (A and B) to very low (E or lower)], lifetime smoking, current smoking, and current e-cigarette use. Descriptive and bivariate analyses were carried out using Stata version 16.

Results

Students' average grade was significantly associated with lifetime

and current smoking. In all, 75.4% (n=645) of high-achieving students (average grades mostly A and B) had never smoked in their lifetimes or in the past 30 days (91.6%, n=784). Only 3.3% (n=28) of high-achieving students had ever smoked more than 40 cigarettes and smoked everyday (1.9%, n=16). Conversely, those who reported lower average grades smoked more both in their lifetimes and every day. A strong association was also observed between achievement and current e-cigarette use; 86.8% (n=743) of high-achieving students had never used e-cigarettes compared to 61.1% (n=22) who scored E or lower. Only 2% (n=17) of high-achieving students used e-cigarettes every day. However, the most high-achieving students (A or B grades) were less likely to be non-e-cigarette current users (86.8%, n=743) than to be non-current smokers (91.6%, n=784), suggesting that, for these high achievers, e-cigarettes are more acceptable than cigarettes.

Conclusions

As with cigarettes, we find a similar inverse association between achievement and e-cigarette use. This has implications for health education.

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Cigarette taxation and price differentials in 195 countries

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Background

Increasing taxation of tobacco is known to be effective in tackling smoking. However, efforts to increase prices overall are resisted by the tobacco industry with a number of tactics. These include keeping budget cigarettes within the market, so that there is a large price differential between premium and other cigarettes.

Objective

We examine trends in price differentials worldwide from 2014–2018 and how these vary by taxation levels and types.

Methods

Country level panel analyses of price differentials against total, specific excise, ad valorem and other taxes were performed. We used linear regression models with two levels using data from 2014, 2016 and 2018. Price differentials were measured as difference between budget and premium cigarette pack prices. Analyses were adjusted for year, WHO region, and income groups.

Results

Median price differentials were 49.4% (IQR: 25.9–70.0) in 2014, and in 2018 were 44.4% (IQR: 22.5–69.4). There was substantial regional variation, with the lowest price variations in 2018 in the European region (22.5%) and the largest in the African region (72.0%). In regression analyses, total taxation was linked to lower price differentials, with a 10% increase in taxation associated with a -1.5% reduction (95% CI: -2.5 – -0.4). Increases in specific excise taxation were also associated with reductions in price differentials (-2.5%, 95% CI: -3.7 – -1.2 per +10% specific excise tax). We did not find statistically significant associations between price differentials and ad valorem.

Conclusions

Smaller cigarette price differentials were associated with higher total levels of taxation as well as specific excise taxes, but not ad valorem taxes. Increasing total and specific excise taxes may reduce cigarette price differentials and tobacco use.

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Advocacy perspectives for strengthened global tobacco control and taxation

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Background

UICC has developed a tobacco control strategy with a vision to reduce the number of smokers globally and the number of tobacco-related deaths by 2030. One objective is to encourage countries to raise the level of taxes charged on tobacco and nicotine products. This vision is aligned with CRUK's strategy which focuses on cancer prevention measures and achieving greater impact by partnering with international organizations to deliver programs and share and amplify resources and expertise.

Objective

The aim is to identify gaps and opportunities for the development of tobacco control programs, especially focusing on taxation in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

Methods

UICC and CRUK conducted a scoping project which included key informant interviews with individuals representing organizations active in tobacco control to share perspectives and exchange information on progress, obstacles, and opportunities.

Results

The main challenges cited by the interviewees were the limited knowledge of taxation held by civil society and health/cancer advocates, and the lack of political will of governments to develop or implement tobacco tax policies. This was confounded by government's lack of awareness of the benefits of tobacco tax policies. Interviewees noted that TII plays a significant role in suppressing government enthusiasm for tax increases. Analysis of all responses showed that capacity building of CSOs and advocates is essential to support policy development and implementation, as well as dialogue with national authorities. External factors such as having strong relationships with government policy makers and the presence of champions in both CSOs and governmental bodies further enable the development and enforcement of tobacco taxation policies.

Conclusions

The analysis of the data collected through the key informant interviews showed several common themes which were viewed as fundamental to developing successful advocacy on tobacco control. These themes encompass the importance of evidence-informed advocacy, sustainable approaches to policy change, addressing tobacco industry interference, utilizing COVID-19 recovery, critical nature of collaboration and partnerships, and establishing champions.

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Public health advocacy: How to effectively communicate research findings to policy makers and the press

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Background

For effective tobacco control, a strong political will to introduce policies to protect public health is a key requirement. The political will can be raised and can be strengthened by sound science communication. To effectively communicate science to politics, a good advocacy strategy is needed.

Objective

This presentation aims at giving an overview on the key elements of an affective advocacy strategy.

Methods

Key elements of an advocacy strategy will be elaborated.

Results

Key elements include building up a long-term goal by defining single steps to reach it, using robust science by translating the scientific language into easily understandable language, even for a lay audience. It is important not only to know the target audience, but also to anticipate the tactics of the counterparts. It is important to build up coalitions and to have champions for the issue. Finally, it is essential to detect and use windows of opportunity for the messages to be heard.

Conclusions

There is no unique method of advocacy, but certain basic principles and practices generally are used, depending on the respective circumstances and needs. A successful advocacy strategy needs passion, persistence, and patience.

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Identifying effective tax policies to reduce cigarette consumption: Cross country empirical evidence

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Background

Increasing cigarette prices with tax and price policies is the most effective way to reduce consumption.

Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of several aspect of tax systems, simultaneously and independently, to reduce cigarette demand over time and between 160 countries.

Methods

We construct tax system scores using the methodology developed by Tobacconomics, University of Chicago, with additional error corrections. The scoring system is based on 5 criteria (ranging from 0 to 5) including cigarette prices, affordability changes, tax burden, and tax system design. Higher scores represent stronger systems. The overall score is the average of the sub-scores. We use alternatively the levels and the resulting tax scores to estimate their impacts on cigarette demand. To do this we collect a biennial database of aspects of tobacco tax systems and rates from 2008 to 2020 across 160 countries, obtained from the WHO. We then use a two-way fixed effect model to estimate the impact of scores and tax and price measures on two margins of demand, cigarette prevalence among adults aged ≥ 15 years and sales volumes.

Results

Most tax systems sub-scores significantly reduce independently

the prevalence of adult cigarette smoking. A higher tax score by 1 unit reduces prevalence of smoking by about 0.55 percentage points (pp). The overall score is the most effective at reducing prevalence. Price and tax burden sub-scores significantly reduce cigarette sales volumes. A higher tax burden score by 1 unit reduces cigarette sales by -0.6 percent. Tax share scores are also the most effective at reducing cigarette sales. Prices scores or tax share scores are more effective at reducing prevalence if combined with strong tax systems. An improvement in price (tax) score increases the effectiveness of the overall tax system score to reduce prevalence and sales.

Conclusions

All tax systems scores are very effective at reducing cigarette demand. A one point increase in scores leads to a -0.3 to -0.8 pp reduction in smoking prevalence and a -2% to -7% reduction in sales volume. Price increases are much more effective at reducing sales when combined with increases in tax shares than price increases alone.

