

Illicit tobacco use among respondents of the 2024 Global Drug Survey

Cheneal Puljević¹, Alice Holland¹, Kylie Morphet¹, Monica J. Barratt^{2,3}, Emma Davies⁴, Adam Winstock^{5,6}, Jason Ferris⁷ & Coral Gartner¹

¹NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence on Achieving the Tobacco Endgame, School of Public Health, The University of Queensland, Australia; ²Social Equity Research Centre and Digital Ethnography Research Centre, RMIT University, Melbourne, Vic Australia; ³National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney, New South Wales, Australia; ⁴Centre for Psychological Research, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK; ⁵Global Drug Survey, UK; ⁶University College London, London, UK; ⁷Centre for Health Services Research, The University of Queensland, Australia

Presenter's email: c.puljevic@uq.edu.au

Introduction: Illicit tobacco products are any tobacco products for which legally required taxes or duties have not been paid. Although many countries report recent increases in illicit tobacco use (e.g., Australia, United Kingdom), little is known about the consumers of these products, or their patterns of use.

Methods: This study uses data from the 2024 Global Drug Survey (GDS), which ran from 10 January-30 April 2024. Individuals aged 16+ who used at least one drug in the past year were eligible to participate. The 2024 GDS included a module on patterns of illicit tobacco use.

Results: 1,066 respondents (71% male; median age 27 years) reported using illicit tobacco products in the past year. Respondents reported hearing about illicit tobacco products from colleagues (16%), friends/family members (45%), retailers (12%), strangers (4%), or online (5%). Branded cigarettes were the most commonly used illicit tobacco product (52% of respondents who used illicit tobacco). Australian respondents (7.6% of sample) reported paying a median of \$15 (range \$10-\$50) per pack. The lower cost was the most common reason for purchasing illicit tobacco (56%). Factors that may deter future illicit tobacco purchasing included finding out that sales fund terrorist organisations (19%) or a criminal charge (16%).

Discussions and Conclusions: This study provides a unique overview of illicit tobacco use among a large international sample of people who use drugs, including the world's first data on potential deterrents of use. Findings may be useful for developing targeted campaigns aimed at preventing consumer purchasing of illicit tobacco products.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: This work was supported by an ARC DECRA Fellowship awarded to Cheneal Puljević (DE230101131). The Global Drug Survey was founded and is owned by Prof Adam Winstock. No other competing declarations.