2002 Global Youth Tobacco Survey
(GYTS)
GEORGIA REPORT

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I. Introduction

Tobacco use is one of the major preventable causes of death in the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) attributes some 5 million deaths a year to tobacco, a figure expected to rise to 10 million deaths a year by 2030, most of these deaths in developing countries.

In Georgia, the smoking prevalence in adults has remained stable during the last 5 years. The pattern of smoking in adults shows big difference between males and females, as over 50% of male smoke (consequently, Georgia is the one of 11 countries out of 51 of those having such high rates, covered by WHO European Region) in comparison to only 15% of women. Still, it is suspected that the tobacco consumption among youngsters is an increasing problem in Georgia. Until 2002 there was no national surveillance system to monitor the smoking behaviour in young people except isolated surveys supported by the Department of Public Health. Basic document referred to tobacco consumption is the Decree of the President of Georgia 2000, Sep., 18, N 412. The Law Concerning Tobacco Control adopted by the Parliament of Georgia, but it is not signed by the President of Georgia yet. According to health care experts, it is a week leal instrument, which does not respect certain demands of Framework Convention and European Strategy.

In 2003, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs initiated the process of development of National Action Plan (NAP) on Tobacco Control for the period 2004-2007. The NAP will be in line with the new European Strategy on Tobacco Control recently approved by the WHO European Member States, in September 2002. The NAP will be based on intersectorial approach and cover areas like all points of European Strategy on Tobacco Control, developing thus thus existing legislation and policy

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control has not been signed by Georgia. It is expected that the ratification of the FCTC by the Georgian Parliament will give a boost to tobacco control in the country.

Another development in the recent years has been the opening of cessation clinics (the National Centre Against Tobacco), and help line services within the framework of the Healthy Lifestyle Programme. Also, pharmacotherapies are available without prescription in pharmacies.

Georgia is a tobacco producer and manufacturer, and very important one (57% of tobacco products on Georgian market is produced in Georgia). The tobacco companies belong to private companies, both local and international ones. Some members of Georgian Parliament are ex-heads of tobacco companies.

In this context, there is specific situation in Georgia - tobacco control measures are increasingly developing, while tobacco companies (both local and international) are blocking the adoption of legislation on tobacco.

In 2002, the Georgian Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs accepted the invitation launched by the WHO Regional Office for Europe in collaboration with US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to participate in the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) project. The implementation of the GYTS took place in Georgia at the end of 2002.

II. Methods

a) Sampling procedures

The 2002 Georgia GYTS is a school-based survey, which employed a two-stage cluster sample design to produce a nationally representative sample of students in grades 7, 8 and 9. The first-stage sampling frame consisted of all regular schools containing any of grades 7, 8, and 9. The schools were selected with probability proportional to school enrolment size. 60 schools were selected (Capital – 20, east urban – 4, east rural – 16, west urban – 16, west rural – 4).

The second sampling stage consisted of systematic equal probability sampling (with a random start) of classes from each school that participated in the survey. All classes in the selected school were included in the sampling frame. All students in the selected classes were eligible to participate in the survey.

A weighting factor was applied to each student record to adjust for non-response and for the varying probabilities for selection. For the 2002 Georgia GYTS, 4543 questionnaires were completed in 60 schools. The school response rate was 100 %, and the student response rate was 85.3 %. The overall response rate was 85.3 %. SUDAAN and Epi Info were used to compute 95 % confidence intervals (95% CI) for the estimates. In case, when the ranges for 95% CI did not overlap, the differences were statistically significant.

b) Data collection procedures

Survey procedures were designed to protect the students' privacy by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation. The self-administered questionnaire was administered in the classroom. Students recorded their responses directly on an answer sheet that could be scanned by a computer. The questionnaire contained multiple-choice questions.