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REGIONAL CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Big Tobacco, Tiny Targets: Campaign success in passing a TAPS ban in Georgia and keys to campaign success

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Background

Greater exposure to tobacco advertising at point-of-sale (POS) is associated with a greater likelihood of smoking among youth. Data on cigarette advertising and promotional tactics at POS within a short walking distance of schools and playgrounds were collected in 42 countries as part of the Big Tobacco, Tiny Targets (BTTT) campaign.

Objective

This case study describes campaign success in Georgia and keys to success.

Methods

Policy adoption was classified as a campaign success where sub-national and/or national tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) regulations were adopted during or within one year of BTTT campaign activities concluding. Keys to success were determined through discussions with campaign staff who closely interacted with in-country partners.

Results

Local advocates observed tobacco advertising and promotion at 640 POS in Tbsili, Georgia; 79% (n=512) of these retailers, within 250 m of schools, sold tobacco. The majority of these displayed cigarettes near kid-friendly snacks and drinks and displayed cigarette ads at the eye level of children. Advocates engaged in stakeholder meetings, including the MOH, the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health, and the Healthcare Committee of Parliament and shared campaign materials, resulting in significant media coverage throughout 2016 and 2017. A TAPS

ban was implemented in 2018. Campaign successes in Georgia can be credited to: 1) mobilization of diverse advocate groups, 2) a campaign message that resonates with policymakers and public, 3) development of a narrative that utilizes compelling photos, 4) local evidence, 5) targeting the tobacco industry as the ‘villain’, and 6) having a call to action. The campaign has also proven helpful to tobacco control groups in other countries, contributing to positive tobacco control policy outcomes in 15 other countries.

Conclusions

BTTT can serve as a campaign model for successfully engaging stakeholders and promoting tobacco control policy change, particularly TAPS policies.

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Ex-smokers among youth in Bulgaria: How and why they did it

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Background

A cross-sectional survey was conducted via online query in December 2020. The total number of the respondents was 644. A third of them (33.4%) were non-smokers, 45.7% current smokers and 21.0% ex-smokers.

Objective

The aim is to explore the reasons and ways ex-smokers quit.

Methods

We employ descriptive statistics, binary logistic regression, Pearson chi-squared test, and Mann-Whitney U test.

Results

The mostly widely used way of quitting smoking is one’s own will. Much smaller is the proportion that claims use of medicinal products, support from a medical practitioner, friend or book. The mostly given reasons why people quit are: health, financial reasons, and other such as it is not fashionable to smoke. The type of product they started smoking is a factor for them to quit. Smoking within the close circle of young people (their homes and workplaces) is also a significant factor to quit. Surprisingly, age, education level, and type of residence, are also amongst the significant factors for quitting. The opinion of ex-smokers about smoking of youth, pregnant women and in front of children is much more likely as non-smokers and thus significantly different from current smokers. The estimates of smoking prevalence amongst youth correspond to those measured by a national representative survey in the same age group.

Conclusions

The mostly given reason for quitting smoking is health, and the most widely used way is one’s own will. Ex-smokers are much more likely as non-smokers according to their opinion and close circle.

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Monitoring on implementation of national tobacco control legislation in Georgia during 2018–2021

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Background

Georgia made a step forward in 2017 and adopted new amendments on tobacco control legislation, which mostly corresponds to the FCTC requirements. Among other changes in the regulations is a ban on smoking in public buildings and public transport, with a few exemptions (casinos, big slot clubs, performances in theatres, taxi). The regulation entered into force in 1 May 2018. Effective implementation was under question in Georgia due to cultural, social and civil problems.

Objective

The objective of the study is to learn process of monitoring of new tobacco control regulations during May 2018 to December 2021.

Results

In Georgia exists a state program on health promotion since 2015. The main direction of the program was information and communication campaigns, as well as monitoring and capacity building regarding new tobacco control regulations. The yearly expenditure on the tobacco control regulations monitoring part of the state program is around 100000 US\$. The FCTC Implementation and Monitoring Center in Georgia (FCTC IMCG) has around 40 monitors in the whole country who check the compliance level of smoke-free, sale restrictions, and advertisement ban regulations during 2018–2021. Around 22000 facilities and public transport are under their monitoring yearly. They organizing around 100 meetings, trainings or seminars for enforcement bodies’ representatives yearly. The work is very hard and the budget is still limited. The permanent monitoring of the tobacco control new regulations keeps enforcement level at 95%. High compliance level of new regulations positively affected to the health status of the population regarding asthma, AMI, and COPD. Unfortunately, civil activism is still low in low- and middle-income countries. Around 97% of violations are identified by the monitors.

Conclusions

The synergy between governmental enforcement bodies and FCTC IMCG is important. The Georgian case is a basis for sharing good experience. The state program still needs sustainable funding.

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Slovenia Without Tobacco 2040 with NGOs support

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In Slovenia, tobacco is the leading preventable risk factor for premature death and lost healthy years of life. Non-governmental organizations, especially ENSP, have immensely helped Slovenia in the field of tobacco control. In 2017, Slovenia adopted the Act on the Restriction of the Use of Tobacco and Related Products, which contains a number of effective tobacco control measures. Following this, Slovenia recorded a significant decrease in the percentage of adult smokers after almost twenty years. In 2019, Slovenia prepared a strategy for reducing the consequences of tobacco use, setting a goal that in 2040 Slovenia will be a society without tobacco. This means that in 2040 less than 5% of the population aged ≥15 years in Slovenia will use tobacco and

tobacco related products. The strategy has been in intersectoral consultation for a long time and on 12 May 2022 the Slovenian parliament adopted the ‘Strategy for reducing the consequences of tobacco use for Slovenia without tobacco 2022–2030’. The measures set out in the strategy will ensure a further reduction in the percentage of smokers and users of tobacco related products by 2030, representing intermediate steps towards the 2040 goal. The work on getting the strategy adopted has been through media campaigns, civil dialogue and advocacy, sharing European models of good practices as well as publishing brochures, and highlighting the need for the adoption. The presentation will focus on the strategy, its measures, the Slovenia without tobacco 2040 goal, the impact that NGOs have had on Slovenia’s tobacco control, and the necessary steps following the strategy’s adoption.

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The ban on making nicotine products available to persons under 18 years of age and punishment for its violation in Poland

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Amendments to the Polish anti-tobacco Act implemented on the timeline gradually introduce increased protection for persons under 18 years of age. These changes, introduced under the influence of international and EU law, extend the scope of the ban on selling nicotine products to youth, and introduce other related obligations (verification and information obligations). The study objective was to assess effectiveness of provisions. Legal analysis and survey on violations was performed. Despite the positive legislative trend, the current state of the regulation cannot be considered optimal. Presented research indicates the direction of further legal changes in the scope of limiting the provision of nicotine products to persons under 18 years of age, which would contribute to making the Polish regulation more effective, in line with global trends in the fight against nicotine addiction.

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Data driven strategic communication supporting the TC policy: A case study in Ukraine

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Background

Approximately 130000 Ukrainians die from tobacco-related diseases each year. The use of ENDS and HTPs is increasing in Ukraine, especially among youth. These novel products until recently were not regulated, with only one exception the ban on sales for minors.

Objective

Change public perception and social norms towards ENDS and HTPs, and build a supporting environment for the legislative process.

