

Impact of anti-smoking advertising on health-risk knowledge and quit attempts across 6 European countries from the EUREST-PLUS ITC Europe Survey

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Abstract

Introduction: Exposure to anti-smoking advertising and its effects differ across countries. This study examines the reported exposure to anti-smoking advertising among smokers and its relation to knowledge of smoking harms and quit attempts in six European countries.

Methods: Data come from Wave 1 of the International Tobacco Control (ITC) 6 European Country (6E) Survey (Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Spain) carried out among smokers between June and September 2016 (n=6011). Key measures included whether participants had noticed anti-smoking advertising in the last six months in 6 different channels, their knowledge of 13 adverse smoking/second-hand smoking health effects and if they had made at least one quit attempt in the last 12 months. Multivariate logistic regression models were used in the analysis.

Results: Across the six countries, only 35.2% of smokers reported being exposed to any anti-smoking advertising. Television was the most common channel identified (25.7%), followed by newspapers and magazines (13.8%), while social media were the least reported (9.5%). Participants 18–24 years old were significantly more likely to have noticed advertisements on the Internet than participants >55 years old (24.3% vs 4.9%; OR=5.15). Participants exposed to anti-smoking advertising in all six channels were twice more likely to have a higher knowledge of smoking risks than those not exposed (2.4% vs 97.6%, respectively; OR=2.49). The likelihood of making a quit attempt was increased by 10% for each additional channel through which smokers were exposed to anti-smoking advertising.

Conclusions: Knowledge of health risks of smoking tended to be higher in countries that aired a campaign in recent years. Exposure to anti-smoking advertising, in the six channels combined, was related to higher smoking knowledge of risks and to more quit attempts. Future anti-smoking mass media campaigns should consider advertising in all dissemination channels to increase the awareness of the dangers of smoking.

Recommended Citation

Nogueira, S., Fu, M., Kyriakos, C.N., Mons, U., Fernández, E., McNeill, A., Zatoński, W., Trofor, A., Demjén, T., Tountas, Y., Quah, A.C.K., Fong, G.T., Hitchman, S.C., Vardavas, C. (2018). Impact of anti-smoking advertising on health-risk knowledge and quit attempts across 6 European countries from the EUREST-PLUS ITC Europe Survey. *Tobacco Induced Diseases*, 16(Suppl 2), A5-.

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