

**GLOBAL YOUTH TOBACCO SURVEY
(GYTS)
2009
Albania**

**National Report
(Final Draft)**

Executive summary

This study aims at providing national representative data on smoking prevalence among Albanian schoolchildren. It also reveals adolescents' knowledge and attitude, related to tobacco use, impact of media messages, exposure to smoking and ETS, access and availability of tobacco products for minors and health education on tobacco use at school.

Subjects and methods:

The school-based national and regional representative survey was administered in 2009, using two stage cluster sampling method. The survey covers 5493 respondents in the age of 13-15. The data was collected by a European standardized questionnaire. The survey was conducted within the frameworks of Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS).

Results:

We have got the following basic data, permitting us to have a comprehensive picture on smoking prevalence among schoolchildren. It is the first and unprecedented study for Albania, giving us important indicators, a guidance for the future activity, aiming at prevention and curbing of the tobacco epidemic in young generation. According to the study, 11, 5 % of schoolchildren are current smokers (17.6% boys and 6.3% girls). Exposure to SHS (second hand smoke) is also a very important factor for Albania, where the anti-smoking legislation is making its first steps and understanding of its dangers is not dominating. The survey, related to this important problem, gave the following picture: four out of ten live at homes where others smoke.

64.5% of schoolchildren reporting exposure to second hand smoke in places outside the home. It shows that this part of the law is not being implemented.

Tobacco advertising and promotion is a serious instrument for promotion of tobacco products and their consumption among young people.

Due to a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising in Albania, 7.8% of students actually say that they are still seeing pro-tobacco messages in billboards, but this figure in 2004 was 68.1%, which shows that this part of the law is being good implemented. And the last important result of the study: (82.5%) of schoolchildren were not refused when buying tobacco products despite their age.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Our study has showed prevalence of smoking among 13-15 year old children in Albania, although in comparison with the smoking prevalence among young people in the European region as a whole (27-30%) it is lower, and compared to data of 2004 and 2009, there is increase of prevalence. The survey is showing how students are exposed to smoke both at home and in public places.

This means that our teenagers, despite some tobacco control measures initiated in the country, being exposed to smoke of their relatives from their childhood (probably, since they were born), are impacted by the unstoppable advertising and promotion actions of tobacco companies, and so they become smokers. Thus we can say that there are some prerequisites for the escalation of tobacco epidemic.

This part of the law is weakly implemented and remains a challenge of the state structure to improve it.

Tobacco use in Albania

Tobacco consumption is one of the main problems of the public health in Albania. Traditionally, Albanians have used tobacco as hand-rolled and manufactured cigarettes. Absolute majority of smokers have been men. At present more than 90% of all smokers use cigarettes. According to the study “Assessment and valuation of smoking prevalence among adult population [+15 years] and population subgroups in Albania and other indicators related to tobacco use” October 1999 – May 2000, 39% of the adult population in Albania (+15 years) are daily smokers; among whom 60% are men and 18% are women. Among men, such a situation with tobacco-addiction provides high rates of those diseases, for which tobacco use is the main risk factor.

Unfortunately, up to the 2004 (before the GYTS), there have not been national data on smoking prevalence among teenagers. Accordance to GYTS 2004 8.5% of students and (11.5%) in 2009 were current smokers. There was a significant difference in smoking prevalence among boys and girls. The survey showed prevalence of smoking among 13-15 years old children in Albania, although in comparison with the smoking prevalence among young people in the European region as a whole (27-30%) was quite lower. But the facts showed how children were exposed to smoke almost everywhere, how highly accessible were tobacco products for children.

Tobacco control in Albania

Legislation

Framework Convention of Tobacco Control (FCTC) in On April, 2006, the Albanian Parliament ratified the FCTC.

Ratification of FCTC means taking legislative, executive, and administrative or other measures, within the terms of the convention. In this setting, is framed the Albanian law “On health protection from tobacco products”, approved in Albanian Parliament in November 6, 2006, after intense consultations among various experts. The law reflects the convention dispositions for tobacco control. The law has come to force and has been legalized in May 26, 2007.

In accordance with this Law in May 26, 2007 we have:

Media

Advertising and promotion of tobacco products, by means of written media, television and radio, services of information societies is forbidden. Advertising and promotion of any other kind and form on tobacco products. is forbidden.

It is prohibited, for advertising purposes, the publication of photos, drawings, act..., which show persons who smoke, and of images that create a wrong impression to the public about the characteristics of tobacco products, the effects of their use in the health, and dangers and/harm.

Technical books, magazines and other professional publication on tobacco. Do not constitute advertising and promotion of tobacco products.

Sponsoring of radio and television programs and other activity by companies that have as object of their activity the production, import or trade of tobacco products and when this sponsoring has as its purpose promotion or advertising of tobacco products is forbidden

Smoke free areas

Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke is regulated by the Law of Republic of Albania “On health protection from tobacco products”.

Smoking is forbidden in: working environments, health institutions, which the exception of mental health institutions (only for patients), educational institutions, means of public transport, commercial environments, bars, restaurants, discos, and night clubs, other public environments.

In the above environments/ institutions, an internal regulation is issued, where the prohibition of smoking tobacco in these environments is emphasized and it is clearly defined the person responsible in cases of violating this prohibition by anybody.

The owner or administrator of environments, or the person appointed by them, is responsible for placing visible signs that show smoking in these environments is prohibited, as well for removing and not permitting to place ashtrays in these environments.

