

# GYTS | GLOBAL YOUTH TOBACCO SURVEY

FACT SHEET UKRAINE 2023

## BACKGROUND

The GYTS, a component of the Global Tobacco Surveillance System (GTSS), is a standardized, school-based survey used worldwide to systematically monitor tobacco use (smoked and smokeless) among young people and to track key tobacco control indicators.

GYTS is a cross-sectional, nationally representative survey targeting students in grades typically associated with ages 13 to 15, though it includes all students aged 11 to 17 who were present on the day of the survey. Classes are carefully selected to ensure a sufficient sample of 13–15-year-olds, but all students in the selected classes are eligible to participate, regardless of age.

In Ukraine, the survey uses a standardized global methodology, including a two-stage stratified cluster sampling design. Schools are selected with probability proportional to enrollment size. Classes within selected schools are randomly chosen.

Students complete an anonymous, self-administered, paper-based questionnaire, which includes a core set of questions and optional modules which can be tailored to country needs. Topics covered are as follows:

- tobacco use (smoked and smokeless);
- cessation;
- second-hand smoke, pro- and anti-tobacco advertising and promotion;
- access to and availability of tobacco products; and
- knowledge and attitudes regarding tobacco use.

In Ukraine, the GYTS was first conducted in 2005 and repeated in 2011, 2017 and 2023 by the WHO Country Office in Ukraine, with technical guidance from the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and of Education and Science of Ukraine. The first three rounds were implemented by the O. Marzeiev Institute for Public Health of National Academy of Medical Sciences of Ukraine. The 2023 round was conducted by the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after O. Yaremko, with technical support for data analysis of the Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.

All surveys used the same standardized methodology and produced nationally representative data. However, data from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol, and certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts – territories temporarily occupied and outside the control of the Government of Ukraine – were excluded from the 2017 and 2023 surveys. For comparison purposes, the 2005 and 2011 results were recalculated to match the geographic coverage of the 2017 and 2023 surveys. For additional information, please refer to the GYTS 2005, 2011, 2017 and 2023 country fact sheets.

This fact sheet focuses on responses from young people aged 13–15 years, who participated in the survey, totalling 6579 students (with an overall response rate of 72.4%) in 2005, 3550 students (response rate: 91.6%) in 2011, 3040 students (response rate: 81.6%) in 2017 and 3316 students (response rate: 69.3%) in 2023.

The GYTS supports Ukraine in meeting its obligations under the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) by generating comparable, policy-relevant data. The survey results help inform, design, implement, and evaluate national tobacco control programmes, especially those targeting young people, using the principles of the WHO MPOWER tobacco initiative.\*

Since 2005, Ukraine has made significant progress in reducing smoking prevalence, driven by the implementation of key FCTC provisions, including:

- a smoke-free law for public places
- bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship
- graphic health warning labels on cigarette packs
- repeated tax increases on tobacco products.

These efforts have contributed to declines in tobacco use among both youth and the general population. The most significant changes in tobacco indicators among young people aged 13–15 years from 2005 to 2023 are summarized in the Key findings section.

## GYTS result highlights

<b>Tobacco use</b>
17.6% of students, 18.9% of boys and 15.9% of girls currently used any tobacco products (includes heated tobacco products)
14.4% of students, 15.8% of boys and 12.9% of girls currently smoked tobacco
12.3% of students, 14.0% of boys and 10.6% of girls currently smoked cigarettes
6.9% of students, 7.7% of boys and 5.8% of girls currently used heated tobacco products
5.1% of students, 6.8% of boys and 3.5% of girls currently used smokeless tobacco
<b>Electronic cigarettes</b>
19.6% of students, 18.4% of boys and 20.7% of girls currently used electronic cigarettes
<b>Cessation</b>
Almost five in 10 (49.7%) students who currently smoked tobacco tried to stop smoking in the past 12 months
Almost five in 10 (47.1%) students who currently smoked tobacco wanted to stop smoking now
<b>Second-hand smoke</b>
24.9% of students were exposed to tobacco smoke at home
36.2% of students were exposed to tobacco smoke inside enclosed public places
<b>Access and availability</b>
30.6% of students who currently smoked cigarettes bought cigarettes from a store, supermarket, gas station, street vendor, kiosk, café, bar or restaurant
Among students who currently smoked cigarettes who tried to buy cigarettes, 47.3% were not prevented from buying them because of their age
<b>Advertising and promotion</b>
More than six in 10 (61.9%) students noticed anti-tobacco messages in the media
Almost five in 10 (49.5%) students noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions at points of sale
Almost one in 10 (8.3%) students had a possession with a tobacco brand logo on it
<b>Knowledge and attitudes</b>
47.6% of students definitely thought other people's tobacco smoking was harmful to them
81.8% of students favoured prohibiting smoking inside enclosed public places.

