

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Significantly increase prices by increasing the specific excise tax** to reduce high tobacco use prevalence (currently amounting to 37.9 percent).
2. **Amend and enforce stricter tobacco control legislation** through tightening measures on smoking in public places, advertising at the point of sale, and effective taxation of alternative tobacco products.
3. **Increase public awareness** of the negative impacts of smoking through information campaigns, education of youth, and providing greater support for cessation.

OBJECTIVES & MOTIVATION

The Survey on Tobacco Consumption in Serbia is a nationally representative survey that was conducted in 2019 as a part of a regional Survey on Tobacco Consumption in Southeastern European Countries (STC-SEE). These are unique data since a similar survey has never been conducted in Serbia previously. Information from the STC-SEE provides a basis for the development and implementation of evidence-based and effective tobacco control policies and programs.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 2,000 respondents were interviewed. The target population of the survey included all men and women in the Republic of Serbia aged 18 to 85. Data collection for this survey was done through face-to-face interviews at respondents' homes using CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews) methodology. The length of the interview was approximately 30 minutes. The survey questionnaire was prepared by the Institute of Economic Sciences, mostly based on the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (ITC), and Pricing Policies and Control of Tobacco in Europe (PPACTE).

HIGHLIGHTS

TOBACCO USE

- Smoking prevalence for all tobacco products among adults in Serbia is 37.9 percent. Manufactured and hand-rolled cigarettes are by far the most popular products, accounting for 97.7 percent of the overall prevalence.
- Only approximately 1.8 percent of adults use heated tobacco products.
- Every second adult in Serbia between the ages of 35 and 65 smokes. There is no observable difference between genders.
- The average number of cigarettes consumed per day by daily smokers is 16.6 (18.8 for men and 14.4 for women).
- Every second adult in Serbia initiated daily smoking between the ages of 18 and 24.

CESSATION

- Only 9.5 percent of current smokers made a quit attempt in the last 12 months, and the majority (93.5 percent) attempted to quit without any assistance.

- Approximately five percent of those who made a quit attempt in the last 12 months used alternative tobacco products such as e-cigarettes and heated tobacco as quitting supports.
- Cigarette prices and health concerns are the most frequently cited reasons for quit attempts last year.

SECONDHAND SMOKE

- More than 48 percent of adults in Serbia are exposed to tobacco smoke at home. Most of them (81.0 percent) are current smokers.
- Among adults in Serbia, 68.5 percent are living in homes where smoking is allowed in at least one room.
- Only 17.7 percent of households with children do not allow smoking at all at home.
- The vast majority of adults who visit bars and night clubs (91.8 percent) and restaurants (86.5 percent) are exposed to tobacco smoke, while only 3.8 percent are exposed to tobacco smoke in government buildings and offices.

ECONOMICS

- The average amount spent on one pack of 20 cigarettes by current adult smokers of manufactured cigarettes is €2.29, while for 20 hand-rolled cigarettes it is €1.87.
- The average spending per week by current smokers is €14.03 on manufactured cigarettes or €4.99 on hand-rolled cigarettes.

MEDIA

- Less than ten percent of adults have noticed tobacco promotion during the last six months.
- Smokers were more likely to notice all types of tobacco promotion than non-smokers during the last six months.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

- More than three-quarters of adults believe that cigarettes in Serbia are expensive or very expensive.
- More than 60 percent of adults are against raising tobacco prices by five percent or 20 percent.
- More than 45 percent of adults believe that increasing tobacco prices would be a useful tobacco control strategy.
- More than half of non-smokers think an expansion of smoking bans would be the most useful tobacco control strategy.