Accessibility and Distribution of tobacco products

Accessibility and distribution are regulated in Albania, according to the’ on health protection from tobacco products”. (In force since May 26, 2007). The law prohibits selling single or unpacked cigarettes, selling to and by youngsters (before the age of 18), all forms of self-service including via vending machines (with the exception of the places, where the entrance of youngsters is prohibited), distribution of free samples. It is prohibited the retail sale of tobacco products non-packaged or with damaged packaging. It is prohibited the free of charge offer of tobacco products by subjects that produce, import or trade them.

Tobacco taxes

In Albania, according to the Albanian Law on Presumptive Tax for Tobacco Products, there is a unified tax for tobacco products, including three types of payments for imported tobacco products: a state duty, added value duty, and excise-duty tax; for domestic tobacco products: 2 types of payment – added-value duty and excise-duty tax.

Labeling tobacco products

According to the Albanian legislation “On health protection from tobacco products”, the tobacco products to be sold on the territory of the country, must be labeled the following way: messages must be placed on packets in national language; the sold package on its widest sides must contain a health warnings, and one of the narrow sides must have an inscription indicating the levels of tar and nicotine. The health warning texts shall occupy no less than 50 % of the front and back panels of the consumer packaging (cigarette pack) used in the wholesale and retail trade. Form and text of messages are defined by the Albanian Intersectorial Committee (ICHPTP) and are reformulated periodically.

In boxes and packages that contain tobacco products should also appear written in Albanian language:

Name of product and address of producer, number of parts of tobacco products in the box and package,
Quantity of nicotine, tar and carbon monoxide in the smoke

It is prohibited to write on boxes or packages of tobacco product expression such as: “of low tar content”, “light”, “ultra light”, “soft” or terms, signs, photos, drawings and other similar elements that aim to create the wrong impression that a tobacco product is less harmful for the health than other products.

The Ministry of Health has the obligation to inform the public on the levels of tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide in tobacco products, on their influence on the health, as well as on every effect that causes or is believed to cause addiction to tobacco products.

Policy and Interventions

In this decade, the tobacco control has become one of priorities for the Government of the country. The Ministry of Health coordinates tobacco control programs on the governmental level.

In 2007 an Intersectorial Committee for protection against tobacco products was established which develops and reorganize the tobacco control policies in the country.

The ICHPTP is responsible for:

- orienting of policies and strategy for health protection of the public from tobacco products
- revision of acts in force for health protection of the public from tobacco products and proposal for improvement of the law
- proposal of programs and projects in order to ensure reduction the use of tobacco products and health protection of citizens, monitoring and assessing of these programs and projects
- orientation of sources toward programs and projects that aim at reduction of use of tobacco products and health protection from them.
- Ensuring the cooperation with institutions, governmental and nongovernmental, within and outside the country, on policies of tobacco control.
- Presentation of annual reports to the Parliamentary Commission of Health.

In 2009-2010 the MoH conducted a massive campaign in all district of the country including high schools and elementary schools.

WNTD is always being celebrated in Albania in collaboration with MoH and WHO

Efforts are being made in collaboration with WHO to improve the anti-tobacco law in order to make it more implantable that till now.

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey – objectives and goals

In 1998, the WHO in collaboration with the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and UNICEF, initiated the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) project to enhance tobacco surveillance among young people. So far the survey has been completed in more than 100 countries, including European ones. Albania with CIS and some other countries from the European region joined the Survey in the 2004. In 2009 GYTS in Albania was repeated.

The GYTS provides a mechanism by which countries can monitor tobacco use among 13-15 year old young people and guide the implementation and evaluation of tobacco control and prevention programs. It aims to understanding and evaluating students' attitudes, awareness and behavior, related to tobacco use and its health impact, including cessation, environmental tobacco smoke, media and advertising, minors' access and school curriculum.

The GYTS attempts to address the following issues:

- Determination of the tobacco use level
- Estimation of the age when cigarette use usually starts
- Estimation of susceptibility of becoming cigarette smokers
- Exposure to tobacco advertising
- Identification of key intervening variables, such as attitudes and beliefs on behavioral norms with regard to tobacco use among young people which can be used in

prevention programs.

- Assessment of prevention programs for schools and analysis of subjective opinions on such interventions.

Methods

Sampling

The 2009 Albania GYTS was a school-based survey with a two-stage cluster sample design to produce a national representative sample in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades, or classes (i.e. grades, containing most of the pupils aged between 13 and 15).

The first-stage sampling frame consisted of all schools containing seventh, eighth and ninth grades. Schools were selected, taking into account school enrolment sizes. The second sampling stage consisted of systematic equal probability sampling (with a random start) of classes from each school that participated in the survey. All classes in the selected schools were included in the sampling frame. All students in the selected classes were eligible to participate in the survey.

There was a regional stratification for sampling as well: 20 schools were selected from the capital city (Tirana) (1956 students), from other urban areas (other city's) (1647 students) and from rural areas (1890 students). Altogether 5493 students were sampled from 60 schools. Overall response rates can be seen in the table below:

OVERALL RESPONSE RATES:

Schools - 100.0% 59 of the 59 sampled schools participated.

Classes- 100.0% 196 of the 196 sampled classes participated.

Students- 86.9% 4,771 of the 5,493 sampled students completed usable questionnaires.

Overall response rate - $100.0\% * 100.0\% * 86.9\% = 86.9\%$

	All schools	Tirana	Other Urban	Rural
Schools (%)	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %
Schools (N)	59	20	19	20
Students (%)	86.9%	87.9%	87.4%	86.2%
Students (N)	5493	1956	1647	1890

The school response rate was 100 % in 2004 and 100% in 2009; the class response rate was 100.0% in 2004 and 100% in 2009; the student response rate was 91.05% in 2004 and 86.9 % in 2009; and the overall response rate was 91.05 % and 86.9 %, respectively.

