

GATS Objectives

The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) is a global standard for systematically monitoring adult tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) and tracking key tobacco control indicators.

GATS is a nationally representative survey, using a consistent and standard protocol across countries including South Africa. GATS enhances countries' capacity to design, implement and evaluate tobacco control programs. It will also assist countries to fulfill their obligations under the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to generate comparable data within and across countries. WHO developed MPOWER, a technical package of selected demand reduction measures contained in the WHO FCTC that include:



- Monitor tobacco use & prevention policies
- Protect people from tobacco smoke
- Offer help to quit tobacco use
- Warn about the dangers of tobacco
- Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, & sponsorship
- Raise taxes on tobacco

GATS Methodology

GATS uses a global standardized methodology. It includes information on respondents' background characteristics, tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), electronic cigarette use, cessation, secondhand smoke, economics, media, and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions towards tobacco use. In South Africa, GATS was conducted in 2021 as a household survey of persons 15 years of age or older by South African Medical Research Council, under the coordination of the National Department of Health. A multi-stage, geographically clustered sample design was used to produce nationally representative data. A total of 7,245 households were sampled and one individual was randomly selected from each participating household to complete the survey. Survey information was collected electronically by using handheld devices. There were a total of 6,311 completed individual interviews with an overall response rate of 91.5%.

GATS Highlights

TOBACCO USE

- 29.4% overall (12.7 million adults), 41.7% of men, and 17.9% of women currently used tobacco.
- 25.8% overall (11.1 million adults), 41.2% of men, and 11.5% of women currently smoked tobacco.
- 4.3% overall (1.8 million adults), 1.1% of men, and 7.2% of women currently used smokeless tobacco.

CESSATION

- 65.7% of current smokers planned to or were thinking about quitting smoking.
- 40.5% made a quit attempt in the past 12 months.
- 42.9% of smokers who visited a healthcare provider in the past 12 months were advised to quit smoking.

SECONDHAND SMOKE

- 11.2% of adults who worked indoors (1.2 million adults) were exposed to tobacco smoke in enclosed areas at their workplace.
- 18.0% of adults (7.7 million adults) were exposed to tobacco smoke inside their homes.
- 10.8% of adults (1.1 million adults) were exposed to tobacco smoke when visiting restaurants.

ECONOMICS

- The median amount spent on 20 manufactured cigarettes was 24.7 (South African Rand).
- The median monthly expenditure on manufactured cigarettes was 263.1 (South African Rand).

MEDIA

- 30.5% of adults noticed anti-cigarette smoking information on the television or radio.
- 22.3% of adults noticed tobacco products advertising or promotions in stores where tobacco is sold.
- 29.9% of adults noticed any tobacco advertisements, promotions, or sporting event sponsorship.

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES & PERCEPTIONS

- 92.9% of adults believed smoking causes serious illness.
- 92.9% of adults believed breathing other peoples' smoke causes serious illness in non-smokers.
- 88.4% support ban on smoking in indoor workplaces and public places
- 73.0% of adults support increasing taxes on tobacco products.

TOBACCO USE

TOBACCO USE (smoked, smokeless, and/or heated tobacco products)

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Current tobacco users	29.4	41.7	17.9

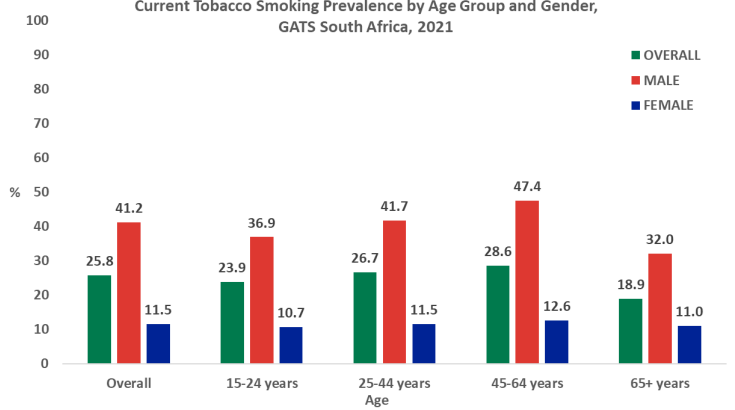
TOBACCO SMOKING

Current tobacco smokers	25.8	41.2	11.5
Daily tobacco smokers	21.2	35.1	8.3
Current cigarette smokers ¹	23.9	39.1	9.7
Daily cigarette smokers ¹	20.5	34.0	7.9
Former daily tobacco smokers ² (among all adults)	2.7	3.8	1.7
Former daily tobacco smokers ^{2,3} (among ever daily smokers)	10.6	9.2	15.4