The fieldwork was done for the period December 5 - 25, 2002. The survey was administrated by 9 administrators of survey from the Institute of Drug Addiction, the Department of Public Health of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, from the Ministry of Education and from NGO Institute of Public Health Development Support. The data was sent from 20 districts of all 12 regions, as some districts were not included (46), because enrolment data was not available from isolated remote areas in the mountains. Still the data was national representative, covering both east and west parts of the country.

III. Results

Table 1A: Percent of students who smoke cigarettes, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Ever Smoked Cigarettes, Even One or Two Puffs	Age of Initiation <10, Ever Smoked Cigarettes	Current Use	Current Cigarette Smokers who Smoke:		Percent of never smokers likely to initiate smoking during the next year
			Cigarettes – Total	Hand-rolled cigarettes	Manufactured cigarettes	
Total	43.9 (± 2.7)	52.2 (± 4.0)	22.1 (± 2.3)	6.5 (± 1.6)	93.7 (± 2.6)	22.7 (± 3.9)
Sex						
Boy	55.5 (± 2.9)	53.8 (± 4.8)	32.6 (± 3.6)	6.2 (± 1.9)	93.7 (± 3.1)	19.6 (± 6.2)
Girl	32.7 (± 3.8)	49.5 (± 4.9)	12.1 (± 2.5)	7.5 (± 4.0)	93.7 (± 2.5)	24.8 (± 3.2)
Region						
Tbilisi	42.7 (± 4.3)	43.9 (± 5.5)	13.7 (± 2.6)	17.4 (± 3.9)	85.1 (± 8.0)	26.6 (± 6.0)
Other Urban	39.5 (± 4.5)	57.5 (± 8.8)	29.5 (± 5.1)	2.5 (± 1.9)	96.3 (± 1.9)	16.3 (± 6.2)
Rural	52.2 (± 5.2)	62.6 (± 5.2)	32.5 (± 4.8)	0.5 (± 0.6)	99.0 (± 0.7)	21.7 (± 8.6)

Among all students, 43.9% have ever smoked cigarettes and 22.1% are current smokers (Table 1A). Boys are significantly more likely than girls to have ever smoked or to currently smoker cigarettes (55.5% versus 32.7% and 32.6% versus 12.1%). Current cigarette smoking was significantly higher in the other urban (29.5%) and rural regions (32.5%) compared to Tbilisi (13.7%). Over half (52.2%) of ever smokers initiated smoking before age 10, with early initiation significantly higher in the other urban and rural regions compared to Tbilisi. For current smokers, 6.5% had smoked hand rolled cigarettes compared to 93.7% who had smoked manufactured cigarettes. Use of hand rolled cigarettes was significantly higher in Tbilisi than in the other regions however use of manufactured cigarettes was significantly higher in the other urban and rural regions compared to Tbilisi. Also, 22.7% of never smokers indicate they are likely to initiate smoking during the next year.

Table 1B: Percent of students who use other tobacco products, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Current Use				
	Other Tobacco Products – Total	Cigars	Chew	Pipe	Any Current Tobacco Use – Cigarettes + Other
Total	6.6 (± 1.0)	5.7 (± 1.0)	1.9 (± 0.4)	1.4 (± 0.5)	23.3 (± 2.1)
Sex					
Boy	9.6 (± 1.8)	8.1 (± 1.6)	2.5 (± 0.9)	2.1 (± 0.9)	33.8 (± 3.4)
Girl	3.7 (± 0.8)	3.4 (± 0.8)	1.2 (± 0.4)	0.7 (± 0.3)	13.0 (± 2.4)
Region					
Tbilisi	6.7 (± 1.1)	5.6 (± 1.2)	2.6 (± 0.5)	1.6 (± 0.8)	15.6 (± 2.5)
Other Urban	4.6 (± 1.9)	3.8 (± 1.4)	1.8 (± 1.2)	1.6 (± 1.0)	30.4 (± 4.6)
Rural	8.9 (± 2.6)	8.4 (± 3.0)	0.3 (± 0.5)	0.5 (± 0.4)	33.1 (± 4.5)

