

OP16.5

The background of the success of Turkey's struggle with tobacco use: a panoramic vision from 1990

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Background & Aim: Using tobacco is one of the main risk factors for a number of chronic diseases. Despite this, it is common throughout the world. Last few decades, Turkey has been in front amongst a number of countries which have passed legislations such as restricting tobacco advertising, regulating who can buy tobacco products, and where people can or cannot smoke. Through those regulations and cooperation with nearly all level of governmental and social organizations, Turkey has achieved an admirable results in lowering tobacco use. In this review background of this success was evaluated.

Method: Original articles, studies, reports and governmental regulations related with tobacco use were searched. Data related with the effect on lowering tobacco use from 1990 to 2013 were analyzed. Tobacco use is measured mainly as grams per capita (+15).

Results: Tobacco use gradually increased until 1999, than had decreasing tendency till to 2009. Between 1999-2009 tobacco use lowered about 22%. Moreover, tobacco use decreased by 21% in following four years as a result of additional legislation passed in 2008. The reflection of these new legislations on social life and impact of tobacco use on economy became a determent factor for smokers. Additional legislations were carried out in 2008 that In most of the public places smoking banned and controlled. Later, all public places were included in no smoking areas. The implementation of all of those regulations were firmly controlled by the government. Strong public support, cooperation with organizations and universities facilitated the generalization and acceptance of these new regulations. Of course the support of WHO should not to be forgotten.

Conclusions: Tobacco use decreased significantly in Turkey especially from 2009 to 2013. Additional legislations gradually lowered the opportunity to smoke. Firm governmental regulations seem to be the main factor.