

18 June 2008

Coverage
Great Britain

Theme
Health and Care



Widespread support for smoking ban

Most people continue to support the UK-wide smoking ban, reveals a report published today by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Eighty per cent of respondents taking part in the 2007 Omnibus Survey said they agreed with the legislation banning smoking in enclosed public places. Sixty one per cent strongly agreed and 19 per cent agreed. A further 14 per cent disagreed with 6 per cent disagreeing strongly.

Almost three quarters of people tend to visit the pub as often as they did before the smoking ban (73 per cent) with 16 per cent reporting that they now go more often. The remaining 11 per cent said they went less often than before the smoking ban.

Those in employment were also less likely to experience smoking in the workplace. Ninety-three per cent said that smoking was banned in the building where they worked. In particular 31 per cent reported that no smoking was allowed on the premises or the grounds where they worked.

There has also been a drop in the number of people allowing smoking in their home. Approximately two-thirds (67 per cent) said that smoking was not allowed at all in their home compared to 61 per cent in 2006.

Awareness of the effects of second-hand smoking was widespread. Respondents thought that a child's risk of getting chest infections (91 per cent) and asthma (85 per cent) were increased by living with a smoker. Seventy-nine per cent of smokers said they did not smoke at all when they were in a room with a child and 13 per cent said they would smoke fewer cigarettes in the presence of a child. Nearly all (94 per cent) of respondents agreed there should be smoking restrictions in place where there are, or are likely to be, children under the age of 16.

Issued by
Office for National Statistics
Government Buildings
Cardiff Road
Newport
NP10 8XG

Contact
Media Office 0845 604 1858

Statistician
Jayne Olney 01633 456291

Email
Jayne.olney@ons.gov.uk

www.statistics.gov.uk

The awareness of the effect of second-hand smoke on adults increased in 2007 compared to previous years. More than 80 per cent thought that second-hand smoking would increase a non-smoking adult's risk of lung cancer, bronchitis and asthma.

Today's report presents the results of the 12th survey of smoking behaviour and attitudes, carried out by ONS for the NHS Information Centre for health and social care.

Other key findings for 2007 include:

Agreement with restrictions on smoking in public places

The majority of respondents agreed with the restrictions on smoking at work (86 per cent), in restaurants (94 per cent), indoor shopping centres (92 per cent) and in indoor sports and leisure centres (95 per cent). They also agreed with the ban in indoor areas at railway and bus stations (85 per cent) and in other public places such as banks and post offices (96 per cent). A smaller percentage of people, 75 per cent agreed with restrictions on smoking in pubs.

Awareness of health risks associated with smoking

Forty two per cent of people thought that smoking was responsible for the most premature deaths (deaths before the age of 65) in the United Kingdom. This was lower than the 46 per cent who mentioned it in 2006.

Attempts to give up smoking

Nearly four-fifths (79 per cent) of current smokers had tried to give up smoking in the past, and three-fifths (60 per cent) of current smokers had made a serious attempt in the past five years. This was similar to the percentage found in previous years.

About a quarter (26 per cent) of ex-smokers had given up within the past five years.

More than half (53 per cent) of smokers had sought some kind of advice or help for stopping smoking in the last year and 54 per cent had received advice from a medical professional in the past five years.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. **Smoking related behaviour and attitudes 2007**

ONS ISBN 978-1-85774-67.

Available free on the National Statistics website:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=1638>

2. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2008