TOBACCO USE

Prevalence by type	Overall	Male	Female
	Percentage (95% CI)		
All tobacco products	37.9 (35.8, 40.1)	40.1 (37.0, 43.3)	35.6 (32.7, 38.5)
Manufactured cigarettes	32.8 (30.8, 34.9)	33.3 (30.4, 36.3)	32.4 (29.5, 35.2)
Hand-rolled cigarettes	6.3 (5.2, 7.3)	7.9 (6.2, 9.6)	4.8 (3.5, 6.1)
E-cigarettes	0.2 (0.0, 0.4)	0.4 (0.0, 0.8)	0.0 (0.0, 0.1)
Heated tobacco products	0.7 (0.3, 1.1)	0.9 (0.3, 1.5)	0.5 (0.1, 1.9)
Smoking status	Overall	Male	Female
	Percentage (95% CI)		
Current smokers	37.9 (35.8, 40.1)	40.1 (37.0, 43.3)	35.9 (33.0, 38.8)
Daily	37.0 (34.9, 39.1)	39.4 (36.3, 42.6)	34.8 (31.9, 37.7)
Less than daily	0.9 (0.5, 1.3)	0.7 (0.2, 1.2)	1.1 (0.4, 1.7)
Non-smokers	62.1 (59.9, 64.2)	59.8 (56.8, 63.0)	64.1 (61.2, 67.0)
Former smokers	10.0 (8.6, 11.3)	12.6 (10.5, 14.7)	7.5 (5.9, 9.1)
Never smokers	38.1 (35.9, 40.2)	32.3 (29.3, 35.3)	43.3 (40.3, 46.3)
Tried several times	5.7 (4.7, 6.7)	6.6 (5.0, 8.1)	4.9 (3.6, 6.2)
Tried once	8.3 (7.1, 9.6)	8.3 (6.6, 10.1)	8.3 (6.7, 10.0)
Cigarettes smoked per day (manufactured and hand-rolled)	Overall	Male	Female
	Average number (95% CI)		
Current smokers	16.6 (15.8, 17.4)	18.8 (17.6, 20.0)	14.4 (13.5, 15.4)

CESSATION

Smokers who made a quit attempt in the last 12 months	Overall	Male	Female
	Percentage (95% CI)		
Current smokers	9.5 (7.4, 11.6)	8.1 (5.3, 10.9)	10.9 (7.7, 14.1)
Smokers who made a quit attempt in the last 12 months by reason	Overall		
	Percentage (95% CI)		
Cigarettes became too expensive	32.0 (20.3, 43.6)		
Other economic reasons (e.g. lower pay, layoff, or needed money for other purposes)	6.9 (0.6, 13.2)		
Illness (any medical condition)	29.5 (18.1, 40.9)		
Physician's or healthcare provider's advice	13.7 (5.1, 22.2)		
Increased knowledge of the harmful effects of smoking	13.5 (5.0, 22.0)		
Pregnancy/birth of a child	1.5 (0.0, 4.5)		
Pressure to quit by partner/relatives	0.8 (0.0, 2.9)		
Don't know	2.2 (0.0, 5.8)		

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

Attitude towards prices increase of tobacco products by 20 percent			
	Overall	Men	Female
In favor	64.8 (62.7 - 66.9)	64.1 (61.1 - 67.2)	65.4 (62.5 - 68.3)
Against	23.4 (21.6 - 25.3)	24.6 (21.8 - 27.2)	22.5 (19.9 - 25.0)
No answer	11.8 (10.3 - 13.2)	11.4 (9.3 - 13.4)	12.1 (10.2 - 14.1)

SECONDHAND SMOKE

Smoking policy at home	Overall
	Percentage (95% CI)
Allowed inside the home (in all rooms)	26.8 (24.8 - 28.7)
Allowed inside the home (in only selected rooms)	16.9 (15.2 - 18.5)
Allowed inside the home (in only one room)	24.9 (23.0 - 26.8)
Allowed only outside the home (terrace etc)	12.1 (10.6 - 13.5)
Smoking is not allowed inside the home	19.2 (17.4 - 20.9)

Adults exposed to smoke at home	Overall
	Percentage (95% CI)
Government buildings and offices	3.8 (0.0 - 9.1)
Health care facilities	5.3 (3.7 - 6.9)
Restaurants	86.5 (84.0 - 89.1)
Bars or nights club	91.8 (89.3 - 94.3)
Public transportation	3.9 (2.6 - 5.1)
Universities or schools	10.6 (7.0 - 14.2)

ECONOMICS

Amount spent on the last-purchased manufactured cigarettes pack (€/pack)	Average (95% CI)
Overall	2.29 (2.26 - 2.31)
Men	2.35 (2.32 - 2.39)
Women	2.23 (2.19 - 2.26)
Region	
Belgrade	2.49 (2.42 - 2.55)
Central and West Serbia	2.22 (2.17 - 2.26)
South and East Serbia	2.17 (2.13 - 2.21)
Vojvodina	2.36 (2.32 - 2.41)

MEDIA

Noticed sponsorship of the events sponsored by or connected with either cigarette brands or tobacco companies in the last six months	Yes
	Percentage (95% CI)
Overall	5.5 (4.5 - 6.5)
Men	8.1 (6.4 - 9.8)
Women	3.1 (2.1 - 4.2)
Residence	
Urban	6.1 (4.7 - 7.5)
Rural	4.6 (3.1 - 6.0)
Current smoking status	
Smokers	7.5 (5.6 - 9.4)
Non-smokers	4.2 (2.6 - 7.2)