

# Level And Trends In Support Among Smokers For Bans On Point-Of-Sale Tobacco Displays: National Survey Data

Richard Edwards\*, Nick Wilson, Deepa Weerasekera, George Thomson  
Department of Public Health, University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand (NZ)  
\* Email: [richard.edwards@otago.ac.nz](mailto:richard.edwards@otago.ac.nz)



## Introduction

A number of countries have introduced comprehensive bans point-of-sale (PoS) tobacco product displays. In New Zealand (NZ) there has been increasing debate in the media and among the public and politicians about a PoS ban, with over 40 relevant media articles during March 2008-February 2009. Some supermarkets have covered tobacco retail displays voluntarily. However, the current government (to date) has opposed the introduction of a ban. This study aimed to determine the levels and recent trends in smokers' attitudes towards a PoS ban on tobacco displays.

## Methods

The NZ arm of the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Survey (ITC Project) uses as its sampling frame participants in the 2006/7 NZ Health Survey (a representative national sample). From this sample we surveyed adult smokers in two survey waves (n=1376 and n=923) one year apart (wave 2 in March 2008/February 2009). Further details of the methods are available in online methods reports.<sup>1</sup> Here we focus on the results for those 923 respondents who participated in both survey waves. All analyses were weighted and adjusted for the complex sample design.

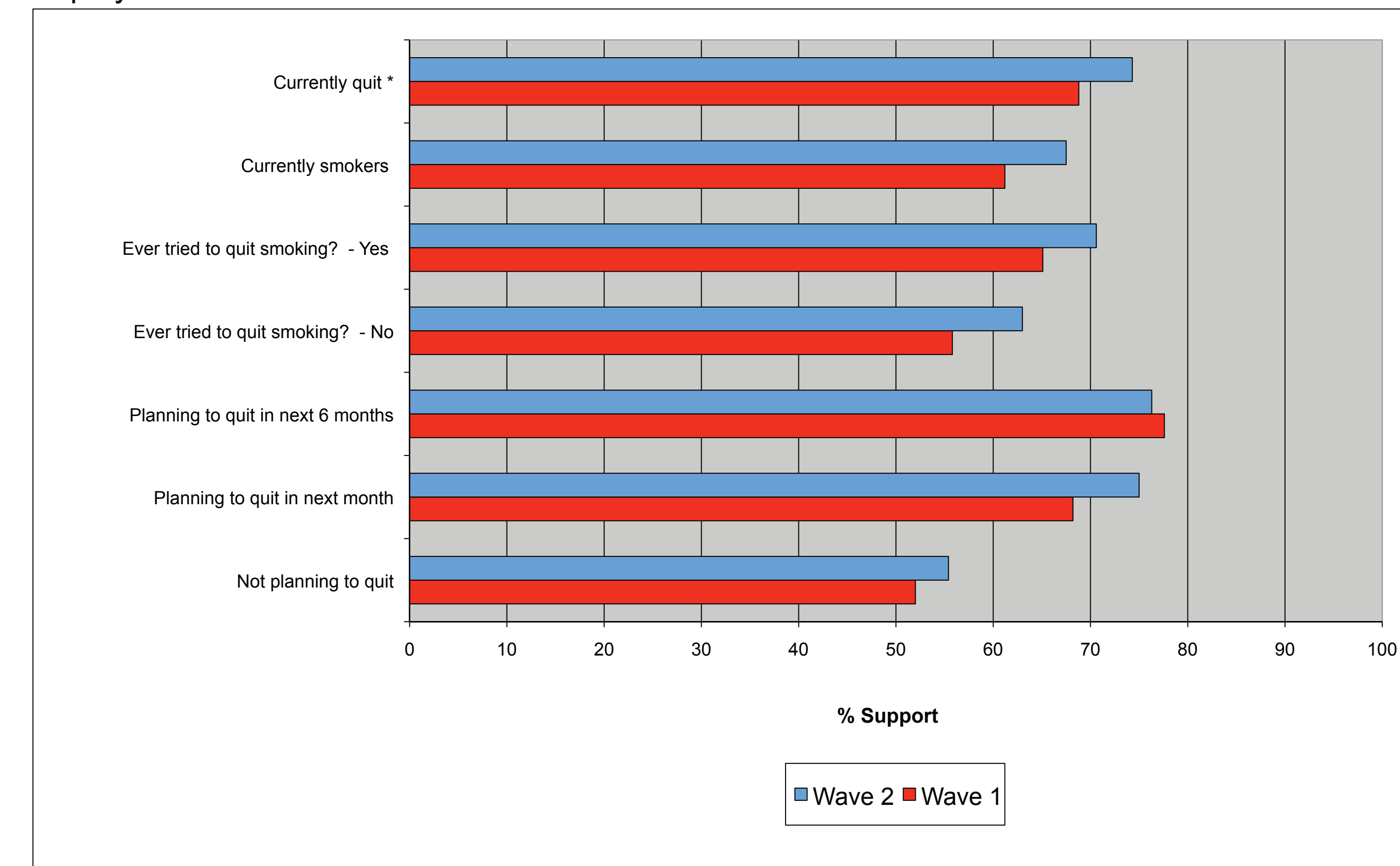
## Results

Most smokers reported seeing "cigarette packages displayed at the place where you usually buy your tobacco" in both waves (60.4% and 63.7%). When asked "do you support complete bans on displays of cigarettes inside shops" there was majority support (ie, % stating "somewhat" or "a lot" of support) that increased from 62.1% to 68.3% over the two waves (p=0.005).

Among wave 2 respondents, there was majority support among all four major ethnic groups: Māori (73.8%), Pacific (76.6%), Asian (79.1%), and European/Other (64.9%). Majority support was also seen within five quintiles of socioeconomic deprivation (small area measure), with the highest support among the most deprived quintile (73.7%).

Support was highest among recently quit smokers (quit since 2006/7 NZ Health Survey), smokers who had tried to quit at least once, and among smokers planning to quit in the next month or six months (figure 1).

Figure: Level of support in two ITC survey waves of smokers for a ban on point-of-sale tobacco displays



\* Currently quit smokers for Wave 1 were those who had quit since the 2006/7 NZ Health Survey and for Wave 2 were those who quit at the time of the Wave 2 survey.

## Examples of under the counter tobacco product storage in Iceland and Thailand



## Conclusions

There was evidence of strong and increasing majority support by NZ smokers for complete bans on PoS displays of cigarettes inside shops over a one-year period. This increase in support coincided with media coverage and public debate of the issue. The higher support from smokers who had recently quit, had a history of quitting or were planning to quit is consistent with other findings which suggest that smokers who have quit recently or actively wish to quit welcome PoS display bans, as they may make it easier for them to stay quit. The findings of a high level support for PoS bans among smokers provides additional support for regulatory action on this persisting loophole in the tobacco marketing restrictions used in this country.

## Acknowledgements

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## Reference

[1] See an *Online Methods Report* by Wilson and 2 reports by Clark at: <http://www.wnmeds.ac.nz/itcproject.html>

## Examples of current tobacco product displays in New Zealand corner shops and convenience stores