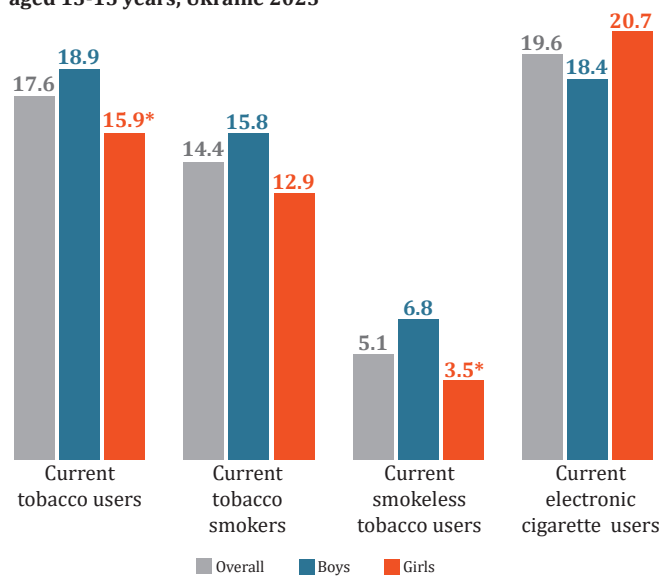
\* MPOWER. World Health Organization; 2025 (<https://www.who.int/initiatives/mpower>).

Tobacco use			
	Overall (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
<b>Any tobacco use (smoked, heated and/or smokeless)</b>			
Current tobacco users <sup>1</sup>	17.6	18.9	15.9*
Ever tobacco users <sup>2</sup>	41.5	44.4	38.3*
<b>Smoked tobacco</b>			
Current tobacco smokers <sup>3</sup>	14.4	15.8	12.9
Current cigarette smokers <sup>4</sup>	12.3	14.0	10.6*
Frequent cigarette smokers <sup>5</sup>	4.2	5.4	2.8*
Current smokers of other tobacco <sup>6</sup>	7.3	7.9	6.6
Ever tobacco smokers <sup>7</sup>	38.2	40.7	35.3*
Ever cigarette smokers <sup>8</sup>	34.6	37.9	31.0*
Ever smokers of other tobacco <sup>9</sup>	21.7	23.1	19.9
<b>Heated tobacco</b>			
Current users of heated tobacco products <sup>10</sup>	6.9	7.7	5.8*
Ever users of heated tobacco products <sup>11</sup>	16.7	18.6	14.2*
<b>Smokeless tobacco</b>			
Current smokeless tobacco users <sup>12</sup>	5.1	6.8	3.5*
Ever smokeless tobacco users <sup>13</sup>	9.1	11.6	6.5*
<b>Oral nicotine products</b>			
Current use of nicotine pouches <sup>14</sup>	2.9	3.8	1.7*
Ever tried nicotine pouches <sup>15</sup>	7.0	8.5	5.3*
<b>Electronic cigarettes</b>			
Current electronic cigarette users <sup>16</sup>	19.6	18.4	20.7
Ever electronic cigarette users <sup>17</sup>	45.9	45.0	46.6
<b>Cessation</b>			
Current tobacco smokers who tried to stop smoking in the past 12 months	49.7	44.8	56.1
Current tobacco smokers who wanted to stop smoking now	47.1	42.8	54.2
Current tobacco smokers who thought they would be able to stop smoking if they wanted to	78.7	76.4	82.6
<b>Second-hand smoke</b>			
Exposure to tobacco smoke at home <sup>18</sup>	24.9	25.3	24.2
Exposure to tobacco smoke inside any enclosed public place <sup>18</sup>	36.2	34.7	37.3
Exposure to tobacco smoke at any outdoor public place <sup>18</sup>	44.2	40.8	47.4*
Students who saw anyone smoking inside the school building or outside on school property <sup>19</sup>	38.3	41.0	35.9*
<b>Access and availability</b>			
Current cigarette smokers who bought cigarettes from a store, supermarket, gas station, street vendor, kiosk, café, bar or restaurant <sup>20</sup>	30.6	30.5	29.8
Current cigarette smokers who were not prevented from buying cigarettes because of their age <sup>21</sup>	47.3	45.7	46.8
Current cigarette smokers who bought cigarettes as individual sticks <sup>22</sup>	17.5	15.1	23.1