Methods

In line with the WHO annual communication campaign ‘COMMIT TO QUIT’, PHC of the MOH of Ukraine, NGO Life and Vital Strategies conducted the multi-channel integrated mass-media campaign ‘Harmless Smoking Does Not Exist’, featuring a prominent oncologist and anti-tobacco ambassador, Anton Shkiryak. Sociological agency KIIS conducted a concept-testing study to understand the relative effectiveness of the campaign messages and execution concepts. According to the focus-groups results, one concept was chosen and adapted. The campaign incorporated COVID-19 messaging to warn about harms of smoking and the use of e-cigarettes and HTPs, and had a strong policy message. Sociological agency KIIS conducted the baseline and endline surveys among Ukrainian smokers and non-smokers aged 18–30 years to probe attitudes towards e-cigarettes and HTPs, and report campaign impact.

Results

It is estimated that the ‘Doctor’s Warning’ campaign reached 24 million people on TV, radio, street posters and social media, despite a very limited budget. The campaign changed the attitudes of youth: 47% responders-smokers are thinking to stop using ENDS or HTPs after the campaign, and 78% responders-non-smokers said that the campaign stimulates people not to start smoking. Supported by the strategic communication work and complex advocacy activities during the last 3 years, the new law was adopted in December 2021. In January 2022, the President signed the new comprehensive tobacco control law that will save lives and protect millions of Ukrainians from the harms of tobacco use.

Conclusions

Sustained and robust mass media campaigns can change public attitudes and social norms around e-cigarettes and HTPs, and catalyze effective regulation and policy adoption.

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Smoke-Free beaches in Spain

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Background

Spain is a country formed by a peninsula and two archipelagos which has over 8000 km of coastline. In 2018, some local initiatives sought to promote smoke-free and cigarette butt-free beaches, corresponding to only 3% of Spain’s beaches.

Objective

The aim is the banning of smoking on all Spanish beaches, to explain the evolution of smoke-free beaches in Spain and the importance of civil society for the increase in the number of smoke-free beaches, by demanding a law banning smoking in all Spanish beaches.

Methods

Collection of signatures through a campaign in Change.org and advocacy with Ministries and policy makers.

Results

There was an increase in the number of smoke-free beaches in a few years (17.5% in 2021) and the inclusion of the ability of local governments to fine people for smoking on Spanish beaches, in the new law on waste.

Conclusions

The social demand for outdoor smoke-free areas is undeniable and

unstoppable, which makes it easier for policy makers to advance in these types of measures for improving health, environment and saving in cleaning costs at the same time.

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New tobacco control policy in the Kyrgyzstan

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The Kyrgyz Republic (KR) ratified the WHO FCTC on 2 March 2006, and the 1st National Tobacco Control Law (TCLaw) was adopted on 21 August 2006. However, it did not regulate tobacco smoking by waterpipes and heated tobacco (HT), use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), smokeless tobacco products, and nicotine-containing smokeless non-tobacco products. Thus, 15 years of experience of implementation of the 1st TCLaw did not reduce the prevalence of tobacco use, and it became the basis for the development of new redaction of the TCLaw. The Law of the KR 'On protection of the health of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic from the consequences of tobacco, nicotine consumption and impact of ambient tobacco smoke and aerosol' (NewTCL) was adopted by 15 September 2021. NewTCL includes the following components: implementation of WHO FCTC Article 5.3 measure into national legislation, comprehensive indoor smoking ban, comprehensive TAPS ban, including tobacco products display ban; smokeless tobacco and tobaccoless nicotine products ban; waterpipe smoking, HT and ENDS regulation; increased size of pictorial pack warning and implementation of PHW for HT and ENDS; increased measures for countrywide tobacco use prevention and cessation, also treatment service; increased measures for countrywide anti-tobacco education, communication, training and public awareness; scientific research, surveillance and exchange of information; availability of participation of the NGOs into countrywide anti-tobacco education, communication, training and public awareness; HT and ENDS producer and importer annual reporting; moving towards economically viable business alternatives. New TCLaw passing was made possible due to: mobilization of civil society, creation of a support group made up of decision makers, strong international supports, and maintaining the continuity of the process without interruptions etc.

Acknowledgement

The Ministry of Health of the KR and the Public Health Protection Foundation is grateful to Campaign Tobacco Free Kids and Bloomberg Philanthropies for their support for promotion of adoption of New TCLaw.

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E-POSTERS

COVID-19 and smoking: Worst complications and outcomes

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Background

Few studies have shown that smokers are more likely than non-smokers to contract COVID-19, while some reports indicate that smokers are underrepresented among those requiring hospital treatment for this illness.

Objective

This study was designed and implemented to investigate the severity and outcomes of COVID-19, based on underlying smoking status.

Methods

This was a cross-sectional study that was implemented in Tehran and Ahvaz, with all COVID-19 hospitalized patients, from February to June 2021. A total of 18200 patients with a positive PCR test were observed. A check list of demographic data and smoking history was completed and analyzed.

Results

In all, 11112 (61.1%) patients were male and the mean age was 47.9±11.3 years; 1508 smokers (8.3%) were seen with any type of tobacco consumption. The frequency of ICU admission in the smokers was significantly higher than non-smokers (23.9% vs 18.8%). Use of more than 3 medications in the smokers was significantly higher (70.6% vs 52%). A comparison between patients based on smoking indicates that the death rate was significantly higher in smokers (31.6% vs 25.6%).

Conclusions

Smokers with COVID-19 had more severe and worse outcomes.

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Trend of smuggled cigarette consumption in Tehran in the last two decades

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Background

Iran is one of two main target markets for illicit tobacco trade in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region. Serial studies of Cigarette Packs Survey with same method were conducted in Tehran between 2003 and 2015 to evaluate consumed smuggled cigarettes.

Objective

This study as the fourth Cigarette Packs Survey is designed to indicate the trends of illicit cigarette trade in Tehran in last two decades.

Methods

This was a cross-sectional household study carried out in early 2021 in Tehran on 3042 smokers aged ≥15 years who reported smoking of at least one daily cigarette for a year. The sampling method was like the sampling method used in three previous studies. Participants were asked to reveal their current cigarette pack, which was either legal cigarettes (displaying governmental pictorial warning and hologram) or illegal cigarettes (with no governmental label).

Results

The subjects included 2536 males (83.4%) and the mean age was

39.9±12.1 years; 1854 subjects (60.9%) showed foreign cigarettes and 1188 (39.1%) showed domestic cigarettes; 2705 (88.9%) consumed legal cigarettes and 337 (11.1%) consumed illegal cigarettes. Consumption of smuggled cigarettes was more by males (11.7% vs 8.1%). No significant differences were seen by marital status and education level in terms of illegal cigarettes prevalence.

Conclusions

Compared with previous studies, the trend of consumption of illicit cigarettes has been decreasing in the past two decades. This could be due to new regulation on monitoring cigarette distribution and changing illegal brands to legal as joint production.

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Digital unit of guidelines tobacco cessation in a German hospital

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Knowledge on how to help patients to stop smoking is poor in Germany. We designed a digital educational unit to promote current national guidelines as a mandatory part of internal education. We have reached about 63% of all employees (doctors, nurses, medical experts, N=6114) within the first 6 months after launching. Only 2% (n=119) used an option to comment on this unit; we have used qualitative data analysis to find out about the 50% who gave positive emotional feedback. About 20% criticized the irrelevance of the topic for their job and expressed their anger: *'This is going much too far, this content should not be part of this online program, this is part of a postgraduate education for physicians and should not be compulsory, just keep it to the legal commitments – what will be next – a swimming course?!'* Digital units are helpful in delivering specific knowledge, but emotional roadblocks to transfer theory into practice need to be considered.