Among all students 6.6% had smoked any tobacco products other than cigarettes, 5.7% had smoked cigars, 1.9% had chewed tobacco and 1.4% had smoked tobacco in pipe (Table 1B). Including cigarette smoking, 23.3% had used any form of tobacco. Boys are significantly more likely than girls to smoke cigars and pipes. Use of chew tobacco was significantly higher in Tbilisi (2.6%) than in rural regions (0.3%). Any current tobacco use including cigarettes was significantly higher in other urban (30.4%) and rural regions (33.1%) compared to Tbilisi (15.6.%)

Table 2: School Curriculum, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	During past school year, percent had class where taught dangers of smoking	During past school year, percent had class where discussed reasons why people their age smoke	During past school year, percent had class where taught about the effects of smoking
Total	10.4 (± 2.0)	11.9 (± 1.6)	10.3 (± 1.4)
Sex			
Boy	10.9 (± 2.9)	13.0 (± 2.1)	10.4 (± 1.9)
Girl	9.9 (± 1.9)	10.7 (± 2.0)	10.2 (± 1.6)
Region			
Tbilisi	17.2 (± 3.4)	19.3 (± 2.5)	17.5 (± 2.4)
Other Urban	3.6 (± 2.5)	4.7 (± 3.0)	2.9 (± 1.8)
Rural	2.5 (± 2.2)	2.5 (± 2.3)	1.7 (± 1.3)

Around 10 % of all surveyed students declared they had classes were they were taught about the dangers (10.4%) and effects (10.3%) of smoking and discussed reasons why people their age smoke (11.9%) (Table 2). Still, there is a significant difference between the capital city Tbilisi (over 17%) and the other urban (approximately 3%) and rural (approximately 2%).

Table 3: Cessation, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Current Smokers			
	Percent desire to stop	Percent tried to stop this year	Received Help/Advice to Stop Smoking	Percent who always have or feel like having a cigarette first thing in the morning
Total	41.2 (± 7.5)	49.0 (± 7.5)	57.5 (± 3.2)	2.3 (± 1.3)
Sex				
Boy	42.9 (± 8.6)	42.9 (± 8.2)	60.0 (± 4.0)	1.9 (± 1.6)
Girl	36.8 (± 7.1)	64.2 (± 9.2)	51.1 (± 7.6)	3.2 (± 2.5)
Region				
Tbilisi	64.7 (± 11.6)	78.6 (± 7.9)	70.9 (± 4.1)	6.2 (± 4.9)
Other Urban	25.5 (± 14.9)	21.8 (± 11.7)	55.2 (± 5.9)	2.1 (± 1.6)
Rural	49.3 (± 9.7)	62.0 (± 9.0)	47.0 (± 5.0)	0.0 (± 0.0)

For the current smokers 49.0% tried to give up smoking, 41.2% had desire to stop smoking, and 57.5% had received help or advice to stop smoking. In the same context, a small proportion of current smokers (2.3%) seem to be already addicted to tobacco, and declared that they always have or feel like having a cigarette first thing in the morning (Table 3).

