

Creating Demand for Enforcement of Smoke-free Laws

Despite a ban on smoking in public places, enforcement remains a problem in Ukraine. About 85,000 people die each year from smoking-related diseases, and over 14,000 non-smokers die from second-hand smoke.

Vital Strategies supported the first national smoke-free campaign, “Invisible Killer,” developed in cooperation with the National Public Health Center and the civil society advocacy organization, Life. The campaign aimed to increase compliance with smoke-free laws and stimulate the public to protect their right to smoke-free air.

The campaign was launched on World No Tobacco Day in May 2019 with government support and ran for a month on national TV, radio, social media and billboards. The campaign’s message reached an estimated 20 million people, including 2 million people on YouTube.

A nationally representative survey by a research agency, KIIS, showed an increase in the number of people demanding smokers obey smoke-free laws especially around building entrances and in cafés and restaurants. Smokers also experience increased pressure not to smoke in smoke-free spaces.

The campaign convinced the government that mass media campaigns should be a key component of Ukraine’s new comprehensive tobacco control bill.



Population

42 million

Smoking Prevalence

40.1% of males, 8.9% of females, 17.8% of boys and 12.1% of girls use tobacco products^{1,2}.

Tobacco Control Policies

Ukraine has strong and well-enforced smoke-free laws in public places including government facilities, restaurants, health and educational facilities, playgrounds, as well as public transportation. Advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products are prohibited in nearly all forms. Ukraine has implemented graphic health warnings that cover 50% of the front and 50% of the back of cigarette packs. Ukraine began a series of annual tobacco excise tax increases in 2008, with the most recent tax change in 2018 being 29.7%. Currently, e-cigarettes are legal, but are prohibited for use in public spaces and transportation.

Milestone

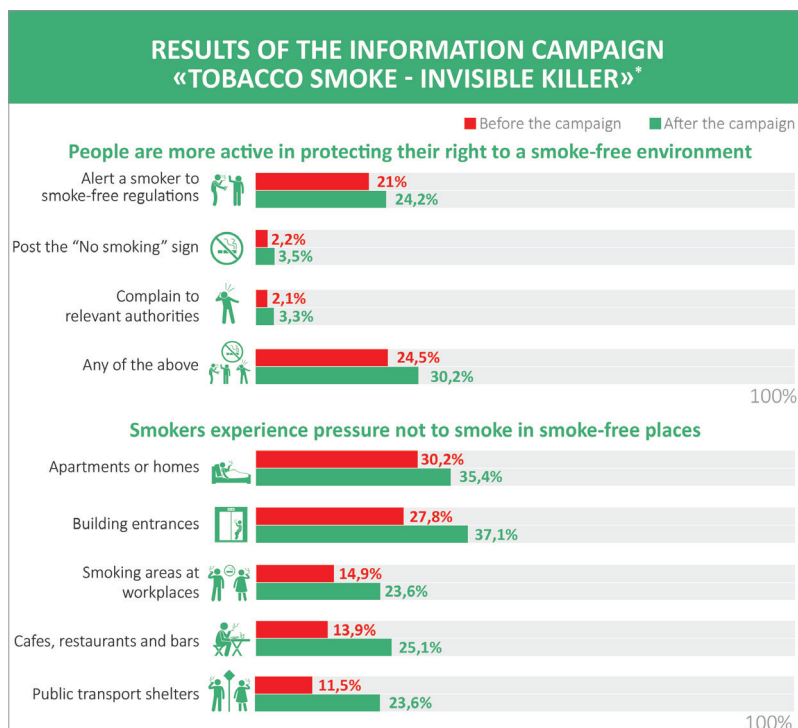
In recent years, multifaceted tobacco control policies in Ukraine have resulted in one of the fastest declines in smoking prevalence in the world. Daily smoking prevalence for adults decreased from 26.4% in 2007 to 20% in 2016. The largest decrease was among men, from 50.6% in 2007 to 38.1% in 2016.

¹ Global Adult Tobacco Survey, 2017

² Global Youth Tobacco Survey, 2017



The “Invisible Killer” campaign advertised on buildings in Ukraine.



Since the “Invisible Killer” campaign launched, there has been an increase in the number of people demanding that smokers obey smoke-free laws.

This case study is part of a series highlighting our work with the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use in priority countries.

About Vital Strategies

Vital Strategies is a global health organization that believes every person should be protected by a strong public health system. We work with governments and civil society in more than 70 countries to design and implement evidence-based strategies that tackle their most pressing public health problems. Our goal is to see governments adopt promising interventions at scale as rapidly as possible. To find out more, please visit www.vitalstrategies.org or Twitter @VitalStrat.