

Drug Affinity among Young People in the Federal Republic of Germany 2004

A repeat survey by the
Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), Cologne

Smoking Report

November 2004

The logo consists of a solid olive-green square. Inside the square, the letters 'BZgA' are written in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The 'g' is lowercase and smaller than the other letters.

**Bundeszentrale
für
gesundheitliche
Aufklärung**

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1. Introduction

Subject of the study

Since 1973, the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) has carried out regular, representative surveys on drug affinity among young people and young adults between the ages of 12 and 25 years. Ten repeat surveys have been conducted to date; the first six covered the territory of the old Federal Republic, the four since 1993 covering the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, including the new Federal Länder.

The subject of the study, denoted by the term "drug affinity", refers not solely to illicit narcotics, but also to alcohol and cigarette consumption. The results obtained for these three substance groups in the latest repeat survey, conducted in 2004, are presented in three separate reports on alcohol consumption, tobacco consumption and use of illicit drugs.

The present report deals with the tobacco consumption of young people between the ages of 12 and 25 years. The current situation is first described in Chapter 2. This is done on the basis of several different indicators for tobacco consumption, such as lifetime prevalence, smoker rate and indicators for the intensity of smoking.

One important task of the Drug Affinity Study is to monitor the tobacco consumption of young people over the course of time. The corresponding results are reported in Chapter 3, in which the proportion of people who have never smoked and the smoker rate are presented as time series from 1973 to 2004. Particular attention is paid there to the change in the smoker rate among the younger age group of young people between the ages of 12 and 17.

Chapter 4 examines the extent to which young people intend to switch from being non-smokers to smokers, and how many smokers would like to quit smoking. The last section reports on the variables that influence smoking. The influences presented in Chapter 5 are those exerted by the school, the family and groups of friends on the tobacco consumption of young people, especially when these groups smoke to a greater or lesser degree. The final chapter deals with the prevalence and influence of attitudes, meaning both attitudes that favour and give rise to smoking, and also attitudes that restrict smoking in the spirit of health prevention, such as health-consciousness. Furthermore, this chapter reports on the reactions of young people to the new design of the health warnings on cigarette packs, which were introduced a few months prior to the repeat survey.

The overview below contains the key methodological data regarding the Drug Affinity Study and the 2004 repeat survey.

Details of the study: goals and methods

Project title:	Drug Affinity among Young People in the Federal Republic of Germany 2004
Goals:	Long-term study of the consumption, motives for consumption, and situational conditions of use of alcohol, cigarettes, illicit narcotics and medication, the influencing factors promoting and inhibiting substance use, and the extent to which young people can be reached by preventive communication measures.
Study method:	Representative repeat surveys of the 12 to 25 year-old population of the Federal Republic of Germany at intervals of several years.
Data collection mode:	Computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI)
Sample selection:	Random sample (computer-generated, random telephone numbers; random selection of 12 to 25 year-olds in the household). Sample size: 3,032 cases
Survey period:	January 2004 to February 2004
Field work and statistical analysis	forsa. Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung und statistische Analysen mbH, Berlin
Concept development, analysis and reporting:	Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), Cologne, Unit 2-25, Gerhard Christiansen, Volker Stander and Jürgen Töppich

Summary of the results

At the moment, 35 percent of 12 to 25 year-olds smoke; this figure refers to young people who classify themselves either as regular smokers (21%) or as occasional smokers (14%). The total includes 22 percent daily smokers and a further 4 percent heavy smokers consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day.

Two-thirds (65%) of young people are non-smokers. This includes 34 percent who have never smoked, meaning young people who have never smoked at all to date (and also not yet even tried a single cigarette), a further 25 percent who have tried smoking, meaning non-smokers who have smoked no more than a total of 100 cigarettes in the past, and 6 percent ex-smokers, who have smoked more than 100 cigarettes, but are now non-smokers.

