

Support for and reported compliance with smoke-free restaurants and bars by smokers in four countries: findings from the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Four Country Survey

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Abstract

Objective: To explore determinants of support for and reported compliance with smoke-free policies in restaurants and bars across the four countries of the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Four Country Survey.

Design: Separate telephone cross-sectional surveys conducted between October and December 2002 with broadly representative samples of over 2000 adult (> 18 years) cigarette smokers in each of the following four countries: the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

Outcome measures: Support for smoke-free policies in restaurants and pubs/bars and reported compliance with existing policies.

Results: Reported total bans on indoor smoking in restaurants varied from 62% in Australia to 5% in the UK. Smoking bans in bars were less common, with California in the USA being the only major part of any country with documented bans. Support for bans in both restaurants and bars was related to the existence of bans, beliefs about passive smoking being harmful, lower average cigarette consumption, and older age. Self-reported compliance with a smoking ban was generally high and was associated with greater support for the ban.

Conclusions: Among current cigarette smokers, support for smoking bans was associated with living in a place where the law prohibits smoking. Smokers adjust and both accept and comply with smoke-free laws. Associates of support and compliance are remarkably similar across countries given the notably different levels of smoke-free policies.

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