Weighting

Weight has been associated with each record to reflect the likelihood of sampling each student and to reduce bias by compensating for different patterns of no response. The weight used for estimation is given by:

$$W = W_1 * W_2 * f_1 * f_2 * f_3 * f_4$$

W_1 = the inverse of the probability of selecting the school

W_2 = the inverse of the probability of selecting the classroom within the school

f_1 = a school-level non-response adjustment factor calculated by school size category (Small, medium, large)

f_2 = a class adjustment factor calculated by school

f_3 = a student-level no response adjustment factor calculated by class

f_4 = a post stratification adjustment factor calculated by gender and grade.

The weighted results can be used to make important inferences concerning tobacco use risk behaviors of students in seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth grade.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of two main parts: core questions (developed especially for the European region), and 19 country-specific questions on the possible background factors, associated with tobacco use. Core questions focus on seven topics:

- Prevalence
- Minor's access
- Cessation
- Knowledge and attitudes
- Tobacco-related school-curriculum
- Media and advertising
- Environmental tobacco smoke.

The questionnaire was translated from English into Albanian and than was translated back into English by another translator to ensure linguistic quality.

Data Collection and data entering

A letter of support for the GYTS was sent from the Ministry of Education to all headmasters of the 60 selected schools to ensure their participation and cooperation.

Survey procedures were designed to protect the students' privacy by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation. The self-administered questionnaire was administered in the classroom. Students recorded their responses directly on an answer sheet that could be optically scanned by a computer.

Regarding the age of the students during this study we found out that since there is not a fixed age for the start of the school (6-7 years), there is the problem of the accurate age in the second degree of the high schools.

Another reason is the big movement of the population during the transition. There are also students who repeat the class, so we have students older than 15 years. This was seen more in some areas.

For the 2009 Albanian GYTS a total of 4,771 questionnaires were completed in 59 schools. The student response rate was 86.9%. SUDAAN and Epi Info (version 3.5.1) were the statistical software packages used for the complex sampling design and weighting factors in the data set, to calculate standard errors and prevalence estimates.

Percentage prevalence is described in this report giving the 95% confidence intervals (CI) for the estimates. Only statistically significant differences are mentioned in the final result. Statistical differences are determined by comparing the range of the 95% CI-s for the estimates. If the ranges for the 95%CI do not overlap then the differences are statistically significant.

Results

Prevalence's

Table 1: Prevalence – Albania 2004 and 2009 (13-15 Years ONLY) Percent of students who ever smoked cigarettes, ever smokers who first smoked cigarettes before age 10, current cigarette smokers and current users of other tobacco products and never smokers likely to initiate smoking in the next year.

Prevalence	2004			2009		
	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl
Ever smoked cigarettes	31.3 (27.7 -35.1)	40.6 (35.8 – 45.5)	23.9. (20.5 - 27.6)	50.3 (45.9 – 54.8)	63.6 (60.3 - 70.5)	37.4 (32.1 - 42.9)
Ever Smokers, first smoked cigarettes before age 10	25.3 (21.2-29.9)	28.5 (23.8-33.8)	20.9 (14.1- 29.9)	33.2 (28.5 - 38.2)	34.4 (27.9 - 41.5)	31.5 (27.6 -35.6)
Current cigarette smoker	8.5 (6.8 – 10.5)	11.9 (9.0 - 15.5)	5.8 (4.5 – 7.5)	11.5 (9.6- 13.7)	17.6 (14.4 - 21.2)	6.3 (5.1 - 7.9)
Current user of other tobacco products	8.9 (7.3 - 10.7)	11.5 (9.0 - 14.6)	6.7 (5.4 – 8.2)	2.9 (2.3 – 3.7)	4.2 (3.3 - 5.3)	1.9 (1.3 - 2.8)
Never smokers likely to initiate smoking in the next year	14.0 (11.4 - 17.1)	15.5 (12.2 - 19.3)	13.1 (10.3 – 16.6)	13.7 (11.6-16.2)	15.2 (11.8 – 19.2)	13.0 (10.6 – 15.9)

About one third of total students (31.3 %) in 2004, more than 5 in ten of total students (50.3 %) in 2009 are significant increase in those who have ever smoked. Same situation is boys,

And girls) respectively, by (40.6% to 63.6 %), and (23.9 % to 37.4 %).

Significant decrease in those who used tobacco other than cigarettes in the past 30 days (total, boys, and girls) respectively, by (8.9 % to 2.9 %), (11.5 % to 4.2 %), and (6.7 % to 1.9 %)

Almost one third of students ever smokers initiated smoking before 10 years old. (2009) There is no significant difference between boys and girls with regards to initiating smoking before 10 years of age (boys = 34.4, girls = 31.5). (Table 1). More than 1 in 10 students are current smokers, and analyzing data according with genders appears a significantly higher percentage of current smokers in boys (17.6%) comparing with girls (6.3 %) in 2009.