Table 4A: Environmental Tobacco Smoke, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Exposed to smoke in their home		Exposed to smoke from father in their home		Exposed to smoke from mother in their home		Exposed to smoke from sister/brother in their home		Exposed to smoke from best friend in their home		Exposed to smoke from others in their home	
	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers
Total	93.8 (± 1.1)	97.2 (± 1.2)	68.4 (± 3.6)	81.5 (± 3.1)	16.5 (± 1.6)	23.9 (± 4.9)	15.6 (± 2.5)	61.4 (± 5.0)	7.9 (± 1.5)	41.1 (± 4.1)	88.5 (± 1.8)	78.8 (± 5.0)
Sex												
Boy	91.9 (± 2.0)	97.2 (± 1.4)	64.8 (± 4.4)	79.9 (± 3.3)	16.3 (± 3.1)	20.8 (± 5.5)	10.3 (± 2.9)	59.8 (± 5.7)	8.9 (± 1.7)	39.0 (± 5.1)	86.8 (± 3.1)	77.0 (± 5.9)
Girl	95.0 (± 1.5)	97.3 (± 2.1)	70.6 (± 3.8)	85.9 (± 5.6)	16.6 (± 2.6)	31.9 (± 5.6)	18.2 (± 3.5)	65.1 (± 8.2)	7.2 (± 1.8)	46.6 (± 8.9)	89.7 (± 2.1)	83.4 (± 4.7)
Region												
Tbilisi	90.7 (± 1.9)	93.1 (± 3.2)	65.4 (± 3.1)	74.0 (± 10.5)	9.7 (± 2.4)	19.8 (± 4.1)	10.2 (± 1.8)	23.0 (± 6.7)	11.3 (± 1.9)	37.9 (± 8.4)	83.7 (± 2.9)	84.8 (± 5.6)
Other Urban	97.4 (± 1.3)	99.7 (± 0.6)	72.6 (± 9.4)	80.6 (± 2.1)	24.1 (± 1.9)	23.5 (± 9.6)	21.7 (± 6.1)	78.7 (± 7.6)	3.7 (± 2.6)	45.8 (± 8.3)	94.8 (± 2.1)	88.7 (± 10.5)
Rural	97.0 (± 2.6)	98.5 (± 1.4)	69.6 (± 7.4)	88.5 (± 3.2)	23.2 (± 4.7)	27.8 (± 9.4)	26.2 (± 7.4)	78.6 (± 3.7)	4.7 (± 4.4)	39.0 (± 4.1)	92.5 (± 5.5)	62.3 (± 6.9)

More than 90% of both current smokers and never smokers are exposed in their home to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) by different persons (Table 4A). Both current smokers and never smokers are exposed more by their father than by their mothers, with current smokers being more exposed than never smokers (81.5% versus 68.4% by father and 23.9% and 16.5% by mother). Current smokers are significantly more exposed to ETS by their brothers or sisters (61.4 %) and friends (41.1%) in comparison with never smokers (15.6 % and respectively 7.9%). This different held by gender and region. Exposure to smoke from others in their home was significantly higher for never smokers (88.5%) than current smokers (78.8%).

Table 4B: Environmental Tobacco Smoke, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Exposed to smoke from others in public places		Percent think smoking should be banned from public places		Definitely think smoke from others is harmful to them	
	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers
Total	91.3 (± 1.5)	96.1 (± 1.2)	85.7 (± 2.2)	69.3 (± 4.1)	35.7 (± 4.1)	9.4 (± 2.1)
Sex						
Boy	90.3 (± 2.3)	95.9 (± 1.8)	87.4 (± 2.8)	69.5 (± 5.5)	51.5 (± 5.9)	10.9 (± 2.4)
Girl	91.9 (± 2.1)	96.7 (± 2.0)	84.6 (± 2.7)	68.6 (± 6.9)	25.5 (± 4.7)	5.6 (± 2.6)
Region						
Tbilisi	86.8 (± 2.1)	88.8 (± 4.3)	79.3 (± 3.4)	51.3 (± 7.0)	29.1 (± 3.5)	19.5 (± 4.5)
Other Urban	96.3 (± 2.9)	99.4 (± 0.4)	92.3 (± 3.7)	78.5 (± 6.7)	50.8 (± 12.8)	3.5 (± 3.3)
Rural	96.1 (± 3.6)	99.5 (± 1.0)	94.0 (± 4.1)	76.3 (± 5.1)	31.4 (± 5.4)	6.5 (± 2.2)

More than 90% of never smokers and current smokers are exposed from others in public places to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) (Table 4B). Exposure to tobacco in public places in Tbilisi (over 85%) is significantly less than in the other regions (over 96%) Never smokers (85.7%) are significantly more likely than current smokers (69.3%) to think smoking should be banned from public places. This difference held by gender and region. Further, never smokers and current smokers in Tbilisi were significantly less likely than these in other regions to favour a ban on smoke in public places. Never smokers (35.7%) were significantly more likely than current smokers (9.4%) to think smoking from others is harmful to them. This difference held by gender and region.