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Cigarette butts: Poison to the environment

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Background

More than 70 billion cigarettes are sold in Germany every year. An estimated 75% of butts are carelessly discarded in Germany, that would be around 53 billion butts that end up in the environment.

Objective

To show the harm caused by discarded butts to the environment, animals and plants, as well as to show possible solutions to avoid the environmental harm of cigarette butts.

Methods

A narrative review to give an overview on the latest evidence on environmental harms of cigarette butts.

Results

Cigarette butts are the most frequent litter, concentrating in places where people gather. If butts get into the environment, the plastic filters degrade only very slowly; after two years, only around 15 to 20 percent of the butt has disappeared, depending on environmental conditions. The toxicants that are released from the butts pollute air, soil and water, thus harming water animals and accumulating in plants. The best solution to reduce environmental harm by littered cigarette butts, is to ban the use of filters in cigarettes and

to reduce the number of smokers by effective tobacco prevention policies. A deposit return scheme as well as campaigns to raise awareness of smokers for the environmental problems caused by cigarette butts may be useful to reduce the amount of littered waste. Several ways of recycling the cellulose acetate of the filters are currently explored. In contrast, biodegradable filters made of cellulose are not a viable solution, as those filters take nearly as long as plastic filters to be degraded.

Conclusions

Cigarette butts are a serious environmental hazard. The increasing environmental awareness of the population should be used to introduce measures that help to avoid cigarette butts being littered in the environment.

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'Facing a problem? Don't reach for the stick!' mobile application designed to help quit smoking

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Background

The advances in information technology provide new opportunities for health professionals to reach patients in new areas and interfaces. One such area is the mobile application, which also helps in patient education and in facilitating behavior change.

Objective

This app is designed to help smokers stay motivated in quitting by providing an overview of how their health improves and shows how much money they have saved since the last cigarette. It helps to change behavior with practical advice and self-monitoring. In January 2022, a new 21-day quit challenge module was added to the app.

Methods

Registration is just a few steps away. It can also be used by customers who are not yet motivated enough. The program employs cognitive behavioral therapy-based behavior modification that helps one observe and gain control over one's actions while trying to quit. The app provides more health education, keeps you motivated, informs you about the possibility of pharmacotherapy, and pays attention to relapse prevention. It also offers games and tips designed to discourage smoking and motivate users to quit.

Results

The app has been downloaded more than ten thousand times in recent years. Currently, it is running on 2914 devices in Hungary. The evaluation of the 21-day challenge is based on the responses to the questionnaires (k1: 873 and k2: 658) but we get very little feedback after 13 days (k3: 16) and at the end of the program (k4: 2).

Conclusions

In recent years, a plethora of new tools and equipment, which also carry false messages have emerged to persuade people to adopt harmful behaviors such as smoking, but fortunately, technical possibilities can also help healthcare professionals provide information and practical help to patients. This option can be an alive and well-used form of support for patients who want to quit in addition to the options that already exist.

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Tobacco endgame has arrived: What that means for tobacco control advocates and ministries of health

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Tobacco endgame – defined here as a policy or set of policies that virtually ends the tobacco epidemic – is no longer a distant dream. Two cities have removed tobacco products from shelves already, while others have put in place policies that will lead to a complete phase-out of sales. And there are plans in at least a dozen countries to examine paths forward on endgame. This session will introduce Project Sunset, a global campaign to phase out the sale of commercial combustible tobacco products. While the vision of Project Sunset is specific, its policy scope is broad, envisioning a plethora of policy schemes that will vary by jurisdiction. Unlike past endgame discussions, Sunset focuses on building the political will necessary to embark on endgame policy discussions. This panel will discuss the growing momentum in favor of tobacco endgame policies, from the birth of the ASPIRE movement to the recent implementation of local tobacco product sales bans to New Zealand's exciting tobacco endgame proposal. The panel will examine the legal framework for pursuing tobacco sales restrictions, the human rights as well as public health imperatives that drive endgame discussions, the challenges and opportunities to open endgame conversations even in jurisdictions that may not yet be positioned to enact endgame policies, and the consideration of unique endgame issues for priority populations. Concrete examples of endgame initiatives such as the embrace of endgame goals in California and New Zealand and the experiences of cities that have successfully passed ordinances phasing out the sale of tobacco products will be considered. Finally, panelists will examine tobacco industry rhetoric and attempts to co-opt the endgame discussion.

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Tobacco use patterns and predictors among college students in Mangalore, South India: Findings from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey

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Background

The tobacco problem in India is probably more complex than in any other country, with a huge consequential burden of tobacco related diseases and deaths.

Objective

The present study aimed at analyzing the pattern and predictors of tobacco use among college students aged 18–24 years, using the Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS).

Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted among 2063 students, from 30 colleges of Mangalore, South India, who were selected by multistage sampling with probability proportional to size. The tobacco questions used for this study were a validated, recommended subset of key questions from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS). Data analysis was performed using GATS manuals and SPSS version 24.0.

Results

A total of 2063 students participated in the study (738 males, 1325 females). Prevalence of tobacco smoking was 4.8%, which included 9.9% males and 2.1% females. Manufactured cigarettes were the most commonly preferred tobacco product among daily smokers. The overall percentage of smokeless tobacco use was 4.8%, which included 7.4% males and 3.3% females. Logistic regression analysis showed that 71.4% of the participants who noticed anti-cigarette information on television made an attempt to quit smoking. The odds ratio (OR) of quitting was 4.4 times higher compared to those who did not notice any information on television ($p=0.002$). In addition, noticing health warnings on cigarette packs strongly influenced an individual to quit smoking (OR=30.09).

Conclusions

The study results showed low prevalence of the use of both smoked and smokeless forms of tobacco, current smoking, and chewing tobacco, among the study population. Generating data in this part of the country on tobacco use and developing tobacco control measures at regular intervals are essential to better understand and develop effective intervention programs.

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Is smoking an independent risk factor for venous thromboembolism?

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Background

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) presenting as pulmonary embolism (PE) and deep venous thrombosis (DVT) represents the third most common cause of cardiovascular death, after myocardial infarction and cerebrovascular insults and is a leading preventable cause of death among hospitalized patients. The incidence of PE is approximately 60 to 70 per 100000 population; its management remains a serious health problem. VTE is considered a part of the cardiovascular disease group, sharing similar predisposing factors such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, hypercholesterolemia and smoking. Smoking is considered an intermediate risk factor for PE and an independent predictor associated with higher readmission rate.

Objective

To determine whether smoking is an independent risk factor for venous thromboembolism.

Methods

We analyzed the data from the Registry for pulmonary embolism at the Clinic of Pulmonology and Allergy in Skopje. In the period from October 2011 to December 2021, a total of 309 patients were hospitalized with radiologically confirmed PE, 169 (54.7%) male and 140 (45.3%) female. Smoking status was registered as never smoker, active smoker and previous (ex-)smoker.

Results

In all, 131 (42.4%) of the patients with acute PE were active smokers, 132 (42.7%) never smoked, 42 (13.6%) were ex-smokers with total smoking history over 15 pack/years. For 4 (1.3%) of the patients we could not collect accurate data. The total of active and ex-smokers adds up to 56% of the total number of patients,

which is almost double than the referred prevalence of smoking in Macedonia according to the Tobacco Atlas from 2015 (36.1% in males and 20.8% in females).