Table 2: Factors influencing tobacco use – ALBANIA 2004 and 2009 (13-15 Years ONLY)

Factors	2004			2009		
	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl
EXPOSURE TO SMOKE						
One or more parents smoke	46.3 (42.9 - 49.7)	46.0 (40.9 - 51.2)	46.0 (42.7 - 49.4)	39.3 (37.5 - 41.2)	37.6 (34.7 - 40.7)	40.9 (38.8 - 43.1)
All or most best friends smoke	3.7 (2.8 - 4.9)	4.7 (3.3 - 6.8)	2.7 (1.9 - 3.8)	7.1 (5.3 - 9.3)	9.0 (6.8 - 11.9)	5.4 (3.8 - 7.5)
Exposed to smoke in public places	80.6 (78.0 - 83.0)	79.4 (76.3 - 82.2)	81.6 (77.9 - 84.7)	64.5 (62.1 - 66.9)	65.3 (62.4 - 68.2)	63.9 (61.1 - 66.7)
In favor of banning smoking in public places	93.7 (92.9 - 94.4)	93.1 (91.7 - 94.2)	94.4 (93.1 - 95.4)	NA	NA	NA
SCHOOL						
During this school year, were taught in any classes about the dangers of smoking	65.7 (62.0 - 69.2)	63.1 (58.0 - 68.0)	67.9 (64.3 - 71.3)	70.4 (65.8 - 74.7)	67.9 (62.9 - 72.5)	72.6 (67.8 - 76.8)

MEDIA/ADVERTISING						
During the past month saw any anti-smoking media messages	83.6 (79.1 - 87.3)	85.7 (81.8 - 88.9)	81.8 (76.1 - 86.4)	65.7 (59.4 - 71.5)	66.8 (60.2 - 72.7)	64.8 (58.3 - 70.8)
During the past month saw any advertisement for cigarettes on billboards	68.1 (63.9 - 72.0)	69.1 (65.1 - 72.9)	67.1 (61.4 - 72.3)	16.9 (10.7 - 25.7)	17.4 (10.5 - 27.6)	16.4 (10.6 - 24.6)
During the past month saw any advertisements or promotions for cigarettes in newspapers or magazines	63.2 (59.1 - 67.1)	62.0 (57.7 - 66.1)	64.1 (59.7 - 68.3)	7.8 (5.6 - 10.6)	8.2 (5.9 - 11.1)	7.4 (5.1 - 10.8)
Have an object (t-shirt, pen, backpack, etc) with a cigarette brand logo on it	17.7 (16.4 - 19.1)	19.4 (17.6 - 21.3)	16.2 (14.1 - 18.5)	16.6 (15.2 - 18.2)	20.4 (18.3 - 22.7)	13.3 (11.5 - 15.4)
CESSATION						
Current smokers who want to stop smoking now	68.0 (57.8 - 76.8)	71.9 (60.1 - 81.3)	60.9 (43.8 - 75.8)	52.5 (42.1 - 62.6)	57.3 (45.9 - 68.0)	40.3 (26.3 - 56.2)
Current smokers who always feel like having a cigarette first thing in the morning	1.1 (0.2 - 4.7)	2.0 (0.4 - 8.9)	0.0	7.5 (4.7 - 11.7)	10.2 (6.5 - 15.5)	2.0 (0.5 - 8.0)
ACCESS						
Current smokers who usually buy their cigarettes in a store were not refused purchase because of their age	87.4 (77.9 - 93.2)	84.7 (73.1 - 91.9)	*	82.5 (73.8 - 88.7)	81.9 (72.4 - 88.6)	84.5 (67.2 - 93.5)
Ever offered a "free" cigarette by a cigarette company representative	9.9 (8.5 - 11.4)	12.4 (10.2 - 15.1)	7.9 (6.7 - 9.3)	8.5 (7.1 - 10.1)	10.7 (8.6 - 13.3)	6.6 (5.2 - 8.3)

* cell size is less than 35

Significant increase overall for those reporting that all or most friends smoke (3.7 % in 2004 to 7.1 % in 2009).

Significant decrease (overall, among boys, and among girls) of those reporting exposure to second hand smoke in places outside the home, respectively from (80.6 % in 2004 to 64.5 % in 2009), (79.4 % to 65.3 % and 81.6 % to 63.9 %)

Significant decrease (overall, among boys, and among girls) of those reporting that they had seen anti-tobacco media message in the past 30 days, respectively from 83.6 % in 2004 to 65.7 % in 2009 and from 85.7% to 66.8% and from 81.8 % to 64.8 %.

Significant decrease (overall, among boys, and among girls) of those reporting that they had seen a pro-cigarette ad on a billboard in the past 30 days, respectively 68.1% to 16.9%, 69.1 % to 17.4% and 67.1 % to 16.4 %.

Significant decrease (overall, among boys, and among girls) of those reporting that they had seen a pro-cigarette ad in newspapers/magazines in the past 30 days, respectively 63.2 % to 7.8 %, 62.0 % to 8.2 and 64.1 % to 7.4 % 2004 to 2009.

Almost 1 in 5 students have an object (t-shirt, pen, backpack, etc) with a cigarette brand logo on it.

Table 3: Percent of students who had ever smoked cigarettes, percent of students who ever smoked that first tried a cigarette before age 10, and percent of students who had never smoked that were susceptible to start smoking in next year, ALBANIA – GYTS, 2009.

