

# Trend Survey on Tobacco Use in Sri Lanka - 2024

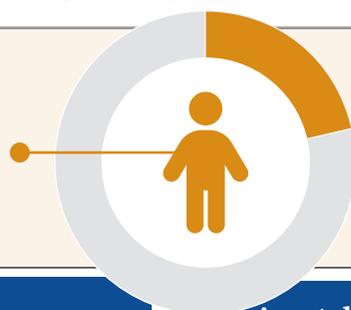
FACT SHEET

ADIC, Sri Lanka (Alcohol and Drug Information Centre)

ADIC has been conducting trend surveys on tobacco use annually since 1998, for mapping and tracing current trends of tobacco use across Sri Lanka. The survey was conducted as a cross-sectional study, which spanned across eleven districts in 2024, namely, **Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Puttalam, Jaffna, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura, Ampara, Matale, Kegalle and Badulla**. The male population of 15 years of age and above living in the selected districts were included in the survey. The participants were recruited using a multi-stage sample design, that incorporated stratified and systematic sampling methods. Data was collected by trained interviewers using a validated questionnaire. The demographic information of the participants, contemporary issues directly affecting smoking and details regarding their smoking patterns were obtained during the survey.

## 'current smokers'

(individuals who have smoked within the past 30 days at the time the survey was administered). among all survey participants (15 years and above)



21.6%

### Current consumers 'between 15-21 years of age'

11.6%

The following measures are crucial to prevent smoking among underaged individuals.

- Even if the NATA act specifically prohibits tobacco sales to underaged individuals, effective implementation of the NATA act needs to be ensured.
- Prohibiting subtle and direct promotions by the tobacco industry through traditional and social media, which specifically target children.
- Implementing 'Tobacco-Free Generation' policy initiative as recommended by the Sri Lanka Medical Association, where the sale of tobacco is banned for all those born after 2010, which will facilitate substantial social and economic gains in the long run.
- Implementing the ban on single stick sales to make the products less affordable and available.
- Prohibiting tobacco sales within a 100-meter radius of educational institutes.
- Introduce and implement a national-level prevention program to reveal the tactics of the tobacco industry and emphasize smoking as a purposeless and harmful behavior.

### Majority of the initiations have occurred at social gatherings.



Similar studies found that peer pressure and influence is a key factor which drives this behavior.

All sorts of promotions by the tobacco industry through media and other platforms also plays a significant role in building up a positive image of their products among vulnerable groups.

Therefore, improved awareness within communities and policy formulations are extremely important to stop or delay initiations as much as possible.

### A notable 36.5% of the survey participants have quit smoking and 20.9% of the current smokers have reduced their smoking at the time of administering the survey.



The survey participants in all three age groups were inquired about the reasons which caused them to change their tobacco usage pattern in the six months prior to the survey.

- Perceiving tobacco usage as a useless behavior
- Price changes

were specified as reasons for quitting/ reducing tobacco use by the majority of the survey participants.

According to Central Bank data and statistics, a 20% increase in excise duty on cigarettes implemented during 2023 have contributed to an increase in government revenue due to cigarette excise duty by LKR 7.7 billion, while cigarette production has reduced by 521.5 million sticks, an 18% reduction compared to the previous year.

Tax and price increases is a proven measure to reduce tobacco harm, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), which will result in reduced affordability of tobacco products for individuals, leading to reduced tobacco use in the long run. Article 6 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) specifically encourages price and tax measures as effective means to reduce the demand for tobacco.

The survey findings emphasize the need for further tobacco control measures as drastic policy changes, and effective tobacco prevention strategies to reduce initiations. The survey also provides a platform for developing a dialogue on recommendations for tobacco prevention including implementation of 'Tobacco-Free Generation,' implementing the ban on single stick sales and prohibiting tobacco sales within a 100-meter radius of educational institutes.