Conclusions

No significant difference was registered concerning predisposition for bleeding, comorbidities, duration of hospitalization. Persistence of thrombi and recidivant PE was more prevalent in smokers, although the difference did not reach statistical significance.

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Do health professionals practice what they preach? A systematic review

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Background

The damaging health effects of poor lifestyle behaviors such as smoking, low physical activity, obesity and excessive alcohol intake are well established. Whilst it might be expected that individuals who are educated and working in health promotion roles exhibit an improved personal health profile, when compared to other professions, counter-intuitively, research has shown that the healthcare workforce in general, exhibits the same health behaviors as the general population.

Objective

This systematic review aims to establish whether health professionals, put into practice the health behaviors they promote to their patients.

Methods

The literature search began by searching eight online databases, the search was applied to MEDLINE, CINAHL, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, ASSIA, PubMed, Ebsco and ProQuest. Studies were also identified by scanning relevant reference lists of identified articles, a grey literature search and consultation with experts in the field.

Results

A total of 16 studies met the inclusion criteria of the review – 10 quantitative, 5 qualitative and one mixed-methods study. The studies provided a wide range of reported smoking prevalence (6.6% to 23.7%), alcohol consumption (60.8% to 94%), moderate to high levels of physical activity (19.1% to 72.7%), consuming ≥5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day (23.2% to 60.3%) and those classified as overweight or obese (9% to 60.55%).

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How legislative tobacco control measures increase the number of those who are seeking help in quitting smoking: Example of Polish Quitline

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Background

The Polish national Quitline was established in 1996 as one of the first Quitlines in this part of Europe. It works according to

international standards and offers reactive and proactive service to its clients as well as online tools. Since Poland is a member of the European Union, it has been obliged to introduce tobacco products directives (TPD).

Objective

To assess the impact of implementing legislative measures, i.e. new health warnings and pictorial health warnings on number of those who call the Quitline.

Methods

The call volume has been compared to assess the impact of health warnings. We took into account implementation of TPD 2001/37/EC (new health warnings) and TPD 2014/40/UE (pictorial health warnings). The Quitline number appeared on cigarettes packages – on every 14 pack in 2004 and on each in May 2016.

Results

We observed a significant increase in number of calls to Quitline just after the implementation of new legislative measures. In 2004, with the new health warnings, the increase was over 1600% – in 2003 there were 628 calls, and in 2005 more than 10000 calls. The biggest increase appeared just before the placing of the Quitline number on cigarette packs, i.e. in October (355 calls), in November and December more than 1000 call per month have been recorded. This increase continued for the next 7 months until July 2005. Another peak was observed after the pictorial health warnings, with an increase of almost 100%. In 2016, we recorded almost 5000 reactive calls and in 2017 almost 10000 reactive calls.

Conclusions

The new health warnings and pictorial health warnings had a significant impact on the number of those who sought help to quit smoking. Placing the Quitline number on cigarettes packs is an effective and cost-effective way to increase the number of calls to Quitline. However, the interest is stabilizing and even going down after some time, so new motivation tools should be implemented regularly.

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Diagnostic issues of lung cancer after SARS-COV-2 pandemic in smoker patients: Case studies

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The SARS-COV-2 pandemic overwhelmed the healthcare systems over the world. Romanian healthcare system should face this pandemic, and this fact was followed by a delay in diagnosis and treatment of many pathologies, especially pulmonary neoplastic diseases.

We present 3 cases of smoker male patients with non-small cell lung cancer, in metastatic phase. The diagnosis was delayed due to the first patient, smoker of 35 pack-years, admitted in hospital for cough, mucopurulent sputum, and pain at the right scapulohumeral joint. The thoracic CT scan performed revealed a left endobronchial expansive process and atelectasis, massive left pleural effusion, and metastatic bone tumors at T3-T12 level,

right collarbone, right shoulder blade, ribs, sternum, and left humeral head.

The second patient, smoker 85 pack-years, presented for chest pain in the left posterior hemithorax with paresthesia in the left upper limb, dry cough, dysphonia, and dyspnea. The CT scans revealed an expansive homogeneous, well delimited mass located at the upper left lobe level. The tumor was adherent to the aortic club, without a cleavage plan, and in contact with bone lysis of T1 and first costal arch.

Third patient, smoker, 45 pack-years, admitted to hospital for rest dyspnea, asthenia, fatigue, paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea, dry cough, and pain at the left coxo-femoral joint. The CT scans revealed an upper right lobe T2N2M1 bronchopulmonary carcinoma and metastatic bone tumors at D8, D9, and D12. Biopsy via fibro bronchoscopy was performed and confirmed squamous cell carcinoma for two cases and adenocarcinoma in the third case.

The SARS-COV-2 pandemic impeded patients access to pneumologist, and the diagnosis of malignant tumors was delayed. The consequences were poor prognosis and shortened life expectancy. A peculiarity of COVID-19 pandemic was the lockdown which increased tobacco use.

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Assessment of air pollution exposure in relation with smoking status in COPD patients from Iasi, Romania

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Background

Smoking is recognized as the main risk factor for the development of COPD. However, studies have shown that half of smokers who are highly addicted to nicotine do not develop COPD, and that non-smokers may also develop COPD throughout their lives. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are a class of complex organic substances, consisting of carbon and hydrogen atoms, that contain at least two benzene rings that can be used as a biomarker of air pollution exposure.

Objective

Assessment of air pollution exposure in relation with smoking status in COPD patients.

Methods

In this observational study, a number of 15 PAHs were investigated for 51 patients diagnosed with COPD, hospitalized at the Clinical Hospital of Pulmonary Diseases, Iasi, Romania. The study mainly focuses on the quantification of PAHs in the blood of patients diagnosed with COPD and the assessment of the admission of these contaminants according to smoking status and exposure to air pollution.

Results

Evaluation of PAHs in the investigated samples revealed high concentrations for patients with COPD stage II and III compared to the values of the concentrations in patients with stage IV. The results show that the concentrations of non-carcinogenic

PAHs were much higher than carcinogenic PAHs and the order of admission was non-carcinogenic ΣPAHs non-smoker > non-carcinogenic ΣPAHs former smoker > non-carcinogenic ΣPAHs smokers. The most abundant carcinogenic PAHs were BaPy in smokers, DahA for non-smokers and B(b)Flu for former smokers. The ranking of admission of carcinogenic PAHs according to smoking status was carcinogenic ΣPAHs smokers > carcinogenic ΣPAHs non-smokers > carcinogenic ΣPAHs former smokers.

Conclusions

Beside smoking, air pollution is a risk factor for COPD and the present study shows that the levels of PAH were high among the investigated patients. More studies should be conducted in this field with the purpose to find the way in which pollutants contribute to the development of this disease.

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Useful biological markers in COPD smoking patients

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Background

Smoking is the most incriminated and studied risk factor for COPD, but other factors like air pollution are also linked to this disease. Assessment of nicotine dependence may be performed clinically or paraclinical.

Objective

To assess useful biological markers in COPD smoking patients.