State	Ever smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs	Ever smokers who initiated smoking before age 10	Percent never smokers likely to initiate smoking within a year
ALBANIA	50.3 (45.9 - 54.8)	33.2 (28.5 - 38.2)	13.7 (11.6 – 16.2)
Boy	65.6 (60.3 - 70.5)	34.4 (27.9 - 41.5)	15.2 (11.8 – 19.2)
Girl	37.4 (32.1 - 42.9)	31.5 (27.6 – 35.6)	13.0 (10.6 – 15.9)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	55.4 (43.9 - 66.4)	34.3 (26.7 - 42.9)	18.4 (16.1 - 21.0)
Boy	70.9 (57.4 - 81.5)	35.0 (24.4 - 47.2)	19.0 (12.3 - 28.2)
Girl	42.8 (30.2 - 56.5)	33.4 (26.9 - 40.6)	18.2 (14.8 - 22.2)
ALBANIA - RURAL	43.8 (38.5 - 49.2)	33.6 (24.7 - 43.9)	10.0 (6.8 - 14.5)
Boy	59.5 (51.7 - 66.9)	35.4 (23.5 - 49.4)	13.1 (8.9 - 19.0)
Girl	29.9 (24.2 - 36.4)	30.5 (23.8 - 38.2)	8.4 (5.3 - 13.0)
ALBANIA - TIRANA	57.7 (52.6 - 62.6)	29.2 (24.5 - 34.4)	15.9 (11.7 - 21.1)
Boy	71.3 (63.9 - 77.7)	30.2 (23.1 - 38.3)	14.5 (9.0 - 22.6)
Girl	45.4 (40.1 - 50.8)	28.3 (24.6 - 32.3)	16.6 (10.9 - 24.3)

Proportion of those who have ever smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs was significantly higher in Tirana (57.7 %) than in Rural (43.8%). Boys (65.6%) were significantly more likely to have ever smoked than girls (37.4%).

More than 3 in 10 ever smokers initiated smoking before 10 years old.

More than 1 in ten students never smokers likely to initiate smoking within a year. Significantly higher in boys than rural girls.

Table 4 : Percent of students who were current cigarette smokers, current users of tobacco products other than cigarettes, and percent of current smokers who were dependent on tobacco products, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Current cigarette smoker	Currently use other tobacco products	Percent of current cigarette smokers who feel like having a cigarette first thing in the morning
ALBANIA	11.5 (9.6 - 13.7)	2.9 (2.3 - 3.7)	7.5 (4.7 - 11.7)
Boy	17.6 (14.4 - 21.2)	4.2 (3.3 - 5.3)	10.2 (6.5 - 15.5)
Girl	6.3 (5.1 - 7.9)	1.9 (1.3 - 2.8)	2.0 (0.5 - 8.0)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	13.0 (9.0 - 18.4)	3.8 (2.7 - 5.2)	9.0 (4.8 - 16.3)
Boy	19.1 (12.3 - 28.3)	5.0 (3.6 - 6.9)	12.9 (7.3 - 21.6)
Girl	7.9 (5.4 - 11.5)	2.8 (1.6 - 4.8)	*
ALBANIA - RURAL	7.8 (5.6 - 10.9)	2.3 (1.4 - 3.8)	5.3 (0.9 - 26.1)
Boy	13.4 (9.7 - 18.3)	3.7 (2.3 - 5.9)	7.0 (1.3 - 30.7)
Girl	3.1 (1.7 - 5.8)	1.1 (0.4 - 3.2)	*
ALBANIA - TIRANA	19.1 (15.4 - 23.3)	2.6 (1.4 - 4.7)	6.8 (3.3 - 13.4)
Boy	26.9 (20.9 - 33.9)	3.5 (1.8 - 6.8)	9.0 (3.9 - 19.2)
Girl	12.2 (9.6 - 15.5)	1.7 (0.8 - 3.7)	2.7 (0.5 - 12.4)

* cell size less than 35

More than 1 in 10 students are current smokers, and analyzing data according with genders appears a significantly higher percentage of current smokers in boys (17.6%) comparing with girls (6.3%). Only a small percentage of students (2.9%) used other tobacco products than cigarettes with no significantly between genders.

Almost 1 in ten students of current cigarette smokers, who feel like having a cigarette first thing in the morning, have differences between genders.

Table 5: Percent of students exposed to smoke at home, exposed to smoke in public, and supported banning smoking in public places, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Percent exposed to smoke from others at home	Percent exposed to smoke from others in public places	Percent who think smoking should be banned in public places
ALBANIA	49.7 (46.5 - 52.9)	64.5 (62.1 - 66.9)	NA
Boy	48.6 (44.2 - 53.1)	65.3 (62.4 - 68.2)	NA
Girl	50.9 (47.7 - 54.1)	63.9 (61.1 - 66.7)	NA
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	50.2 (43.2 - 57.1)	67.7 (62.7 - 72.4)	NA
Boy	47.8 (38.2 - 57.5)	69.5 (62.5 - 75.8)	NA
Girl	52.1 (45.5 - 58.6)	66.3 (61.2 - 71.0)	NA
ALBANIA - RURAL	50.0 (45.4 - 54.5)	60.8 (56.6 - 64.9)	NA
Boy	50.9 (44.4 - 57.4)	60.9 (56.6 - 64.9)	NA
Girl	49.5 (45.0 - 54.0)	60.9 (55.4 - 66.2)	NA
ALBANIA - TIRANA	47.8 (43.1 - 52.5)	68.0 (64.8 - 71.2)	NA
Boy	43.2 (39.4 - 47.0)	69.3 (64.2 - 73.9)	NA
Girl	52.0 (44.1 - 59.7)	67.0 (62.8 - 70.9)	NA

NA – Data not available

SHS exposure is high – half the students live in homes where others smoke, (49.7 %) and almost two thirds (64.5 %) of the students are exposed to smoke around others outside of the home.