Advertising and promotion			
	Overall (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
<b>Tobacco advertising and promotion</b>			
Students who noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions at points of sale <sup>23</sup>	49.5	49.4	49.1
Students who saw anyone using tobacco on television, videos or movies <sup>24</sup>	15.7	15.4	15.8
Students who had a possession with a tobacco brand logo on it	8.3	8.7	7.7
<b>Anti-tobacco advertising and promotion</b>			
Students who noticed anti-tobacco messages in the media <sup>19</sup>	61.9	60.0	63.6*
Students who noticed anti-tobacco messages at sporting or community events <sup>25</sup>	38.3	37.8	38.1
Current tobacco smokers who thought about quitting because of a warning label <sup>26</sup>	21.6	22.5	20.9
Students who were taught in school about the dangers of tobacco use in the past 12 months	44.4	45.4	43.4

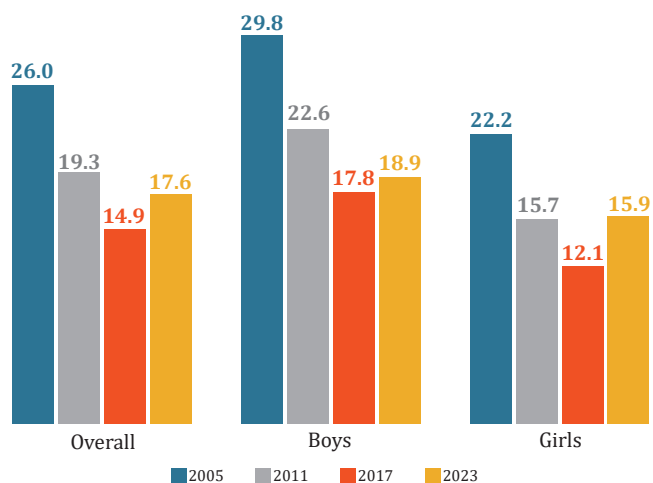
Knowledge and attitudes			
	Overall (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Students who thought smoking tobacco helps people feel more comfortable at celebrations, parties and social gatherings	28.5	28.7	28.3
Students who definitely thought other people's tobacco smoking is harmful to them	47.6	48.4	46.6
Students who favoured prohibiting smoking inside enclosed public places	81.8	80.5	83.1
Students who favoured prohibiting smoking at outdoor public places	70.1	72.2	68.5

Table 1. Current tobacco and nicotine product use among students aged 13-15 years, Ukraine 2023

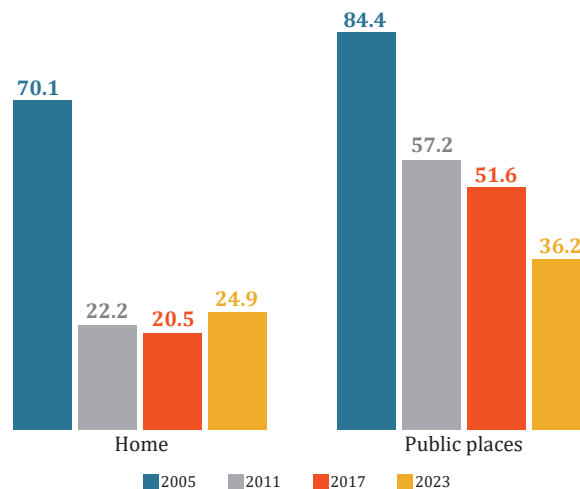


\* Statistically significant differences by gender, p<0.05.

