

Correlates of the support for smoke-free policies among smokers: a cross-sectional study in six European countries of the EUREST-PLUS ITC Europe Surveys

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Abstract

Introduction: This report describes the support for smoke-free policies in different settings among smokers in six European countries and the relationship between their opinions about the places where smoking should be banned and their beliefs about the harms of secondhand smoke to non-smokers.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey (the ITC 6 European Country Survey, part of the EUREST-PLUS Project) was conducted using nationally representative samples of adult smokers in Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Spain (n=6011). We describe the prevalence of agreement and support for smoke-free policies in different settings according to sociodemographics, smoking characteristics and beliefs about the danger of secondhand smoke to non-smokers.

Results: There was high agreement with smoking regulations in cars with preschool children and in schoolyards of primary/secondary schools (>90% overall) and low agreement with banning smoking in outdoor terraces of bars/pubs (8.6%; 95%CI: 7.5%-9.8%) and restaurants (10.1%; 95%CI: 8.9%-11.4%). The highest support for complete smoking bans inside public places came from smokers in Poland, among women, people aged ≥ 25 years, who had low nicotine dependence, and who tried to quit smoking in the last 12 months. About 78% of participants agreed that tobacco smoke is dangerous to non-smokers, ranging from 63.1% in Hungary to 88.3% in Romania; the highest agreement was noted among women, the 25-54 age groups, those with higher education, low cigarette dependence, and those who tried to quit in the last 12 months. The support for complete smoking bans in public places was consistently higher among smokers who agreed that secondhand smoke is dangerous to non-smokers.

Conclusions: Smokers in six European countries declared strong support for smoke-free policies in indoor settings and in settings with minors but low support in outdoor settings, particularly leisure facilities. More education is needed to increase the awareness about the potential exposure to secondhand smoke in specific outdoor areas.

Recommended Citation

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