Table 5: Knowledge and Attitudes, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Think boys who smoke have more friends		Think girls who smoke have more friends		Think smoking makes boys look more attractive		Think smoking makes girls look more attractive	
	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers
Total	8.4 (± 1.6)	19.0 (± 4.6)	20.6 (± 5.8)	12.8 (± 3.8)	27.0 (± 5.6)	24.4 (± 4.9)	6.6 (± 1.8)	24.8 (± 5.0)
Sex								
Boy	7.4 (± 2.3)	19.6 (± 5.5)	33.0 (± 7.6)	14.7 (± 4.7)	38.5 (± 7.4)	23.1 (± 6.2)	6.8 (± 2.6)	26.1 (± 6.1)
Girl	9.1 (± 2.1)	17.4 (± 5.5)	12.6 (± 5.2)	7.7 (± 3.3)	19.6 (± 5.3)	27.6 (± 5.7)	6.5 (± 1.7)	21.4 (± 5.1)
Region								
Tbilisi	11.9 (± 2.4)	23.0 (± 7.2)	5.8 (± 2.0)	12.7 (± 4.3)	15.9 (± 3.3)	31.1 (± 4.9)	9.1 (± 3.2)	20.3 (± 4.3)
Other Urban	5.2 (± 3.0)	13.7 (± 10.1)	44.3 (± 19.1)	14.7 (± 9.4)	46.8 (± 17.5)	22.1 (± 12.2)	4.3 (± 2.3)	18.9 (± 11.7)
Rural	3.3 (± 3.1)	21.0 (± 4.5)	26.3 (± 8.5)	10.6 (± 3.8)	27.9 (± 8.4)	20.4 (± 4.7)	3.3 (± 1.7)	35.6 (± 7.0)

More youngsters think that smoking makes young people more attractive than it makes them having more friends (Table 5). While in general youngsters think almost equally that boys and girls who smoke have more friends (around 15% of them), almost two times more current smokers (19.0%) than never smokers (8.4%) think that boys who smoke have more friends. This gender difference is present in Tbilisi and in the rural area. Also, around one-fourth of almost all students think that youngsters who smoke are more attractive, except for never smokers of whom almost four times less think that girls who smoke are more attractive. This gender difference is reflected in all regions of the country.

Table 6A: Media and Advertising, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages on Television	Percent Heard Anti-Smoking Media Messages on Radio	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages on Billboards	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages on Posters	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages in Newspapers or Magazines	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages at the Cinema	Percent Saw Anti-Smoking Media Messages at Sports Events, Fairs, Concerts or Community Events
Total	62.8 (± 4.4)	32.0 (± 5.4)	53.5 (± 3.1)	50.0 (± 3.0)	37.6 (± 4.3)	72.5 (± 6.6)	46.6 (± 5.9)
Sex							
Boy	61.9 (± 4.3)	30.9 (± 5.0)	56.1 (± 2.7)	54.7 (± 3.2)	39.0 (± 4.4)	75.2 (± 6.1)	45.4 (± 6.3)
Girl	63.6 (± 4.9)	33.1 (± 6.3)	50.9 (± 4.4)	45.4 (± 4.2)	36.3 (± 5.0)	69.9 (± 7.5)	47.8 (± 5.9)
Region							
Tbilisi	82.4 (± 2.2)	51.9 (± 4.2)	68.1 (± 3.0)	61.7 (± 3.8)	55.4 (± 2.8)	64.4 (± 3.2)	70.5 (± 2.3)
Other Urban	45.3 (± 13.2)	15.3 (± 14.2)	42.7 (± 5.9)	42.3 (± 5.7)	18.1 (± 12.1)	82.5 (± 19.4)	22.6 (± 16.8)
Rural	36.8 (± 11.4)	11.9 (± 10.9)	32.4 (± 10.0)	31.7 (± 9.3)	19.6 (± 9.9)	81.9 (± 19.6)	23.6 (± 13.0)

