

# Effect of cigarette tax increase in combination with mass media campaign on smoking behaviour in Mauritius: Findings from the ITC Survey

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## **Abstract**

**BACKGROUND:** Mauritius has made great strides in adopting evidence-based tobacco control measures, including an increase in its cigarette excise tax and antitobacco mass media (Sponge) campaign. The primary objective of this study is to examine the combined effect of these measures on smoking behaviour.

**METHODS:** This study used longitudinal data from the International Tobacco Control Mauritius Survey, 2009-2011. Waves 1 and 2 were conducted before the tax increase and wave 3 was conducted shortly after the Sponge campaign and 6 months after the cigarette excise tax increase. Generalised estimating equations were used to examine the effects of these two key tobacco control measures on smoking prevalence and the quantity of cigarettes smoked.

**RESULTS:** The results showed that the combination of cigarette tax increase and the Sponge campaign had a significantly negative effect on the prevalence of smoking in Mauritius and the number of cigarettes smoked among continuing smokers. Specifically, the measures significantly reduced the odds of being a smoker (adjusted OR 0.88, 95% CI 0.81 to 0.97). For average daily cigarettes smoked, the measures had a significant reduction in cigarettes per day by about 6% (incidence rate ratios 0.94, 95% CI 0.89 to 0.99).

**CONCLUSIONS:** The combination of policy measures significantly reduced the consumption of cigarettes in Mauritius. While these results are encouraging, these efforts must be part of a sustained effort to further reduce the smoking prevalence in Mauritius.

## **Recommended Citation**

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