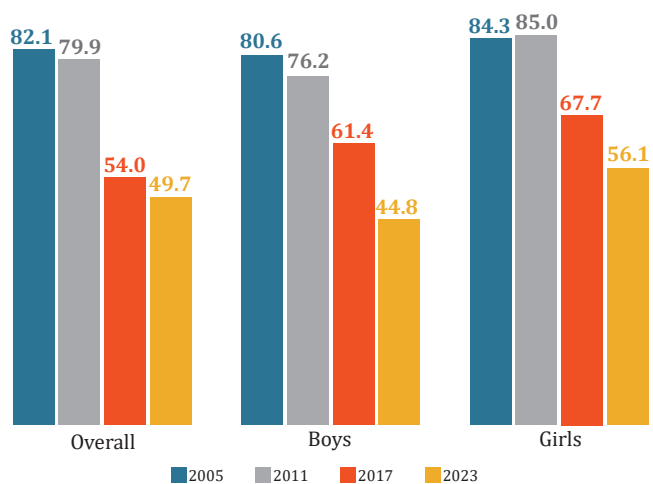
**m** Prevalence (%) of current tobacco use<sup>27</sup> by gender, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2011, 2017, and 2023



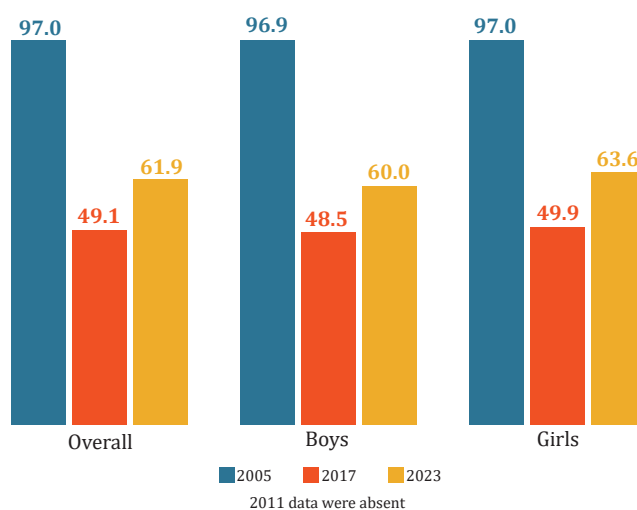
**p** Students<sup>28</sup> (%) exposed to tobacco smoke at home or inside any enclosed public places<sup>29,30</sup>, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2011, 2017, and 2023



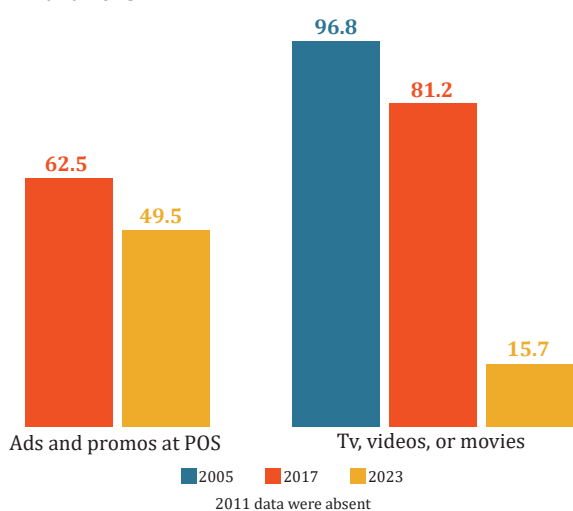
**o** Prevalence (%) of quit attempts among current tobacco smokers<sup>31</sup> by gender, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2011, 2017, and 2023