Most of surveyed students (above 50%) saw anti smoking messages in cinema (72.5%), on TV (62.8%), billboard (53.5%), posters (50.0%), less than half saw anti smoking messages in other places (at sport events, concerts or community events) (46.6%), in newspapers or magazines (37.6%) an only 32% heard anti smoking messages on radio (Table 6A). For Tbilisi the percent of all kinds of anti smoking media messages which are seen and heard are high (82.4%; 51.9%; 68.1%; 61.7%; 55.4% for each message) and 70.5% except anti smoking messages in cinema, which is high in other urban (82.5%) and rural (81.9%).

Table 6B: Media and Advertising, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages on Television	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages on Billboards	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages on Newspapers/Magazines	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages at Sporting Events	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages at Cinema	Percent Saw Pro-Tobacco Messages at Community Events/Social Gatherings
Total	75.8 (± 2.7)	77.0 (± 2.5)	74.0 (± 1.5)	77.5 (± 2.3)	78.8 (± 2.0)	83.6 (± 1.5)
Sex						
Boy	69.4 (± 2.9)	73.0 (± 3.2)	73.7 (± 2.4)	80.8 (± 2.0)	80.9 (± 2.6)	83.6 (± 1.8)
Girl	81.9 (± 3.4)	81.0 (± 3.1)	74.3 (± 2.0)	74.2 (± 4.0)	77.0 (± 3.3)	83.6 (± 2.4)
Region						
Tbilisi	81.4 (± 1.4)	82.5 (± 2.7)	70.7 (± 1.9)	76.8 (± 2.5)	69.9 (± 3.1)	75.8 (± 1.7)
Other Urban	60.7 (± 9.3)	66.0 (± 7.3)	76.6 (± 4.1)	79.7 (± 5.3)	88.1 (± 4.8)	91.0 (± 4.5)
Rural	80.7 (± 2.5)	77.4 (± 3.3)	78.7 (± 1.7)	76.9 (± 5.7)	91.1 (± 3.5)	94.2 (± 3.0)

More than 70% saw pro-tobacco messages on TV, billboards, newspapers and magazines, at the sports events, at cinema and at community events/social gatherings, with boys seeing slightly more advertising on TV and billboards than girls (Table 6B). Students from other cities saw less advertising on TV (60.7%) and billboards (66.0%) than the ones from Tbilisi (81.4% and 82.5%) and rural areas (80.7% and 77.4%), while the students from Tbilisi saw less advertising at cinema (69.9%) and at community events/social gatherings (75.8%).

Table 6C: Media and Advertising, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Percent Who Had Object With a Cigarette Brand Logo On It		Percent Offered a Free Cigarettes by a Tobacco Company	
	Never Smokers	Current Smokers	Never Smokers	Current Smokers
Total	17.7 (± 2.0)	40.0 (± 3.9)	9.1 (± 1.5)	11.8 (± 3.5)
Sex				
Boy	17.6 (± 2.4)	39.6 (± 4.3)	11.0 (± 2.3)	12.8 (± 3.8)
Girl	17.8 (± 2.4)	41.0 (± 6.4)	7.8 (± 2.0)	9.0 (± 5.6)
Region				
Tbilisi	26.9 (± 2.9)	35.7 (± 7.6)	11.7 (± 2.5)	21.7 (± 8.1)
Other Urban	7.1 (± 2.8)	44.4 (± 7.8)	7.1 (± 2.2)	9.5 (± 6.6)
Rural	8.0 (± 5.9)	39.2 (± 4.8)	4.4 (± 2.8)	5.3 (± 2.3)

The percent of current smokers who have an object with tobacco logo on it is high for both boys and girls (39.6% and 41.0%) (table 6C). Almost half of current smokers have object with cigarette logo on it in Tbilisi (35.7%), other urban (44.4%) and rural (39.2%). For never smokers this percentage is low. There is no difference between never smokers and current smokers who were offered a free cigarette by a tobacco company. In Tbilisi 21.7% of current smokers were offered free cigarettes by tobacco company representatives. This percent is low for other urban (9,5%) and rural (5,3%).

