

Public acceptance for tobacco control and healthcare policies: results from the German Study on Tobacco Use ("DEBRA")

Sabrina Kastaun^{1*}, Daniel Kotz^{1,2}, Jamie Brown², Lion Shahab², Melanie Boeckmann¹

BACKGROUND

- By ratifying the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, Germany has pledged to implement healthcare and tobacco control measures to decrease the current smoking prevalence of 28%
- Little is known about German public support for these measures and their associations with sociodemographic or smoking characteristics

METHODS

- Cross-sectional, computer-assisted, face-to-face household interviews
- Multi-stage, multi-stratified random probability sampling of the German population
- Every two months, a new sample of approximately 2,000 respondents completes the survey

DEBRA Deutsche Befragung zum Rauchverhalten

ANALYSES

- Prevalence data on public support (weighted data)
- Associations between public support and socio-demographic/smoking characteristics: exploratory multivariable logistic regression (unweighted data)
- Dependent variable: "agree on a policy" (yes/no)
- Covariables: sex, age, education, household income, smoking status. For smokers: number of quit attempts (<12months), motivation to quit, cigarettes/day

POPULATION

- German speaking persons aged 14 and older
- September 2016, N= 2,087 (51.8y ± 20), ♀ = 51.9%

SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO CONTROL (A)

1. A total ban on sale of tobacco
2. Raising the legal age for tobacco sales from 18 to 21
3. Taxation of tobacco industry sales
4. Research on e-cigarettes as smoking cessation aid
5. Smoking ban in cars while minors are present

SUPPORT FOR HEALTHCARE MEASURES (B)

1. Every smoker gets cessation treatment for free
2. Training healthcare professionals to advise smokers
Making cessation treatment a standard part of care:
3. for smokers with **physical** diseases
4. for smokers with **mental** diseases

RESULTS (A)

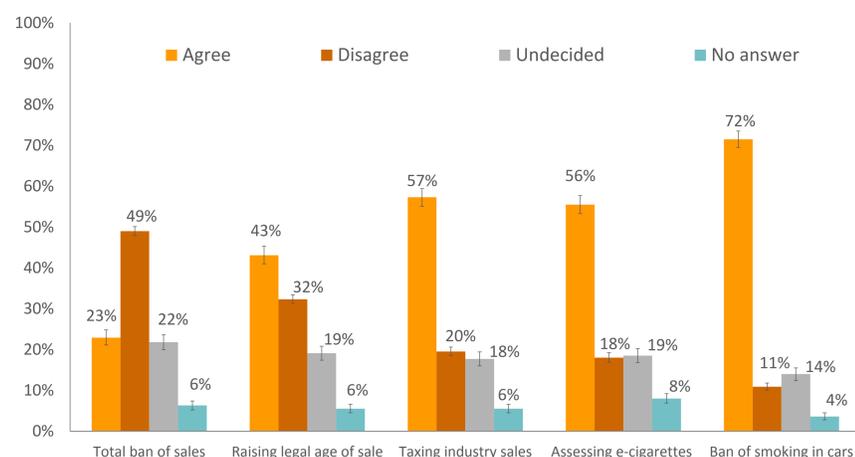


Fig. 1 Proportion (and 95% confidence intervals) of respondents indicating support for suggested **tobacco policies**

RESULTS (B)

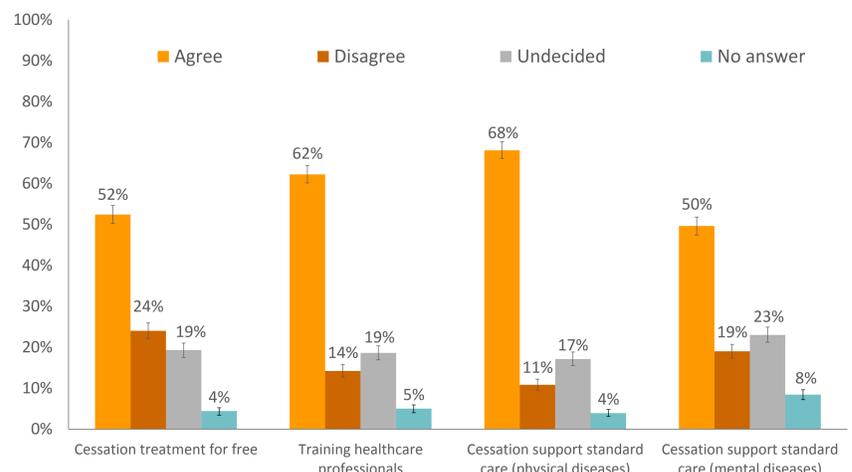


Fig. 2 Proportion (and 95% confidence intervals) of respondents indicating support for suggested **healthcare measures**

- Public support was strongest (>60%) for the following measures: banning smoking in cars when minors are present (A), training all healthcare professionals to advise smokers how to quit (B), and offering cessation treatment as standard care for patients with chronic physical disorders (B)
- A total ban of tobacco sales (A) was least supported (23%)
- Among smokers, moderate to high support (>50%) was found for two tobacco control measures (assessing the effectiveness of e-cigarettes and banning smoking in cars with children (A), and for all healthcare measures (B)
- Odds of support among ex- and never-smokers were higher than among smokers for all tobacco control measures (A), but only for two of the four healthcare measures (B); and odds of support for B were only about 40% greater
- Associations with sociodemographic characteristics were small and inconsistent across different measures

CONCLUSIONS

- German public support for possible legislative changes on some tobacco control and healthcare measures is moderate to high, even among smokers
- Starting with the implementation of the most broadly accepted of these measures seems to be a first feasible step to control the smoking prevalence in Germany

Affiliations

¹Institute of General Practice, Addiction Research and Clinical Epidemiology Unit, Medical Faculty of the Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany; ²Department of Behavioural Science and Health, University College London, London, United Kingdom

*Correspondence: Dr. Sabrina Kastaun, Institute of General Practice, Addiction Research and Clinical Epidemiology, Medical Faculty of the Heinrich-Heine-University, Germany; Mail: Sabrina.Kastaun@med.uni-duesseldorf.de

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Conflicts of Interest

SK, MB and DL have no conflict of interest. DK has received an unrestricted grant from Pfizer in 2009 for an investigator-initiated trial. LS has received honoraria for talks, an unrestricted research grant and travel expenses to attend meetings and workshops by pharmaceutical companies that make smoking cessation products (Pfizer, Johnson&Johnson), and has acted as paid reviewer for grant awarding bodies and as a paid consultant for health care companies. Other research has been funded by the government, a community-interested company (National Centre for Smoking Cessation) and charitable sources. JB has received unrestricted smoking cessation research funding from Pfizer.