Table 6: Percent of students who were taught dangers of smoking, discussed reasons why people their age use tobacco, taught effects of using tobacco, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Percent taught dangers of smoking tobacco	Percent discussed reasons why people their age smoke tobacco	Percent taught about the effects of smoking tobacco
ALBANIA	70.4 (65.8 - 74.7)	56.8 (51.0 - 62.3)	55.5 (49.8 - 61.1)
Boy	67.9 (62.9 - 72.5)	54.2 (47.5 - 60.8)	55.0 (49.3 - 60.6)
Girl	72.6 (67.8 - 76.8)	58.9 (53.6 - 64.0)	55.9 (49.9 - 61.8)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	67.6 (58.0 - 75.9)	53.0 (41.0 - 64.7)	49.3 (39.6 - 59.1)
Boy	64.5 (54.2 - 73.6)	49.7 (35.4 - 64.0)	48.2 (37.7 - 58.9)
Girl	70.1 (60.2 - 78.5)	55.7 (45.2 - 65.6)	50.4 (40.9 - 59.9)
ALBANIA - RURAL	75.0 (68.0 - 80.9)	61.3 (53.3 - 68.8)	63.1 (53.3 - 71.9)
Boy	71.4 (63.8 - 78.0)	58.8 (49.6 - 67.4)	62.0 (53.4 - 70.0)
Girl	78.1 (71.3 - 83.7)	63.6 (55.3 - 71.1)	63.7 (52.6 - 73.5)
ALBANIA - TIRANA	63.1 (58.2 - 67.6)	52.1 (46.7 - 57.4)	48.0 (42.7 - 53.2)
Boy	64.6 (58.3 - 70.5)	50.8 (44.2 - 57.4)	49.3 (41.6 - 57.1)
Girl	61.9 (57.7 - 65.9)	53.3 (47.1 - 59.4)	46.8 (40.8 - 52.8)

More than 7 in ten students (70.4 %) had been taught in class, during the past year, about the dangers of smoking.

More than 1 in two students (56.8 %), had discussed in class, during the past year, reasons why people their age smoke.

More than 1 in two students (55.5%) had been taught in class, during the past year, the effect of tobacco use.

Table 7: Percent of students who saw ads on billboards, saw ads in newspapers, and had an object with a tobacco company logo on it, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Percent who saw ads for cigarettes on billboards in the past month	Percent who saw ads for cigarettes in newspapers or magazines in the past month	Percent who have an object with a cigarette or tobacco logo on it
ALBANIA	16.9 (10.7 - 25.7)	7.8 (5.6 - 10.6)	16.6 (15.2 - 18.2)
Boy	17.4 (10.5 - 27.6)	8.2 (5.9 - 11.1)	20.4 (18.3 - 22.7)
Girl	16.4 (10.6 - 24.6)	7.4 (5.1 - 10.8)	13.3 (11.5 - 15.4)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	33.2 (18.3 - 52.6)	12.4 (7.5 - 19.9)	18.7 (15.9 - 21.9)
Boy	36.3 (19.2 - 57.7)	13.6 (7.9 - 22.5)	23.8 (19.4 - 29.0)
Girl	30.7 (17.0 - 49.0)	11.4 (6.6 - 19.1)	14.4 (11.1 - 18.6)
ALBANIA - RURAL	5.5 (3.0 - 10.0)	4.3 (2.4 - 7.6)	13.2 (11.0 - 15.7)
Boy	4.9 (2.7 - 8.5)	4.0 (2.4 - 6.7)	16.5 (13.5 - 20.1)
Girl	6.2 (2.9 - 12.7)	4.5 (2.0 - 10.1)	10.2 (7.4 - 13.8)
ALBANIA - TIRANA	10.2 (5.1 - 19.5)	6.7 (3.5 - 12.6)	22.1 (20.1 - 24.2)
Boy	11.0 (5.3 - 21.5)	7.9 (3.7 - 15.9)	24.3 (20.8 - 28.2)
Girl	9.4 (4.6 - 18.0)	5.6 (3.0 - 10.5)	20.1 (18.4 - 21.8)

Almost 2 in ten students (16.9 %) who saw ads for cigarettes on billboards in the past month. Almost 1 in ten students (7.8 %) saw ads for cigarettes in newspapers and magazines in the past month and a lower proportion of students.

Almost 1 in ten students who saw ads for cigarettes in newspapers or magazines in the past month 7.8 %.

Almost 2 in ten students who have an object with a cigarette or tobacco logo on it. 16.6 %.

Table 8: Percent of current smokers who want to quit, current smokers who tried to quit, and current smokers who received help to quit, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Percent of current cigarette smokers who desire to stop smoking	Percent of current cigarette smokers who tried to stop smoking during the past year	Percent of current smokers who received help to stop smoking
ALBANIA	52.5 (42.1 - 62.6)	79.6 (73.0 - 84.8)	82.1 (77.2 - 86.1)
Boy	57.3 (45.9 - 68.0)	79.4 (71.8 - 85.4)	87.1 (82.0 - 91.0)
Girl	40.3 (26.3 - 56.2)	81.8 (72.6 - 88.4)	67.8 (58.5 - 75.9)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	49.4 (30.5 - 68.5)	81.3 (69.3 - 89.4)	80.9 (71.7 - 87.6)
Boy	57.1 (35.7 - 76.2)	81.0 (69.3 - 88.9)	86.1 (75.0 - 92.8)
Girl	*	*	68.4 (53.6 - 80.3)
ALBANIA - RURAL	71.3 (49.9 - 86.1)	84.3 (65.2 - 93.9)	89.0 (78.1 - 94.9)
Boy	*	83.5 (57.2 - 95.0)	92.8 (83.3 - 97.1)
Girl	*	*	*
ALBANIA - TIRANA	42.0 (32.6 - 52.0)	72.6 (62.5 - 80.7)	76.4 (68.6 - 82.8)
Boy	47.7 (35.2 - 60.4)	72.4 (62.2 - 80.6)	81.0 (72.4 - 87.3)
Girl	29.2 (20.6 - 39.6)	72.9 (57.9 - 84.1)	66.7 (53.6 - 77.6)

* cell size less than 35

More than 5 in ten of students of current cigarette smokers who desire to stop smoking 52.3 %.