Table7: Access and Availability, GEORGIA, GYTS, 2002

Category	Percent Current Smokers who Usually Smoke at Home	Percent Current Smokers who Purchased Cigarettes in a Store	Percent Current Smokers Who Bought Cigarettes in a Store Who Were Not Refused Because of Their Age
Total	20.1 (± 3.1)	53.0 (± 4.9)	97.1 (± 2.2)
Sex			
Boy	17.9 (± 3.7)	58.3 (± 7.1)	98.2 (± 2.0)
Girl	25.9 (± 7.0)	39.2 (± 6.7)	92.7 (± 8.1)
Region			
Tbilisi	16.3 (± 6.2)	62.9 (± 6.4)	92.0 (± 7.6)
Other Urban	22.1 (± 5.1)	54.7 (± 9.8)	99.1 (± 1.1)
Rural	21.4 (± 5.1)	42.9 (± 6.7)	99.3 (± 1.4)

One-fifth (20.1%) of current smokers usually smoke at home (Table 7). More than half of current smokers bought cigarettes in a store (53.0%) and over 90 % were not refused because of their age.

Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations

Tobacco use

The patterns of tobacco use are very different amongst boys and girls in Georgia. Thus, almost double as many boys than girls ever tried to smoke, even if around 50% of both boys and girls started to smoke before 10 years old. Also, almost three times more boys than girls are current cigarettes smokers and use other types of tobacco products. This pattern corresponds to the pattern we have in adults, even if the gap is slightly narrowing.
Considering this, actions could be taken in two directions: a) to decrease or at least to maintain smoking prevalence amongst boys (as at this point is far below the prevalence in male in Georgia - 32.6 %); b) to maintain or even decrease the smoking prevalence amongst girls, that is considerable low comparing to the WHO European average (12.1%).
Another interesting aspect is that it is still the current smokers who use in the same time also other types of tobacco products. This is shown by the fact that the current smoking prevalence for cigarettes is the same with the overall tobacco consumption, in spite of the fact that youngsters do use also other types of tobacco products. Considering that the percentage of youngsters who use other types of tobacco products is quite low (6.6%), efforts should be made to that it does not increase. In this direction, legislative measures should be taken to prohibit the selling of this type of tobacco products and any other measures that proved to be efficient in countries having experience in this area of tobacco control.

School education

Tobacco control education did not develop yet much in Georgia. From all students surveyed, only 10% have classes on tobacco control, even in Tbilisi the percentage is higher (about 18%) than in other cities and rural areas.
In these circumstances, it is necessary that to introduce in the school curricula more classes on health education that tackle tobacco. But since we are anyway it is a good opportunity that we develop school programs that proved to be efficient in countries with long-term tradition in this area (like UK, of Finland, etc.).

Knowledge and attitudes

The impact of the smoker image (that has more friends, is more attractive, etc.) promoted by tobacco industry is not so popular amongst young Georgians. Only around 15 % of them think that smoking makes you have more friends and around 20 % think that smokers look more attractive. Public health professionals can speculate this opportunity, if they are supported by a legislation that bans advertising at this stage, when it didn't stat have a considerable impact on youngsters.

