

Global implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control – progress note (September 2011¹)

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), the world's first public health treaty, entered into force in February 2005 and has 174 Parties to date. Most of the Parties (144) have already submitted at least one report on their progress in implementation of the Convention. Seventy-two of those Parties for which the Convention has been in force for more than five years have submitted two reports.

Progress in implementation has been analysed on the basis of the requirements under 11 articles of the Convention² for which data are available across all Parties that have reported twice. These requirements concern the reduction of demand for and supply of tobacco, and tobacco-related research and surveillance activities, among others.

The trend across the two reporting cycles shows that the average rate of implementation has increased by 10% over that period, from 61% to 68% of all of the requirements analysed.

More than half of the 72 Parties that have reported twice registered progress over the two reporting cycles in raising taxation rates for tobacco products (45 out of the 72 Parties), strengthening their legislation to make more public places smoke-free (46 out of the 72 Parties), and strengthening research and surveillance in tobacco control (41 out of the 72 Parties). A slightly lower number (between one third and one half) of Parties reported progress in implementation of several other requirements, such as introducing stronger health warnings, strengthening infrastructure for tobacco control, protecting public health policies from the interference of the tobacco industry, conducting education and communication programmes, banning advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and helping smokers to quit.

At five years of implementation, the articles attracting the highest implementation rates were those concerning smoke-free public places (Article 8) and the banning of sales to and by minors (Article 16), followed by those concerning communication and public awareness programmes (Article 12), strong health warnings on tobacco packages (Article 11), and disclosure of the content of tobacco products to government authorities (Article 10).

The reports of Parties also show that most progress has been achieved through the adoption or strengthening of relevant tobacco-control legislation. Forty-two Parties out of the 144 that have reported at least once adopted national legislation after ratifying the Convention. Of those that already had legislation at the time of ratification, 79 (or 83%) reported that they strengthened their legislation after ratification.

¹ Status as of 15 September 2011.

² Article 5 (*General obligations*); Article 6 (*Price and tax measures to reduce the demand for tobacco*); Article 8 (*Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke*); Article 10 (*Regulation of tobacco product disclosures*); Article 11 (*Packaging and labelling of tobacco products*); Article 12 (*Education, communication, training and public awareness*); Article 13 (*Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship*); Article 14 (*Demand reduction measures concerning tobacco dependence and cessation*); Article 15 (*Illicit trade in tobacco products*); Article 16 (*Sales to and by minors*); and Article 20 (*Research, surveillance and exchange of information*).