SMOKELESS TOBACCO USE

Current smokeless tobacco users	4.3	1.1	7.2
Daily smokeless tobacco users	2.7	0.3	4.9

Current Tobacco Smoking Prevalence by Age Group and Gender, GATS South Africa, 2021



ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE USE

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Ever heard of electronic cigarettes	36.1	45.8	27.1
Ever used electronic cigarettes	6.2	9.3	3.4
Current user of electronic cigarettes	2.2	3.8	0.7

CESSATION

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Smokers who made a quit attempt in past 12 months ⁴	40.5	40.7	39.7
Current smokers who planned to or were thinking about quitting ⁵	65.7	66.5	63.2
Smokers advised to quit by a health care provider in past 12 months ^{4,6}	42.9	42.5	43.8

SECONDHAND SMOKE

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Adults exposed to tobacco smoke at the workplace ^{7§}	11.2	13.7	8.4
Adults exposed to tobacco smoke at home at least monthly	18.0	22.1	14.1
Adults exposed to tobacco smoke inside: ^{8§}			
Government buildings or offices	5.8	7.8	3.7
Healthcare facilities	3.8	5.6	2.9
Restaurants	10.8	13.4	8.2
Bars/taverns/pubs, shebeens, or night clubs	74.4	75.0	72.3
Universities	16.0	12.6	18.6
Public transportation	3.1	3.6	2.7

ECONOMICS

Median amount spent on 20 manufactured cigarettes (South African Rand) 24.7

Median monthly expenditure on manufactured cigarettes (South African Rand) 263.1

Cost of 100 packs of manufactured cigarettes as a percentage of per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) [2021]⁹ 2.4%

MEDIA

ANTI-TOBACCO WARNINGS

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT SMOKERS (%)	NON-SMOKERS (%)
Adults who noticed anti-cigarette smoking information on the television or radio [§]	30.5	31.3	30.2

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Current smokers who thought about quitting because of a warning label [§]	35.6	37.0	30.7

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Current smokeless tobacco users who thought about quitting because of a warning label [§]	25.7	16.5	27.1

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT (SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)	NON-(SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)
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TOBACCO INDUSTRY ADVERTISING

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT (SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)	NON-(SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)
Adults who noticed tobacco advertising or promotions in stores where tobacco products are sold ^{10,§}	22.3	27.6	20.4

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Adults who noticed any tobacco advertisements, promotions, or sporting event sponsorship [§]	29.9	34.4	28.4

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES & PERCEPTIONS

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT SMOKERS (%)	NON-SMOKERS (%)
Adults who believed smoking causes serious illness	92.9	91.5	93.4

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT (SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)	NON-(SMOKERS/TOBACCO USERS) (%)
Adults who believed breathing other peoples' smoke causes serious illness in nonsmokers	92.9	91.5	93.4

	OVERALL (%)	CURRENT SMOKELESS USERS (%)	NON-SMOKELESS USERS (%)
Adults who believed smokeless tobacco use causes serious illness	79.9	81.8	79.9

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Adults who support the law prohibiting smoking in indoor workplaces and public places	88.4	85.0	91.5

	OVERALL (%)	MEN (%)	WOMEN (%)
Adults who support increasing taxes on tobacco products	73.0	65.8	79.7

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¹ Includes manufactured, kretek, and hand-rolled cigarettes. ² Current non-smokers. ³ Quit ratio for daily smoking. ⁴ Includes current smokers and former smokers who quit in the past 12 months. ⁵ Planning or thinking about quitting within the next month, 12 months, or someday. ⁶ Among those who visited a health care provider in past 12 months. ⁷ Among those who work outside of the home who usually work indoors or both indoors and outdoors. ⁸ Among those who visited the place in the past 30 days. ⁹ Estimated 2021 per capita GDP = 101,545.26 South African Rand, provided by International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook database accessed on 09 February 2022. ¹⁰ Includes those who noticed any advertisements or signs promoting tobacco in stores where tobacco products are sold; tobacco products at sale prices; or free gifts or discount offers on other products when buying tobacco products.

§ During the past 30 days.

NOTE: Current use refers to daily and less than daily use. Adults refer to persons aged 15 years or older. Data have been weighted to be nationally representative of all non-institutionalized men and women aged 15 years and older. Percentages reflect the prevalence of each indicator in each group, not the distribution across groups.

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The findings and conclusions in this fact sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the CDC.