Methods

In this observational study, 52 patients diagnosed with different stages of COPD were included and clinical features and biological variables were statistically assessed. The biological markers measured were ALAT-alanine amino aminotransferase, ASAT - aspartate aminotransferase, urea, creatinine, total cholesterol, triglycerides, high density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-CHOL), low density lipoproteins-cholesterol (LDL-CHOL), lactate dehydrogenase (LDH), and uric acid.

Results

Significant correlations were obtained between COPD stages and serum uric acid concentrations ($r=0.4$; $p<0.05$), smoking status (smoker/non-smoker/ex-smoker) and total serum cholesterol values ($r=0.45$; $p<0.05$), but also between serum urea concentrations and the number of pack-years for the smoker/ex-smoker groups ($r=0.45$; $p<0.05$). The statistical difference between the investigated smoker/non-smoker/ex-smoker groups was assessed with the Man-Whitney U test. Thus, the statistical results showed a statistically significant difference between the smoker/ex-smoker groups given by the following biological variables: total cholesterol ($p=0.012$), LDL-CHOL ($p=0.039$), PY-pack-years ($p=0.006$). The results from the descriptive statistics point to LDL-CHOL values for smokers and ex-smokers of 106.34 mg/dL and 110.53 mg/dL, respectively, slightly higher than the reference biological range compared to the mean LDL-CHOL concentration values in non-smokers (98.28 mg/dL).

Conclusions

The results show that lipid metabolism seems to be affected by smoking and other studies conducted in this field also show a correlation between this habit and high levels of triglycerides and low levels of HDL cholesterol. Uric acid can be used as a biomarker of exposure to tobacco smoke.

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Vitamins B9 and B12 in adolescents smoking cigarettes and waterpipe combined

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Background

Vitamins B9 and B12 are essential for many bodily functions. Circulatory levels of the vitamins are affected by cigarette (Cg) smoking. However, the effect of waterpipe (Wp) smoking on circulatory vitamin levels is still unknown, especially among adolescents.

Objective

The current study examines the differences in serum vitamin B9 and B12 in 360 girls and 369 boys smoking Cg, Wp, both (Cg+Wp), versus none.

Methods

Self-reported smoking status and serum B9 and B12 were measured after obtaining assent and consent from all adolescents.

Results

About 18.9% and 50.8% of the adolescents were B9 and B12 deficient. Levels of B9 ($p < 0.03$) were greater in the boys while B12 was greater ($p < 0.0001$) in the girls. The ANCOVA shows a main effect ($p < 0.004$) of smoking status for B9. Further subgroup comparisons revealed lower B9 in the Cg+Wp group versus none ($p < 0.005$), Cg only ($p < 0.05$), and Wp only ($p < 0.001$) groups, without differences ($p > 0.05$) between none, Cg only, and Wp only groups. Likewise, the ANCOVA demonstrated a main effect ($p < 0.009$) of smoking status for B12. Subsequent post hoc analysis shows lower B12 in the Cg+Wp group versus none ($p < 0.04$), Cg only ($p < 0.007$), and Wp only ($p < 0.007$) groups, without differences ($p > 0.05$) between none, Cg only, and Wp only groups.

Conclusions

The results are unique and suggest that combining Cg with Wp smoking is associated with altered serum B9 and B12 levels. Therefore, programs are needed to implement plans and strategies to restrain the rapid spread of Cg and Wp smoking and to mitigate the negative effects of Cg and Wp smoking, especially among adolescents. Additionally, studies are warranted to verify the current results.

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E-cigarette and smoking addiction: Way out or a quicksand? An impact study on e-cigarette users in Dhaka Metropolitan Area

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Background

E-cigarettes include components lethal to the human body. A lot of e-cigarette users receive more nicotine than their traditional counterparts. But the tobacco companies say the opposite, like e-cigarettes can reduce tobacco-related diseases and assist in quitting conventional tobacco use, though many of the harmful chemicals generated by e-cigarettes are similar to those generated by conventional cigarettes. E-cigarettes are not approved by the Drug Administration Bangladesh either. Still, the increase in the number of e-cigarette users in the Dhaka metropolitan area remains alarming. The multi-layered impacts of e-cigarette consumption on quitting tobacco need to be evaluated as well.

Objective

To investigate the role of e-cigarettes in assisting people to quit smoking and analyze the causes behind e-cigarette consumption in the Dhaka metropolitan area.

Methods

The study adopted a mixed methodology where structured questionnaire-based surveys and in-depth interviews were conducted. The participants were e-cigarette users for at least twelve consecutive months. The sample size for the survey was 405 and 15 participants were selected for in-depth interviews.

Results

The majority of respondents in the 18–25 years age group consider e-cigarette smoking glamorous, whereas, the 46–55 and 56–65 years age groups used e-cigarettes to quit smoking. In all, 185 of the 276 respondents using e-cigarettes to quit smoking, returned to smoking again and 212 mentioned e-cigarettes have no impact on getting rid of cigarettes. None of the three respondents who managed to quit smoking attributed their success to e-cigarettes; 89 of the 129 respondents who started using e-cigarettes first from peer pressure and to show off, switched to cigarette smoking later.

Conclusions

This study indicates the insubstantiality of companies' claims regarding the positive impact of e-cigarettes. The youngsters find e-cigarette consumption stylish, which often leads them to cigarette smoking. A number of respondents resume smoking after trying to quit tobacco using e-cigarettes.

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Factors related to smoking of youth in Bulgaria and tracked consequences of their behavior

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Background

A cross-sectional survey has been conducted via online query in December 2020. The total number of the respondents was 644. A third (33.4%) were non-smokers, 45.7% current smokers and 21.0% ex-smokers. For this analysis ex-smokers are excluded.

Objective

The aim is to assess the factors related to smoking among youth.

Methods

Descriptive statistics, binary logistic regression, and Pearson chi-squared test were used.

Results

Age and gender are not amongst the significant factors of being a smoker but the self-perceived wealth is. Smoking in the close circle of young people (their homes and workplaces) is also proved as a significant factor of smoking. Significantly more smokers think that due to their behavior they have more social interactions whilst more non-smokers think theirs are less. Significantly more smokers confess that their own wealth is slightly worsening due to smoking and more non-smokers think their own wealth is slightly improved. Significantly more smokers agree that their general health is worsening because of smoking and more non-smokers think that their health is strengthened. Just a small number of both groups approved smoking of youth, pregnant women and in front of children, but there is a significant difference in the degree of approval of both groups, more non-smokers completely disagree with such a behavior whilst more smokers disagree just partially. The estimates of smoking prevalence amongst youth corresponds to the one measured by a national representative survey in the same age group.

Conclusions

Wealth is significant factor of being smoker amongst youth in Bulgaria. Measures of tobacco tax incentive would probably have a great impact on smoking prevalence of young people.

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Motivation to stop using tobacco products among Polish youth: Results of the PolNicoYouth survey

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Background

The use of tobacco products is a significant public health problem, especially among adolescents and young adults.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the motivation to stop using tobacco products in the last 12 months among Polish youth.

Methods

The cross-sectional study was carried out in 2020 on a sample of secondary school students aged 15–18 years (N=16712), representative of the Polish population, using the CAWI method. In order to estimate the relationship between the independent variables and the outcome variables, the Bayesian multivariate logistic regression was used in the R program using the brms library.

