|  |
| --- |
| **Title: Tobacco control policy factors to prevent illicit trade in Korea** |
| **Background/Objectives**Republic of Korea has been suffering from high male smoking rate since 1980s. There has been two tobacco tax hikes in 2005 and 2015, but the price of tobacco products are relatively lowRaising tobacco tax has been a major cause to increase illicit tobacco trade. Because Korean tobacco price is still relatively low, increased smuggling seemed to have little effect on government revenue. The government needs to raise tobacco tax again in the new future for public health purposeThe objective of this study was to find policy measures to prevent illicit trade in Korea.**Methods**The author reviewed tobacco policy during the last decade and government policy documents from 2015-2017 for illicit trade of tobacco products in Korea. **Results**Korea Customs Service has uncovered 592 cases of tobacco products smuggling in 2015, just after a tobacco tax increase, and the cases of seizures has been increasing. Small unit of smuggling by travelers has been increasing as well. Most typical form of smuggling in Korea is an illicit trade of tax exempt, exporting tobacco products. Smugglers report fake documents to the Korea Customs Service and deliver the exporting tobacco products back to domestic market.**Discussion**To prevent increased smuggling in the future there needs to have a trace and tracking system in the government. Recent technology includes RFID(Radio Frequency Identification), Color Bit Code, and Specialty Ink. These tracing technologies differ in security and price. A unique identification marking system may prevent counterfeit tobacco products as well as contraband tobacco products. Tobacco company may adopt some electronic measures to trace authentic tobacco products. It has been addressed that tobacco products’ tracking and tracing policy should be strengthened based on the recommendations in the WHO FCTC and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products. We need to reduce tax exempted tobacco products as the Framework Convention on.Education and income status was significantly associated with inequality of smoking rate. As the tobacco tax rises people from the lower income group will pay more tax out of their income than their counterparts. The government should adopt integrated monitoring system and educate the public as well.**Keywords****Illicit trade of tobacco, policy measures, FCTC** |