

Category	Percent Current Smokers who Usually Smoke at Home ACCESSCS_Q39A Table 15	Percent Current Smokers who Purchased Cigarettes in a Store ACCESS_Q12 Table 16	Percent Current Smokers Who Bought Cigarettes in a Store Who Were Not Refused Because of Their Age ACCESS_Q1218 Table 17
<b>Total</b>	8.6 (±2.4)	64.6 (±5.7)	93.0 (±2.8)
<b>Sex</b>			
Boy	8.4 (±3.8)	67.3 (±4.9)	88.5 (±4.6)
Girl	9.0 (±2.6)	62.5 (±7.5)	96.2 (±2.9)
<b><u>Region</u></b>			
Ljubljana	5.0 (±2.3)	67.4 (±9.7)	94.9 (±1.7)
East	9.6 (±3.9)	65.7 (±9.0)	93.3 (±4.2)
West	9.0 (±3.9)	60.6 (±7.9)	91.0 (±6.2)

\* < 35 cases in the denominator

## **Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

### Tobacco use

Tobacco smoking is not only the behaviour of adult people, more and more is in use among children. Children, young people are still growing up – physically and emotionally and socially, and the harm of tobacco smoke is even more unpredictable.

The results of this survey show us that almost one-third (28,5%) among 13-15 years old children in Slovenia are current smokers, 26,2% had initiated to smoke before age of 10 and almost two-third –66,4% had ever smoked cigarettes. There are 15% of 13-15 years old reported that they always felt like having a cigarette first time in the morning. Almost one-third never smokers indicated that are likely to initiate smoking during the next year, significantly more likely girls than boys.

### Cessation

There were 41,6% current smoker that desire to stop and 68,5% current smokers tried to stop in last year. Only half of them received help.

### Environmental tobacco exposure

Exposure of young people to tobacco smoke is harmful. The students were exposed to tobacco smoke at home from closest relatives and at public places. Current smokers more (84,8 %) and also half of never smokers (52,2%) were exposed to tobacco smoke at home and 92,4% of current smokers and 84,1% of never smokers, significantly more girls never smokers (86,6%) than boys (80,9%) were exposed to smoke in public places. Never smokers (84,3%) were significantly more likely that current smokers (41,9%) to think smoking should be banned from public places; a difference that held for gender and region.

### Knowledge and attitudes

The percentage of current smokers (11,3%) who think boys and girls who smoke are

more attractive than those who don't is significantly higher than for never smoker and almost one fourth of never smokers (23,0%) and 18,1% of current smokers think boys who smoke have more friends, but percentage of never smokers (15,8%) who think girls who smoke have more friends is significantly lower.

Never smokers (58,8%) were significantly more likely than current smokers (41,6%) to think smoke from others is harmful for them; difference that held by gender and in the west in east region of Slovenia.

#### School curriculum

During the past school year 60,5% of students had classes where danger of smoking was taught and significantly less in Ljubljana region (43,3%). Less than half (45,5%) had classes that discussed about reasons why people their age smoke.

#### Media and advertising

Over 60% of students have seen anti-smoking media message on television and 52,5% of them in newspaper or magazines, but also almost half of students (53,8%) saw pro-tobacco messages in newspaper and magazines. Boys were significantly more likely than girls see pro-tobacco messages on TV and at sports events.

Exposure to anti-smoking media message on TV, radio and cinema was significantly lower in Ljubljana than in other regions. In Ljubljana specially exposure to pro-tobacco messages on billboards (53,8%) was significantly higher.

#### Access and availability

In Slovenia restrictive legislation on Tobacco Use has been introduced in 1996: prohibition of sale of tobacco products to persons under the age of 15. More than half of current smokers (64,6%) purchased cigarettes in a store, and 93,0% of current smokers bought cigarettes and was not refused because of their age, significantly more girls (96,2%) than boys (85,5%). Almost one-tenth current smokers (8,6%) usually smoke at home.

#### Conclusions and recommendations

It is well known that tobacco industry for each smoker who quit need another one. Tobacco use among young people continues to rise as the tobacco industry promotes its products to a new generation.

As the results show also in Slovenia there are quite high number of smokers among the young generation. The results on prevalence of smoking, environmental tobacco smoke exposure, access to tobacco products, knowledge and attitudes of youngsters toward cigarette smoking, role of media and advertising on young people and school curricula and policy should be used for further investigation and control strategies.

Recommendations for further strategies:

- school based educational interventions and school policy
- health education on cigarette smoking done by school nurse during the health check up
- peer based interventions at schools or in a local community
- youth oriented cessation programmes, while almost all cessation programmes has focused on adult
- changing the environment for youth to grew up- non smoking environment should be role model for children

- media campaigns - youth orientated anti-tobacco advertising campaign
- control on implementation of tobacco legislation

### **Literature**

1. Doll R. Fifty years of research on tobacco. J of Epid and Biost 2000; 6:321-9.
2. WHO. Tobacco and the rights of the child.
3. WHO .The European Report on Tobacco Control Policy. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2002.
4. Willemsen MC, Hoogenveen RT, Van der Lucht f. New smokers and quitters. Eu J of Public Health 2002, 12: 136-8.
5. <http://www.euro.who.int/childhealthenv/Risks/SmokeTop>
6. <http://cisid.who.dk/tobacco/Country/TCP2.asp?TS=2&PY=2001&PC=SI>
7. <http://www.can.se>
8. Čaks T, Petrič VK, Rupnik Potokar M, Mahkota M. The Slovene Legislation on Tobacco Use. Alliance Bulletin 2003: 3.

### **Acknowledgement**

- Vesna Kerstin Petrič –WHO Liaison Officer -Ministry of Health of the Republic of Slovenia and M.D.,
- Tomaž Čakš, M.D. WHO National Counterpart for Tobacco
- Wick Warren and Julette Lee, Veronica from CDC
- Ionela Petrea from WHO
- Headmasters and headmistress of the selected schools and students who participated in the survey
- Marisa Višnjevca Tuljak, M.D. –Slovene Society for School and University Doctors
- Field researchers:
- Maruška Plut Levstek, M.D. and Polona Abunar N.- School Dispensary Novo Mesto
- Darinka Strmole, M.D.- School dispensary Trebnje
- Dr. Kseniji Goste, M.D. - School dispensary Celje
- Jožica Mugoša, M.D. - Šolski dispanzer Sežana
- Janeta Kodrin Prušnik, M.D. amd Jožica Lešnik, M.N.- School dispensary Ravne na Koroškem
- Tanja Horvat, M.D. and Nada Ivanc, M.N.- School dispensary Murska Sobota
- Ivan Erženu, M.D., MSc, and Franc Jeseneku, BA. –Regional Institute for Public health Celje
- Marjanca Markočič, Robert Mihajilu ter Saša Tršar