

Release

Brazilian National Cancer Institute releases ITC Project findings on smoking in Brazil and 27 other countries at the INCA 80 Years Congress

49% of Brazilian smokers plan to quit in the next 6 months, the highest among all countries surveyed

Rio de Janeiro, September 29, 2017 - Brazilian smokers are highly motivated to stop smoking and strongly support new governmental actions for smoking cessation, according to the ITC Brazil Project, a survey that measures the psychosocial and behavioral impact of policies for tobacco control. The results of the study were announced at the INCA 80 Years Congress. Brazil has the highest percentage (49%) of smokers who plan to quit in the next 6 months in the 25 countries surveyed (in three countries this question was not asked). The percentage is quite high, especially compared to developed countries with structured tobacco control programs such as the USA (37%), France (34%), England (33%) and Germany (10%).

The ITC study indicates that smokers and non-smokers support the creation of new government actions to stop smoking. There is strong support even for a total ban on the marketing of tobacco products - something that is not on the agenda, but demonstrates the approval of the State's action in the control of smoking. The ITC Project asked all respondents whether they support or oppose a total ban on tobacco products over the next 10 years as the government would provide treatment to help smokers quit. The results show that 68% of smokers and 77% of non-smokers surveyed "support" or "strongly support" this prohibition.

Smokers and non-smokers strongly support two key policies to reduce advertising and promotion of tobacco products: banning the display of tobacco products at points of sale and the standardization of all cigarette packs. Approximately three-quarters of smokers (72%) support the ban on in-store cigarette displays and nearly half (49%) support standardized packaging. Support is even greater among non-smokers: 86 percent support the ban on in-store cigarette displays and 56 percent support standardized packaging.

"There was a change in the social acceptance of smoking, which was well-seen and widely stimulated in Brazil between the 1970s and 1990s. This change is the result of extensive work by INCA and the Ministry of Health, in partnership with secretaries Health and Civil Society," said Tânia Cavalcante, executive secretary of Conicq / INCA. "Our challenge is to increase the access of these smokers to smoking cessation treatment, which is one of the most cost-effective medical interventions."

The survey asked smokers and ex-smokers which reasons led them to think about giving up smoking in the last 6 months or have stopped them. The most common reasons for smoking cessation among smokers and ex-smokers were concerns about their own health (68% of smokers, 89% of former smokers); setting an example for children (66% of smokers, 63% of ex-smokers); and concerns about the harm caused by secondhand smoke to non-smokers (51% of smokers and 60% of former smokers). The price of cigarettes was the reason in half of the interviewees (50% of smokers and ex-smokers).

About the ITC Project

The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (ITC Project) was designed to measure the impact of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the major global public treaty in response to the tobacco epidemic, ratified by Brazil in 2005. This is the third survey wave of the ITC Project in Brazil - the first was in 2009 and the second in 2013. In addition to Brazil, the 2017 edition encompassed another 27 countries, where two thirds of the world's smokers live. In Brazil, the survey was conducted among 1,358 smokers and 470 non-smokers. The ITC Project in Brazil is coordinated by INCA in association with the University of Waterloo in Canada and in partnership with the Cancer Foundation, CETAB / Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), Tobacco Control Alliance (ACTbr) and the National Secretariat of Policy on Drugs (SENAD). INCA presented the unpublished findings of ITC Brazil Wave 1-3 Survey during the INCA 80 Years Congress, a medical and scientific meeting that marks the anniversary of the founding of the Institute. The Congress, held this Friday and Saturday (September 29 and 30) at Rio Othon Palace in Copacabana, involves the participation of approximately 700 people a day, 300 speakers, 30 international guests, 157 lectures and 32 roundtables.