Cessation

The survey showed that more than 40% of youngsters expressed their desire to stop smoking and even more of them (49%) tried to stop smoking during the year of the survey. The fact that more than 80% of the current smokers say that they could stop smoking if they wanted, supported by the fact that only 2.3% of them showed to be

addicted to tobacco, constitutes a positive factor that needs to be exploited, since it was not until now. It is interesting to mention as well that a high percentage of youngsters were encouraged to stop smoking by receiving advice or help, but most of them from their family (72.8%) or friends (23.7%), very few form health professionals (3.5%). That is way professional cessation programs need to be developed more in the future, as an essential tool for Georgia to decrease smoking prevalence amongst youngsters.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke

The results of the GYTS show that all Georgian youngsters (both boys and girls, both current smokers and never smokers) are highly exposed (more than 90 % of them) to ETS both in public places and in their homes (both by family members and by other persons).

Currently, there are almost no restrictions on smoking in public places in Georgia. But more than 75% of youngsters are in favour of banning smoking in public places, with more never smokers than current smokers supporting this ban. Therefore, the recent initiative of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affaires to promote a new tobacco law, containing provisions on ETS could be a adequate response to this situation. The necessity of such a law is strongly supported by the results of this survey.

Current smokers are even more exposed than never smokers at home. The highest exposure at home comes from their fathers and from other persons, as almost 75 % of youngsters are exposed by fathers and more than 80% of them by other persons.
A significant aspect is that current smokers were exposed to ETS at home four times more by their brothers and five times more by their best friends than never smokers. The passive smoking at home seems to be a critical factor for youngsters in becoming current smokers.

It is therefore necessary to develop programs that address passive smoking at home, targeting each of the categories that expose young people to ETS, as mentioned above. These programs should take into consideration the fact that only one third of current smokers in comparison with never smokers think that smoking from others is harmful for their health.

Media and Advertising
The pro tobacco messages are significantly more advertised than the anti-tobacco messages on almost all forms of advertising. There are twice as many pro tobacco advertisements than anti tobacco advertisements in billboards, newspapers and magazines and at sports events, fairs, concerts or community events. It is therefore important to increase the number of anti tobacco advertising. Still, more than 50% of youngsters have seen or heard anti tobacco advertising in one or another form of advertising. This shows that not only the number of advertisements launched is important, but also their quality. In the same time, since there is no comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising in Georgia, this gives a good opportunity, but an unfair one from the public health point of view, to tobacco industry to promote tobacco use. Their actions have proved their efficiency, considering the high prevalence in tobacco use in youngsters. Adopting legislative measures that would include a comprehensive

ban on all forms of tobacco advertising will constitute an efficient way of preventing the spread of tobacco use amongst young people. In the same time, more substantial investment, financial and media-wise professional from the government into anti-tobacco advertising could also contribute to counterbalancing the effect of the pro-tobacco advertising.

Indirect advertising is also speculated by the tobacco industry, as 40 of current smokers have an object with a cigarette brand logo on it. In the same time only half as many never smokers declared they have such an object. The percentage of youngsters who have been offered free cigarettes is relatively low, around 10% in Georgia in general, but significantly more in Tbilisi. Since at present there is no legislation to restrict any of these forms of indirect advertising, it is important to include in the new project of law a ban on both of them as soon as possible, so that they do not expend more.

Access and Availability

More than 50% of current smokers were able to purchase cigarettes in stores, and almost 100% of those who bought were not refused because of their age. This is in spite of the fact that tobacco products selling to minors (under 18 years old) is prohibited in Georgia. In this case, even if the law exists, it is not enforced appropriately and there are no efficient measures in the present law to control the enforcement.

Contributors

Dr. Ramaz Urushadze was the National Coordinator. Dr. Akaki Gamkrelidze was the scientific and financial director of the survey. The OSH/CDC designed the study. Dr. Akaki Khuskivadze, Dr. Nino Chanturidze, Dr. Theodore Gobejishvili supervised the data collection. Dr. Nana Nikolaishvili, Dr. Charles W. Warren, Ms. Joliette Lee, Ms. Veronica Lea, Ms. Ionela Petrea contributed to the data analysis and interpretation of the data. Dr. Nana Nikolaishvili wrote the report with contributions from Dr. Charles W. Warren, Dr. Akaki Gamkrelidze

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