Results

It was observed that a very significant relationship [$\ln(\text{BF}) < 2.3$] with the respondents attempts to quit smoking traditional cigarettes was the use of these products by their parents [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 3.23$]. Adolescents whose parents smoke traditional cigarettes more often reported attempts to quit smoking the same products in the last 12 months. In the case of the respondents' attempts to quit e-cigarette use, a very significant relationship was observed only

with the type of user (e-cigarette user, dual user) [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 23.26$]. Attempts to quit the addiction were more often declared by e-cigarette users than by dual users. Moreover, dual users more often than e-cigarette users declared that they do not want to and do not intend to stop using e-cigarettes [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 5.55$]. In the case of smoking traditional cigarettes, no such differences were observed.

Conclusions

Motivating people to stop using tobacco products and getting support in this process is especially important among young users for whom continued use of these products has significant health consequences. It seems that special attention in this aspect should be paid to dual users. Moreover, it seems that it is worth considering building dedicated programs of help in giving up addiction dedicated to young people.

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Nicotine concentration preferences of Polish youth using e-cigarettes: Results of the PolNicoYouth survey

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Background

The use of tobacco products is a significant public health problem, especially among adolescents and young adults.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the consumer preferences of Polish youth in the use of e-cigarettes.

Methods

The cross-sectional study was carried out in 2020 on a sample of secondary school students aged 15–18 years (N=16712), representative of the Polish population, using the CAWI method. In order to estimate the relationship between the independent variables and the outcome variables, the Bayesian multivariate logistic regression was used in the R program using the brms library.

Results

It was observed that a very significant relationship [$\ln(\text{BF}) < 2.3$] with different consumer preferences among e-cigarette users were the gender and size of the place of residence. Men more often than women declared that they knew the amounts of nicotine in the e-cigarettes they used [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 15.94$]. In the entire study population, it was the most common from 4 to 6 mg/mL of nicotine [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 2.35$]. Men more often than women also declared that in their e-cigarettes they use liquids prepared on their own or at home [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 46.51$] and tastes other than sweet or tobacco and menthol [$\ln(\text{BF}) = 2.99$].

Conclusions

Already in the group of young e-cigarette users in Poland, different consumer preferences for these products can be observed. Particular attention should be paid to the use of e-cigarettes by young people also for purposes other than their original use. It seems that, especially in the largest cities, it would be reasonable to implement educational and preventive measures in groups of young residents.

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Changes in excess deaths from smoking in Poland between 2005 and 2020

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Background

Smoking is a single, well-identified cause of many lethal diseases. This is one of the few determinants of cancer and other life-threatening diseases that can be completely eliminated. Many diseases and deaths can be avoided by changing people's attitudes and behavior towards smoking.

Objective

The main purpose of this study is to present changes in health consequences of smoking in Poland between 2005 and 2020.

Methods

Poland's population data, mortality data, and smoking frequencies come from Statistics Poland. The relative risk of death (compared to non-smokers) for each of these diseases is based on the prospective Cancer Prevention Study II (CPS-II) results, conducted by the American Cancer Society in the 1980s on a sample of 1.2 million Americans. The magnitude of excess deaths has been estimated for the major disease groups, such as malignant neoplasms, respiratory tract diseases, cardiovascular diseases, and digestive tract diseases.

Results

Between 2005 and 2020 the proportion of smokers in males dropped by 7 percentage points (from 31% to 24%), while in females it remained stable (20%). The number of excess deaths, especially among men, has decreased (males 54000 vs 32000; females 20000 vs 18000). The excess deaths fraction from cancer in men decreased from 73% to 37%. There was an increase in this fraction among women from 14% in 2005 to 18% in 2020. Among the other causes of death in both genders there was a reduction in the fraction of excess deaths related to smoking.

Conclusions

The obtained results indicate that cutting down on smoking prevalence translates directly into a considerable reduction of the excess deaths related to smoking-dependent diseases.

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A scoping review on policies to reduce tobacco availability by regulating retail environment

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Background

In 2005, the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) entered into force. This treaty was developed in response to the global tobacco epidemic, and it includes measures to reduce both demand for and supply of tobacco. The measures related to demand reduction include raising tax, providing cessation services, promoting smoke-free public places, banning advertising, and raising awareness. However, there are a limited number of measures for supply reduction, and these mainly include fighting illicit trade, banning

sales to minors and providing alternatives to tobacco workers and growers. Unlike regulation of many other goods and services that have been subjected to retail restrictions, there is a lack of resources about restricting tobacco availability through regulation of tobacco retail environment.

Objective

Considering the potential of retail environment regulations in reducing tobacco supply and consequently reducing tobacco use, this scoping review aims to identify relevant measures.

Methods

This scoping review examines interventions, policies, and legislation to regulate tobacco retail environment to reduce tobacco availability. This was done by searching all FCTC and its Conference of Parties decisions, a grey literature search including tobacco control databases, a scoping communication with the focal points of the 182 FCTC Parties, and a databases search in PubMed, EMBASE, Cochrane Library, Global Health, and Web of Science.

Results

Themes of measures were identified to reduce tobacco availability by regulating retail environment: FCTC and non-FCTC measures. Studies show the effects of regulation of the retail environment in influencing overall tobacco purchases, and there is strong evidence that having fewer retailers reduces the level of impulse purchasing of cigarettes and tobacco goods. The measures covered by FCTC are much more implemented than ones not covered by it. Although not widely implemented, many themes of limiting tobacco availability by regulating tobacco retail environment are available.

Conclusions

Further studies to assess such measures, and the adoption of the effective ones to be covered under FCTC decisions would probably increase their adoption by many countries. There is a need for exploring regulating retail environment to reduce tobacco availability and its supply as a theme to be adopted globally for tobacco control.

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Adapting a social marketing operation during a Pandemic: The French *Mois sans tabac* in the time of COVID-19

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Background

Mois sans tabac (MST) is a social marketing initiative inspired by the British Stoptober. Organized every November in France since 2016, it aims to encourage smokers to stop smoking for 30 days. Smokers are encouraged to register on a website and to use quitting tools (QT): app, website, and quitline. Between 2016 and 2019, annual registrations ranged from 158290 to 243579 and the estimation of quit attempts were from 360000 to 550000.

Objective

To describe how the operation was adapted to maintain the level of awareness and commitment to tobacco cessation during COVID-19.

Methods

A narrative description of the technical adaptations of MST in

2020 and 2021 and a comparison of key outcomes with previous years.

Results

In 2020 and 2021, COVID-19 prevented Santé publique France from organizing local and face-to-face activities. Collective mobilization and media impact were more difficult to achieve. The program was adapted with remote services, digitalization of content, and changes in the media plan. The number of registrations decreased by 38% in 2020 compared to 2019 and by 11% in 2021 compared to 2020. QT use also declined: -25% for the calls on the quitline, -26% for the traffic on the website and -12% for app downloads between 2019 and 2020. The decline was even steeper between 2020 and 2021: -29% for the quitline and -48% for the app.

Conclusions

Changes made during the pandemic contributed to maintaining interest in smoking cessation. Indicators decrease can be partly explained by the pandemic: a lassitude from the numerous health messages, a lower visibility of the media campaign, a missing collective dimension and the lack of field activities, which did not allow for a mass mobilization nor a collective impulse. Another explanation comes from the loss of momentum of MST, which leads to rethink the operation for the next editions.

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Ban on advertising and promotion of heated tobacco products in Poland

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Background

Among the many tools limiting the consumption of tobacco and tobacco products, the legal regulations prohibiting their advertising and promotion are of significant importance. Currently, there are two types of heated tobacco products on the Polish market.

