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Coverage
Great Britain
Theme
Health and Care

Support for smoking restrictions remains stable

Support for smoking restrictions in pubs remained stable between 2004 and 2005, after rising sharply between 2003 and 2004, according to a report published today by the Office for National Statistics.

In 2005, 65 per cent of people over 16 favoured restrictions in pubs, the same as in 2004 but well ahead of 56 per cent in 2003 and 48 per cent in 1996, when the survey was first carried out.

In addition, 91 per cent of people were in favour of restrictions in restaurants and 86 per cent supported restrictions at work. These figures were similar to 2004, and well ahead of 85 per cent and 81 per cent respectively in 1996.

Asked in more detail about smoking in pubs, 33 per cent favoured a ban, while 48 per cent wanted pubs to be mainly non-smoking with smoking areas. This represents a total of 81 per cent backing for regulation of smoking in pubs, similar to last year and up from 71 per cent in 2003, when the question was first included in the survey.

Twenty two per cent of pub goers said they would go more often if smoking restrictions were in place. Women pub goers were more likely to say this (26 per cent) than men (17 per cent).

Today's report presents the results of the tenth survey of smoking behaviour and attitudes, carried out by ONS for the Department of Health and the Information Centre for Health and Social Care. The survey was carried out in late 2005, before the ban on smoking in enclosed public places came into force in Scotland.

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The report also found a very high level of support for restrictions in indoor shopping centres (87 per cent), indoor sports and leisure centres (93 per cent) and indoor areas at railway and bus stations (83 per cent).

People who were most likely to be in favour of restrictions were: women; those who had never smoked; those in managerial and professional occupations; and those who were aware of the effect of second hand smoking on the health of children and non-smoking adults.

Ninety-three per cent of people agreed there should be smoking restrictions in places there are, or are likely to be, children under the age of 16. Non-parents were just as likely as parents to agree with these restrictions.

Other key findings include:

Giving up smoking

- Seventy-two per cent of smokers said that they wanted to give up smoking (a similar proportion to previous years). There was no significant difference between men and women.
- Older smokers were least likely to want to stop smoking (39 per cent of smokers aged 65 and over, against 87 per cent of those aged 16-24).
- Smokers with children aged under 16 in the household were more likely to want to stop smoking than those without children (81 per cent and 67 per cent respectively).
- Those who smoked 10 or more cigarettes a day were the most likely to want to stop (76 per cent compared with 65 per cent of those who smoked nine or fewer).

Previous attempts to give up smoking

- Eighty per cent of smokers had tried to give up smoking in the past, a similar percentage to that found in previous years.



- Of those who had tried to stop in the past year, 58 per cent had made one attempt while 22 per cent had made three or more attempts.
- Twenty-nine per cent of smokers who had previously tried to stop had been successful for six months or more. Seven per cent of smokers had previously given up for two years or more.
- Forty-six per cent of smokers had sought some kind of help or advice for stopping smoking.

Attitudes relating to smoking

- Sixty-two per cent of non-smokers said they would mind if other people smoked near them (compared with 60 per cent in 2004). Women non-smokers were more likely to mind than men (67 per cent compared with 56 per cent).
- The smell of cigarette smoke was the main reason given by non-smokers for minding if other people smoked near them (64 per cent). The health effect of second hand smoke was given by 46 per cent, while 25 per cent said cigarette smoke affected their breathing.

Smokers' behaviour in the presence of non-smokers

- Seventy-four per cent of smokers said they would not smoke at all in front of children and 21 per cent said they would smoke fewer cigarettes.
- Forty-seven per cent of smokers said they would not smoke at all in the presence of non-smoking adults and 34 per cent said they would smoke fewer cigarettes.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. The survey was carried out in Great Britain during October and November 2005 as part of the Omnibus Survey, a multi-purpose survey carried out by ONS on behalf of a range of government departments.
2. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
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