

# The role of income and psychological distress in the relationship between work loss and smoking cessation: Findings from three International Tobacco Control (ITC) Europe countries

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## **Abstract**

**Introduction:** The relationship between work loss and smoking has not been studied extensively, and underlying factors are often not examined. The aim of this study was to test two hypotheses. First, work loss is associated with greater intention to quit and more likelihood of smoking cessation, and this relationship is moderated by a decrease in income. Second, work loss is associated with lower quit intention and lower rates of smoking cessation, and this relationship is moderated by an increase in psychological distress.

**Methods:** We used pooled data from three countries participating in the ITC Project: France, Germany and the Netherlands (n=2712). We measured unemployment, income and psychological distress at two consecutive survey waves, and calculated changes between survey waves. We first conducted multiple logistic regression analyses to examine the association between work loss and smoking cessation behavior. Next, we added income decrease and psychological distress increase to the models. Finally, we added interaction terms of work loss by income decrease and work loss by distress increase to the model.

**Results:** Work loss was not associated with quit intention, quit attempts, and quit success. When income decrease and psychological distress increase were added to the model, we found a positive association between distress increase and quit attempts. The interactions, however, were not statistically significant.

**Conclusions:** Our results indicate that smokers who become unemployed and face a decrease in income are not less likely to quit smoking than smokers who are employed.

## **Recommended Citation**

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