Objective

The aim of the study was to analyze the provisions protecting consumers against advertising and promotion of HTP in Poland.

Methods

A dogmatic and legal analysis of the provisions was performed.

Results

Heated tobacco products, as well as tobacco props relating to them and associated symbols, are prohibited from advertising. The promotion consists of activities specified in Article 2.23 of the Anti-Tobacco Act, including public distribution, organization of tastings, bonus sales or competitions relating to heated tobacco products.

Conclusions

The best solution, fully compliant with the standards of the WHO Convention, would be to completely abandon the legislator's distinction between public and private promotion by prohibiting any type of promotion of nicotine products.

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Effectiveness of behavior change interventions for smoking cessation among expectant and new fathers: Findings from a systematic review

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Background

Smoking cessation during pregnancy and postpartum period by both women and their partners offers multiple health benefits. However, compared to pregnant/post-partum women, their partners are less likely to actively seek smoking cessation services. There is an increased recognition about the importance of tailored approaches to smoking cessation for expectant and new fathers. While Behavior Change Interventions (BCIs) are a promising approach for smoking cessation, evidence on its effectiveness exclusively among expectant and new fathers is fragmented and does not allow for many firm conclusions to be drawn.

Objective

To conduct a systematic review on effectiveness of BCIs on smoking cessation outcomes offered to expectant and new fathers (child <1 year) both through individual and/or couple-based interventions.

Methods

Peer reviewed articles were identified from eight databases. Two reviewers independently conducted screening, data extraction and quality assessment.

Results

Of the 1222 studies identified, 9 RCTs (involving 4681 men) were included in the study. The intervention targets were mixed, with 5 studies targeting expectant/new fathers, 3 targeting couples and 1 primarily targeting women with intervention component to men. While the follow up measurements for men varied within the studies, majority of studies reported biochemically verified quit rates at 6 months. Most of the interventions were found to be effective and showed small effects on cessation outcomes. BCI approaches in interventions were heterogenous across studies. Findings are suggestive of gender specific interventions being more likely to have positive outcomes.

Conclusions

This review suggests that use of the BCI approach for smoking cessation among expectant and new fathers is effective. However, more studies are needed to strengthen the evidence base to inform policy and practice. Further, there is a need to identify how smoking cessation service delivery can better address the needs of (both) gender(s) during pregnancy – ‘an opportune time for offering smoking cessation interventions’.

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The gender and smoking duration importance for obesity and lipid profile among individuals smoking shisha

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Background

The evidence demonstrating the adverse health effects of shisha smoking is accumulating, however, data on the effect of shisha smoking on obesity and lipid profile are still sparse.

Objective

The present study investigated the relationship of shisha smoking with obesity and lipids.

Methods

Body weight, BMI, total cholesterol (Tch), LDL, HDL, Tch/HDL, LDL/HDL, and triglycerides (Tri) were measured in 147 shisha smokers and 144 non-smokers. The smokers were subdivided according to smoking duration, those who smoked <10 years (shisha1), smoked 10–20 years (shisha2), and those who smoked >20 years (shisha3).

Results

The ANCOVA demonstrated elevated obesity and lipid profile measures in shisha smokers versus non-smokers ($p < 0.01$). Further comparisons showed greater ($p < 0.05$) weight and BMI in the women who smoked for longer time, but not the men. Furthermore, Tch, LDL, Tch/HDL and LDL/HDL levels were elevated ($p < 0.05$) in the men with longer smoking history, but not the women.

Conclusions

The results demonstrate that gender and smoking duration impact the relationship of shisha smoking with obesity and lipid profile. The findings are unique and indicate that gender and smoking duration should be considered when designing cessation programs for shisha smoking. Moreover, the adverse health effects of shisha smoking are further confirmed.

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Biochemical evaluation of oxidative stress induced by smoking in patients with COPD

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Background

Oxidative stress is induced by tobacco smoking and is also associated with COPD. Malondialdehyde (MDA) has become one of the most used biomarkers that can evaluate the effects of oxidative stress.

Objective

This study correlated tobacco use and COPD with oxidative stress markers useful in clinical practice.

Methods

Oxidative stress was evaluated according to the biological

variables in 51 (smoking/non-smoking /ex-smoking) patients diagnosed with COPD in different stages of the disease. Smoking status was quantified in pack-years (PYs) in the case of smoker/ex-smoker patients. Other useful parameters assessed are: serum total cholesterol, triglycerides, low density lipoproteins (LDL-Chol), high density lipoproteins (HDL-Chol), glucose and lactate dehydrogenase (LDH).

Results

In the case of smokers, the descriptive analysis showed a mean concentration value for MDA of 2.83 $\mu\text{mol/L}$ (range: 1.69–5.55) that was much higher than the mean concentration in the case of non-smoking patients (2.03 $\mu\text{mol/L}$; range: 0.7–2.77). A positive correlation was observed between serum concentrations of MDA and triglycerides ($r=0.31$, $p < 0.05$), MDA and LDH ($r=0.5$, $p < 0.05$). Based on the statistical results, it can be concluded that MDA ($F=3.35$, $p=0.042$), triglycerides ($F=2.83$, $p=0.09$) and PY ($F=27.12$, $p=0.0001$) were the factors of highest importance for the discrimination of the three groups considered (smokers/non-smokers/ex-smokers). Lower concentrations of uric acid were found in smokers (mean concentration=5.47 mg/dL) versus non-smokers (mean concentration=6.61 mg/dL), suggesting a decreased endogenous production.

Conclusions

The discriminatory analysis of smokers showed a direct correlation between MDA concentrations and the intensity of smoking. The findings of this study suggest that smoking is associated with lipid peroxidation and antioxidant response in COPD patients.

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Smoking, alcohol and cannabis use among Serbian adolescents

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Background

Tobacco, alcohol and cannabis are among psychoactive substances with the highest prevalence of use in many countries. In addition, there is vast evidence in the literature on the clustering of these substances use among adolescents.

Objective

Our aim was to determine different groups of adolescents according to their use of tobacco, alcohol and cannabis as well as factors associated with co-occurrence of these substances use.

Methods

To explore patterns of tobacco, alcohol and cannabis use among Serbian students aged 15–16 years, we used data obtained through Pilot survey Health behavior in school-aged children, conducted in 2017 on a nationally representative sample. Latent class analysis (LCA) was conducted and classes were compared according to sociodemographic characteristics.

Results

In 2017, in Serbia, among students aged 15–16 years ($n=1408$), 23.5% reported smoking, 51.3% drinking alcohol and 6.7% using cannabis in the last 30 days. Based on the last month's tobacco, alcohol and cannabis use, using LCA ($AIC=4771.771$; $BIC=4855.644$; $\text{entropy}=0.9$), students were grouped into: those who do not use any of the explored substances (abstainers); predominantly smokers; users of alcohol and cigarettes; and users of all three substances. More students are in the group of

alcohol and tobacco users compared to the predominant smokers' group (4.0% vs 37.9%). Compared to abstainers, students in the predominant smokers' group have twice higher odds of reporting health complaints at least twice a month (OR=2.10; 95% CI: 1.11–3.99).

Conclusions

To address dual and poly substance use there is a need to carefully plan the interventions which should address multiple risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

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