

WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco use 2000-2025

third edition



World Health
Organization

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Foreword

Dr Naoko Yamamoto

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I have great pleasure in releasing the *WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco use 2000–2025, third edition*. This report offers a reflection on the phenomenal progress made by countries who are working to reduce the demand for tobacco, a celebration of the successes achieved to date, and a preview of what can be achieved in the coming years.

This report enables us to see for the first time that the number of people using tobacco in the world is declining, despite population growth. The number of male tobacco users, which previously was increasing every year, finally turned the corner in 2018 and is projected to decline each year from 2019 forward. For this projection to become reality, tobacco control efforts need to be reinforced, and in some countries accelerated, to prevent additional people falling victim to tobacco-related illnesses and death.

Although admirable progress is being made, the tobacco epidemic is far from over. Progress towards reducing tobacco use everywhere in the world is uneven and some groups are getting left behind. We are falling short of achieving a global 30% relative reduction in current tobacco use by 2025, a target of the *WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020*.

This report contributes to the global monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal 3.a, which calls for strengthening implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in all countries, as appropriate. I acknowledge the dedicated work of the Secretariat to the WHO-FCTC both as co-custodian of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.a.1, and in helping Parties to the WHO-FCTC achieve their goals of protecting their populations from the harms of tobacco.

I congratulate all countries who are taking multisectoral actions to put in place effective policy measures and to continually monitor and enforce these measures. Together, we will reverse the global tobacco epidemic and save millions of lives.

Foreword

*Professor Kevin Hall
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On behalf of the University of Newcastle, Australia, I congratulate the World Health Organization (WHO) on the publication of the third edition of the *WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco use 2000-2025*. I also wish to thank my colleagues from the University of Newcastle Priority Research Centre for Health Behaviour (PRCHB) for their contribution and their continuing close collaboration with WHO scientists in helping to produce the report.

The University of Newcastle has a proud record of engaging with United Nations bodies to help improve the health and well-being of people everywhere. The year 2019 marks 35 years since the University of Newcastle became one of the WHO sites for the Multinational Monitoring of Trends and Determinants in Cardiovascular Disease (MONICA) project. We are also particularly proud that the PRCHB has, this year, been designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Evidence-Based Non-Communicable Disease Program Implementation. This year also saw the renegotiation of the cooperation agreement between the University of Newcastle and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) CIFAL training centre. CIFAL Newcastle is the first CIFAL centre to be established within a university from its inception, and the first to be established in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

As a WHO Collaborating Centre, our objective in being closely involved with the production of this report is to serve countries' needs. This latest edition contains encouraging numbers indicating that prevalence of tobacco use has peaked and is now declining globally. There is evidence that the hard work of WHO, countries and a variety of non-governmental organizations in implementing the WHO FCTC is starting to achieve the desired results.

The University of Newcastle remains committed to providing its technical know-how and energy to help the WHO, UNITAR and all countries improve the lives of people everywhere.

Abbreviations

BAU	Business As Usual
ENDS	Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems
GSHS	Global School-based Student Health Survey
GYTS	Global Youth Tobacco Survey
NYTS	National Youth Tobacco Survey
HBSC	Health Behaviour in School-aged Children
NCD	Noncommunicable Disease
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WHO FCTC	WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

1. Introduction

Tobacco in any form kills and sickens millions of people every year (1). Around 8 million people died from a tobacco-related disease in 2017 (2). The number of annual deaths can be expected to keep growing even after rates of tobacco use start to decline, because tobacco-related diseases take time to become apparent (3). A global commitment to reversing the tobacco epidemic was made in 2003 when Member States of the World Health Organization adopted the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC) (4), which lays out specific, evidence-based actions that all Parties to the Convention should take to effectively reduce demand for tobacco.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include among their targets Target 3.a *Strengthen the implementation of the WHO FCTC in all countries, as appropriate*. The indicator that accompanies this target is 3.a.1 *Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older*. WHO monitors global progress of this indicator and reports results to the United Nations via this report.

The *WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020* includes a target for reducing the global prevalence of tobacco use (smoked and smokeless tobacco) by 30% by the year 2025 relative to 2010 (5). Although the target for reducing tobacco use was set as a global target, each country is at liberty to set its own target. This report indicates whether tobacco use in each country is likely to achieve a 30% reduction by 2025, or, if not, whether the trend is upwards, flat or downwards. Recent improvements in the quantity and quality of national data allows calculation of internationally comparable estimates of prevalence levels and trends in most countries. Combined, these estimates help us understand regional and global average prevalence rates, and whether or not we are collectively tracking towards meeting tobacco use reduction targets.

Each year, more countries are calculating their own trends and projections of tobacco use. Country-produced estimates are no less valid than WHO estimates. The value of WHO estimates is mainly to extract a global picture from comparable estimates by using one method for all countries. WHO estimates undergo a country consultation prior to publication, and country feedback is taken into account when producing final results.

WHO published the first edition of this report in 2015, and the second edition in 2018. This is the

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