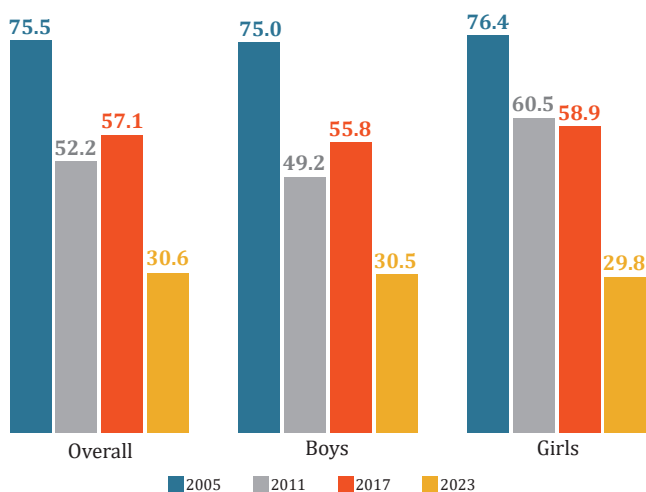
**w** Students (%) who noticed tobacco media messages<sup>32</sup> by gender, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2017, and 2023



**e** Students<sup>28</sup> (%) who noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions at points of sale or anyone using tobacco on television, videos or movies, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2017, and 2023



**r** Current cigarettes smokers (%) who bought cigarettes from an outlet<sup>33</sup> by gender, GYTS Ukraine 2005, 2011, 2017, and 2023



### KEY FINDINGS

The prevalence of current tobacco use among students decreased from 26.0% in 2005 to 14.9% in 2017. However, in 2023 it increased slightly to 17.6%.

The prevalence of current cigarette smoking among adolescents declined markedly from 24.0% in 2005 to 9.2% in 2017, and further to 12.3% in 2023, while current tobacco smoking, first assessed in 2017 at 13.5%, remained relatively stable at 14.4% in 2023.

The prevalence of current use of e-cigarettes remained high at 19.6% in 2023 compared with 18.4% in 2017, when these data were first collected.

The prevalence of current smokeless tobacco use increased from 1.5% in 2005 to 3.1% by 2017, and further to 5.1% by 2023, indicating a steady rise in alternative tobacco product use.

The percentage of students exposed to second-hand smoke at home significantly decreased from 70.1% in 2005 to 20.5% in 2017, but increased slightly to 24.9% in 2023.

Exposure to smoke inside enclosed public places decreased from 84.4% in 2005 to 51.6% in 2017 and further decreased to 36.2% in 2023.

The percentage of students who currently use tobacco but wanted to quit smoking decreased from 74.5% in 2005 to 62.3% in 2017, and declined further to 47.1% in 2023.

The percentage of students who currently smoked cigarettes and were not prevented from buying them because of their age decreased from 64.1% in 2005 to 46.3% in 2017, with little change by 2023 (47.3%).

The percentage of young people who noticed tobacco advertisements or promotions at points of sale declined from 62.5% in 2017 to 49.5% in 2023.

The percentage of students who had considered quitting smoking because of a warning label decreased from 26.8% in 2017 to 21.6% in 2023, showing a modest decline in the influence of warning labels on quitting intentions.

The percentage of students who noticed people using tobacco products in television, videos or movies decreased from 96.8% in 2005 to 81.2% in 2017, and then dramatically declined to 15.7% in 2023.

The percentage of adolescents who noticed anti-tobacco media messages significantly decreased from 97.0% in 2005 to 49.1% in 2017, but rose again to 61.9% in 2023.

The percentage of students who definitely thought that other people's tobacco smoking was harmful to them increased significantly from 41.5% in 2005 to 66.3% in 2017, but then declined to 47.6% in 2023.

The percentage of adolescents who reported being taught in school about the dangers of tobacco use decreased from 86.7% in 2005 to 52.3% in 2017 and continued to decline to 44.4% in 2023.

The percentage of students who saw someone smoking on school property decreased from 55.0% in 2017 to 38.3% in 2023.