Significantly more students in Tirana (42.0%) reportedly desire to stop smoking now than in the Other Urban areas (71.3%).

Almost 8 in ten of current cigarette smokers who tried to stop smoking during the past year, 79.6 %.

More than 8 in ten of current smokers who received help to stop smoking, 82.1 %.

Table 9: Percent of current smokers who usually buy tobacco in a store, percent of current smokers who buy tobacco in a store and were not refused purchase because of their age, and percent of all students who have been offered free cigarettes by a tobacco company representative, ALBANIA - GYTS, 2009.

State	Percent current smokers who usually buy their tobacco in a store	Percent current smokers who buy their tobacco in a store and were not refused cigarette purchase because of their age	Percent who have been offered "free" cigarettes by a tobacco company representative
ALBANIA	58.5 (52.9 - 64.0)	82.5 (73.8 - 88.7)	8.5 (7.1 - 10.1)
Boy	64.6 (57.8 - 71.0)	81.9 (72.4 - 88.6)	10.7 (8.6 - 13.3)
Girl	45.9 (34.8 - 57.3)	84.5 (67.2 - 93.5)	6.6 (5.2 - 8.3)
ALBANIA - OTHER URBAN	63.9 (52.5 - 73.9)	90.8 (84.0 - 94.9)	8.8 (5.7 - 13.3)
Boy	71.9 (58.3 - 82.4)	92.2 (82.7 - 96.7)	12.2 (7.7 - 18.7)
Girl	50.4 (33.5 - 67.2)	*	6.2 (3.5 - 10.8)
ALBANIA - TIRANA	63.5 (54.4 - 71.8)	90.0 (82.5 - 94.5)	10.5 (8.0 - 13.5)
Boy	72.6 (64.2 - 79.7)	88.4 (78.5 - 94.0)	12.6 (8.1 - 19.2)
Girl	46.5 (30.8 - 62.9)	95.0 (80.4 - 98.9)	8.5 (7.1 - 10.2)

Almost 6 in ten student's current smokers who usually buy their tobacco in a store, 58.5 %.

More than 8 in ten students' current smokers who buy their tobacco in a store and were not refused cigarette purchase because of their age, 82.5 %.

Almost 1 in ten students who have been offered "free" cigarettes by a tobacco company representative, 8.5 %.

Discussion

Prevalence

A large proportion of students has experimented with tobacco, more than 5 in ten of total students (50.3%), but the stratified analyze according with gender shows a significantly higher proportion of ever smoking, boys than girls(65.6% - 37.4%), same situation is between capital city and rural areas (57.7% - 43.8%).

As regarding the prevalence of current smokers our data shows that more than 1 in 10 students are current smokers, and a significantly higher percentage of current smokers is noted in boys (17.6%) comparing with girls (6.3%). However comparing the data across the two studies (2004, 2009) we noticed that both the prevalence of ever smokers and current smokers has gone higher in 2009.

More than 3 in 10 ever smokers initiated smoking before 10 years old.

More than 1 in ten students never smokers likely to initiate smoking within a year. Significantly higher in boys than rural girls.

These results indicate a high potential for tobacco use in later life, which may lead to a higher prevalence of tobacco-related diseases. More than nine out of ten smokers use manufactured cigarettes.

The current situation of tobacco use among young people in Albania requires urgent intervention. The main goal should be the reduction of smoking prevalence. Programs targeting young individuals and focusing on knowledge and attitudes could be a good intervening strategy for effective programs of health promotion for students.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke

The ETS (environmental tobacco smoke) is an urgent problem for everyone, especially for the young population in Albania. According to studies conducted before, Albanian people are exposed to tobacco smoke actually everywhere - from their working places to public places, from their home to school.

Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke is regulated by the Law of Republic of Albania “On health protection from tobacco products”.

Smoking is forbidden in: working environments, health institutions, which the exception of mental health institutions (only for patients), educational institutions, means of public transport, commercial environments, bars, restaurants, discos, and night clubs, other public environments.

SHS exposure is high – half the students live in homes where others smoke, (49.7%) and almost two thirds (64.5%) of the students are exposed to smoke around others outside of the home in 2009, but in 2004 was (46.3%). At the same time, there was a significant increase; however, this part of the law is a big problem for the implementation.

In 2009 almost 4 in 10 of the students lived at home where anybody other smoked.

However, compared with 2004 in 2009 less students were exposed to SHS in public places in Albania.

Media and Advertising

Advertising, sponsorship and promotion greatly impacts on smoking prevalence, and in particular, smoking among teenagers. When advertising is banned (comprehensive), the tobacco industry continues promoting its products indirectly, but no less effectively. Young people are the most vulnerable category to be impacted by such advertising.

As far as mass media are very much accessible for young population (newspapers, magazines, internet, TV and radio, posters and billboards, etc), it is extremely important to pay a special attention to cooperation with mass media in anti-tobacco campaigning. According to our study, Almost 7 in 10 of students (65.7%) saw anti-smoking messages in the past 30 days, which is positive.

Advertising and promotion of tobacco products, by means of written media, television and radio, services of information societies is forbidden. Advertising and promotion of any other kind and form on tobacco products is forbidden.

We emphasize that our law doesn't create an area for any form of advertising and promoting.

Significant decrease of students reporting that they had seen a pro-cigarette ad on a billboard in the past 30 days, respectively (68.1%) in 2004 to 16.9% in (2009).

