

Smoking in movies

Impact on European youth and policy implications



European Commission

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www.smokefreemovies-europe.eu

SUMMARY

Background

Tobacco marketing is linked with youth smoking initiation. Therefore, most Member States have introduced a ban on tobacco marketing. However, a comprehensive ban on tobacco marketing does not limit entertainment media from projecting billions of favourable images of smoking to adolescents in the EU.

Methods and means

1) Description and analysis of the current policies on smoking in movies in all Member States. 2) Content analysis of films released in European cinemas. 3) Population estimate of movie smoking exposure in European adolescents, based on the results of a survey of 16500 European students recruited in 6 EU countries. 4) Follow-up survey to investigate the impact of smoking in movies on current smoking and smoking initiation among baseline never smokers. 5) Development of policy options.

Expected outcomes

1) Increased knowledge on the amount and effect of smoking in movies on smoking in European youth.
2) Policy options at local, regional, EU, and international level to address the problem.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1

Assessment of the current policies in all Member States with regard to smoking in movies

Objective 2

Development of a standardized tool for measuring smoking in movies

Objective 3

Measurement of the amount of smoking in films released in European cinemas

Objective 4

Estimation of population exposure to smoking in movies among EU adolescents

Objective 5

Investigation of the impact of smoking in movies on smoking initiation among EU adolescents

Objective 6

Development of policy options on local, regional, national, EU, as well as international level to deal with this topic

METHODOLOGY

Internet search of all Movie Classification Boards in the Member States

Questionnaire survey of representatives of the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention (27 States plus EFTA states Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland)

Two-wave empirical study with a one year follow-up of a sample of 16,551 European students from six countries

Exposure to smoking in movies estimated with the "Beach Method"

WP COORDINATION

Overall coordination

Institute for Therapy and Health Research, Kiel, Germany (R. Hanewinkel, M. Morgenstern)

Project partners

Directorate of Health and University of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland (S. Karlsdottir, S. Jonsson)

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Technical Advisory Board

Dartmouth Medical School, Lebanon, NH, USA (J. Sargent)

Medical University of Vienna, Austria (M. Neuberger)

University of Greifswald, Germany (U. John)

WP DISSEMINATION

- 1) Reports to the European Commission
- 2) Publications in international journals
- 3) Oral presentations
- 4) Conference posters
- 5) Smoking in movies measurement guide (pdf and CD-Rom)
- 6) Project homepage



WP EVALUATION

Ethical compatibility

All ethical boards of the six countries approved the study

Representativeness

93% of Member States + 3 non-member states included
86% response rate in the student survey

Standardised procedure

Paper-pencil questionnaires with closed format
Data assessment conducted by trained staff

Reliability and Validity

Cross-validation of expert ratings
Standard item rate above 80% in all questionnaires
Interrater-Reliability > .90

Process Evaluation

All partners fill in feedback forms on a regular basis
Documentary sheets during all data assessments

RESULTS

Policy status report: Motion picture rating systems in the European Union¹

Frequency of smoking in popular movies: Content analysis of box-office hits from 2004 to 2009²

Youth access to movies that contain smoking in six European countries³

Smoking in movies and adolescent smoking: Cross-cultural study in six European countries⁴

The impact of smoking in movies on children and adolescents. A systematic review⁵

CONCLUSIONS

- We found no evidence that smoking in movies is considered in any of the movie rating systems.
- There are very heterogeneous legal regulations and vague responsibilities with regard to implementation and enforcement of movie age ratings.
- Compared to U.S. teens European adolescents have access to substantially more movies, and this gives them access to more movies that portray smoking.
- The link between smoking in movies and adolescent smoking is robust and transcends different cultural contexts.
- The current research findings support WHO recommendations, and provide further scientific evidence in favour for measures to limit on-screen smoking in European countries.

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¹ Hanewinkel R, Morgenstern M. Policy Status Report: Motion picture rating systems in the European Union (Version June 30th, 2010). Kiel, IFT-Nord.

² Morgenstern M, Sargent JD, Hanewinkel R. Frequency of smoking in popular movies: Content analysis of box-office hits from 2004 to 2009 in six European countries. Poster presented at the 5th European Conference on Tobacco or Health, March 28-30 2011

³ Hanewinkel R, Sargent JD, Karlsdottir S, Jonsson SH, Mathis F, Faggiano F, Poelen EAP, Scholte R, Florek E, Sweeting S, Hunt K, Morgenstern M. Youth access to movies that contain smoking in six European countries. *Tobacco Control*, in rev.

⁴ Morgenstern M, Poelen EAP, Scholte R, Karlsdottir S, Jonsson SH, Mathis F, Faggiano F, Florek E, Sweeting S, Hunt K, Sargent JD, Hanewinkel R. Smoking in movies and adolescent smoking: Cross-cultural study in six European countries. *Thorax* 2011, in press.

⁵ Maruska K, Hanewinkel R. The impact of smoking in movies on children and adolescents. A systematic review. *Bundesgesundheitsblatt* 2010; 53: 186-95.