### IMPLICATIONS

Although Ukraine has made strong progress in reducing smoking prevalence in young people (cigarettes and tobacco products) and second-hand smoke exposure, a notable rise in smokeless tobacco and heated tobacco products use and persistently high susceptibility among non-users both signal emerging challenges.

E-cigarette use remains a concern and requires urgent implementation of adopted regulatory actions to prevent young people starting to use them, and dual use of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products.

While the accessibility of cigarettes to minors has declined, nearly half of young smokers can still buy cigarettes without being prevented, underscoring the need for stronger enforcement of sales laws.

The dramatic reduction in tobacco imagery on television and movies is a major public health success, but continuous monitoring and tightening of advertising loopholes are needed.

School-based tobacco education efforts must be reinvigorated.

During 2022–2023, Ukraine adopted and enforced several comprehensive tobacco control measures, including new pictorial health warnings on tobacco products, a ban on flavoured cigarettes, and restrictions on e-cigarette marketing and sales. In parallel, tobacco taxes continued to increase as part of long-term fiscal policy.

However, the impact of these legislative measures may be undermined by the complex emergency and humanitarian crisis arising from the ongoing war.

Continued investment in youth-focused education programmes, public media campaigns and smoking cessation support services is critical to sustain progress and further reduce youth tobacco use in Ukraine.

The fourth round of the GYTS in 2023 was co-funded by the European Union and the CDC Foundation.

- 1 Smoked cigarettes, smoked other type of tobacco and/or used smokeless tobacco anytime during the past 30 days.
- 2 Ever smoked tobacco and/or used smokeless tobacco.
- 3 Smoked cigarettes or other type of tobacco anytime during the past 30 days.
- 4 Smoked cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days.
- 5 Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days of the past 30 days.
- 6 Smoked tobacco other than cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days.
- 7 Ever smoked cigarettes or other type of tobacco, even one or two puffs.
- 8 Ever smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs.
- 9 Ever smoked tobacco other than cigarettes, even one or two puffs.
- 10 Used heated tobacco products anytime during the past 30 days.
- 11 Ever used heated tobacco products.
- 12 Used smokeless tobacco anytime during the past 30 days.
- 13 Ever used smokeless tobacco.
- 14 Use of nicotine pouches anytime during the past 30 days.
- 15 Ever tried nicotine pouches.
- 16 Used electronic cigarettes anytime during the past 30 days. Current use of electronic cigarettes is assessed separately from cigarettes, other smoked tobacco products, smokeless tobacco products and heated tobacco products and is not included in the current definition of current any tobacco use.
- 17 Ever used electronic cigarettes in entire life.
- 18 During the past 7 days.
- 19 During the past 30 days.
- 20 Outlet from which current cigarette smokers bought cigarettes the last time they smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days.

- 21 Among those who tried to buy cigarettes during the past 30 days.
- 22 Based on the last purchase, among those who bought cigarettes during the past 30 days.
- 23 Among those who visited a point of sale in the past 30 days.
- 24 Among those who watched television, videos or movies in the past 30 days.
- 25 Among those who attended sporting or community events in the past 30 days.
- 26 Among those who noticed warning labels on cigarette packages in the past 30 days.
- 27 Smoked cigarettes, other type of tobacco, and/or smokeless tobacco used anytime during the past 30 days.
- 28 There is no statistically significant difference by sex, so this includes both male and female students.
- 29 During the past 7 days.
- 30 Before 2011: Public places.
- 31 2005,2011: Among current cigarette smokers/2017,2023: Among current tobacco smokers
- 32 Includes media messages on television, radio, internet, billboards, posters, newspapers, magazines, or movies.
- 33 Outlet (store, shop, street vendor, or kiosk) from which current cigarette smokers bought cigarettes the last time they smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days.

#### Notes:

GYTS: Global Youth Tobacco Survey; POS: point of sale.

Data are weighted to be nationally representative of all students aged 13–15 years who are enrolled in school. Percentages reflect the prevalence of each indicator in each group, not the distribution across groups.

If statistics are not reported for a particular year, it is because no data were collected or available for that period.