Significant decrease among students, reporting that they had seen a pro-cigarette ad in newspapers/magazines in the past 30 days, respectively (63.2 %) in 2004) to (7.8 %), in 2009.

Almost 1 in 5 students have an object (t-shirt, pen, backpack, etc) with a cigarette brand logo on it.

These figures show that this part of the law is being good implemented.

School Curriculum

In 2009 more than 7 in 10 students (70.4%) of respondents noted that during this school year they were taught about the dangers of smoking in any classes. There is an increase compared to 2004.

Also in 2009, more than a half (55.5%) of respondents reported that they discussed the effects of tobacco use, and more than a half (56.8) of respondents reported that they discussed in class the

reasons why people their age smoke during the school year. Adolescents often concentrate on the short-term benefits of tobacco use neglecting its harmful effects. Smoking is mainly a social activity for them, a way of making contact with peers (including peers of the opposite sex). Such discussions on regular bases in class during the school year period are positive and survey shows that they have more or less regular character.

Access and Availability

Our survey shows that students mainly (58.5%) buy cigarettes at stores, and a large number of current smoker schoolchildren (82.5%), who usually bought their cigarettes at a store, were **NOT** refused purchase because of their age. The sale to and by minors is regulated by the Article 9 of Albanian Law (Bill 9636, 6.11.2006) “On health protection from tobacco products”

In accordance to the Law,

“It is prohibited selling or supplying, for trading purposes, of tobacco products to persons under the age of 18 years. All selling posts should be equipped with a shop-sign, visible and readable, where should be written “It is prohibited selling of tobacco products to persons under the age of 18 years.”

In 2009 almost one in ten of schoolchildren offered free cigarettes by tobacco company representative. It is necessary to note that Article 12 of this law “It is prohibited the free of charge offer of tobacco products by subjects that produce, import or trade them”.

Cessation

Although the proportion of current and addicted smokers is high among young people, the first thing that almost 1 in ten of smokers did after waking up in the morning was smoking a cigarette. A half of current smokers would like to quit smoking and the large number 79.6% of already made unsuccessful effort to do it.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From this survey, the increased use of cigarettes by young people has been shown and many recommendations especially specific intervention programmers can be drawn. From the discussion above, the following broad recommendations are given:

- Awareness campaigns on the dangers of cigarette smoking to be intensified. And implemented by NGOs operating within communities.

- Educational programmers and health promotion campaigns can play a useful role in tobacco control. However, unless they are backed up by strong public policies, which help young people refrain from using tobacco, educational programmers have only modest results. Such education programmers and health promotion campaigns should be placed in the overall context of strong and coherent tobacco control policies.
- A comprehensive Tobacco Control Program should include the following elements: schools-based programs, smoking cessation, restriction of exposure to second-hand smoke, media campaigns, and prohibition of availability of tobacco products to minors
- Adolescent specific tobacco control interventions are necessary to avert the potential escalation in tobacco-related health care costs and especially to protect the health of the future workforce of Albania.
- The data suggests a decreasing age of initiation of cigarette usage among Albanian adolescents. Tobacco control education therefore needs to start at a very young age. However in Albania, very limited levels of tobacco-related issues are currently discussed in the formal school curriculum.
- Adolescents want to stop smoking, but are experiencing difficulty in trying to quit and are displaying signs of addiction. The traditional practice has been to develop prevention programmers for adolescents and cessation programmers for adults. However, the data supports the need for the development of both prevention and cessation interventions specifically designed for adolescents.
- Adolescent exposure to environmental tobacco smoke both in the home and outside of the home is high. In addition, awareness of the effects of environmental tobacco smoke is limited. Community wide interventions are necessary to educate, encourage and support adults so that they can protect themselves and their children from environmental tobacco smoke. "Building alliances and taking action to create a generation of tobacco free children and youth."
- Albania has a law that is in accordance with the FCTC. A new start for the implementation of the Albanian ant-tobacco law is needed.
- The Ministry of Health established Inter-sector Committee for Protection of Health from the Tobacco Products which is responsible for strategy and policy orientation for protecting public health from tobacco products. This committee needs to fulfill its legal obligations.
- Finally it is recommended that regular surveys also should be conducted on a periodic basis in order to monitor the current situation and evaluate the effectiveness of tobacco control and prevention programs, campaigns, and different other actions against the tobacco epidemic in

Albania. The global youth tobacco survey is an excellent tool that could be used to monitor the above-recommended activities.

Acknowledgements

This study has been supported by the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention USA/Atlanta. The Ministry of Health of Albania, Ministry of Education and Science of Albania also supported this project.

We would like to express our gratitude to **Dr. Charles W. Warren** (CDC Atlanta) for his professional and for his contribution to this final report. Our gratefulness to **Ms. Ann Goding and Mr. Brandon O'Hara, Veronica Lea, Michelle Carlberg** (CDC Atlanta) for their contribution for the successful implementation of the survey during the analytical period. We highly appreciate **Mrs. Kristina Mauer-Stender for support and Ms. Rula Nabil Khoury, Yulnara Kadirova** (WHO Euro) and all other colleagues from CDC and WHO Euro for their assistance.

Our thanks go as well to the Institute of Public Health, **Ms. Meriglina Rusta** (Executive Director "For Tobacco Free Albania" Albania NGO), **Ms Ledina Hoxha** (Executive Director "The association of Health professionals against tobacco and alcohol", **Mr Xhovan Shyti** Chair of the "Alliance Against Tobacco" and to all Education Directory of Tirana and other city, for their support in organization the survey. Our gratitude also extends to the many educational workers and young people for their active participation in this survey, and to the Directors of the Institute of Public Health of Tirana for their comprehensive support of our work in this project.