Seen in the long term, the tobacco consumption of young people has slowly declined over the last three decades. While 44 percent of 12 to 25 year-olds were (regular or occasional) smokers in 1979, the smoker rate has since dropped by 9 percentage points to the current figure of 35 percent. However, this trend is neither linear, nor steady. For example, it was interrupted in the mid-1990s, when the smoker rate rose rapidly between 1993 and 1997, mainly among the younger age groups.

The tobacco consumption of young people has declined again in recent years: between 2001 and 2004, the proportion of smokers among 12 to 25 year-olds fell from 37 percent to 35 percent. Conversely, the proportion of people who have never smoked (excluding people who have tried smoking), which had dropped significantly as a result of the spread of smoking in the interim, rose again from 31 percent in 2001 to 34 percent in 2004. The most pronounced change is to be seen in the tobacco consumption of 12 to 17 year-olds, who had recorded the strongest growth rates in the 1990s: their smoker rate was 28 percent in 2001, but 5 percentage points lower in 2004, now totalling 23 percent.

As another trend towards lower tobacco consumption among young people, it can be observed over the past ten years that the proportion of heavy smokers (20 or more cigarettes per day) among the smokers has declined substantially: from 34 percent in 1993 to 19 percent in 2001 and further to 12 percent in 2004.

The smoker rate is dependent on the number of non-smokers who intend to start smoking, and the number of smokers who intend to stop smoking. At the moment, 13 percent of 12 to 25 year-old non-smokers can imagine starting to smoke in the next twelve months, although the great majority (86%) of non-smokers definitely intend to remain non-smokers. On the other hand, the majority of young smokers would like to stop smoking: 64 percent are thinking about whether they want to quit smoking in the next six months; this figure includes 29 percent who intend to actually give up in the next 30 days.

Many young people find it difficult to put their willingness to give up smoking into practice and actually stop smoking. For example, 43 percent of smokers have already made several unsuccessful attempts to quit smoking. The willingness to quit drops substantially between the ages of 16 and 19 years. It is at this age that smoking becomes a regular habit among many smokers, this being expressed by the fact that, among other things, the proportion of daily and heavy smokers also increases at this age. Many smokers (65%) find it hard not to smoke themselves in situations where many other people are smoking.

Social influences, exerted by the family and the groups of friends to which the young people belong, play an important role as regards starting and stopping smoking. The more other members of the household or friends smoke, the more young people can imagine smoking themselves.

The reasons for smoking that young smokers primarily agree with likewise relate to the influence of peer groups. 83 percent say the reason for smoking is that it has an "infectious" effect when other people smoke. Another frequently mentioned reason is that smoking has a calming effect (80%). These reasons are also stated comparatively often by non-smokers who can imagine starting to smoke.

However, the influence of groups of friends is not based on people being urged into smoking by normative pressure. On the contrary: for the majority, not smoking is the social norm and the behaviour to be strived for. For example, 84 percent of young non-smokers say their friends would regret it if they were to start smoking. 87 percent of smokers say their friends would find it good if they were to stop smoking.

Health-consciousness is another important variable influencing smoking or not smoking. Young people who pay very great or great attention to their health (meaning roughly half of all young people), tend more to be non-smokers, or particularly also people who have never smoked; they are less willing to start smoking and more willing to stop.

Health-consciousness also plays a key role in connection with the fact that young people accept and react to the warnings on cigarette packs introduced in 2003. It has apparently proven possible to draw the attention of a relatively large proportion of young buyers of packs of cigarettes to the health warnings printed on them: 31 percent read them very often, and 23 percent often, meaning that a good half (54%) of 12 to 25 year-old smokers regularly take in messages regarding the risks involved with smoking. There is above-average interest among young females and in the younger age group (12 to 19 year-olds).

The results of the Drug Affinity Study suggest that the warnings certainly can have an influence on the tobacco consumption of young people. It is apparent that the readers of the warnings are more likely to be willing to quit smoking: 34 percent of them say they want to stop smoking in the next 30 days. 27 percent of the people who rarely or never look at the warnings want to give up smoking. The impact of the warnings is substantially stronger when they are read by health-conscious young people: in this case, 44 percent want to give up smoking in the next 30 days.

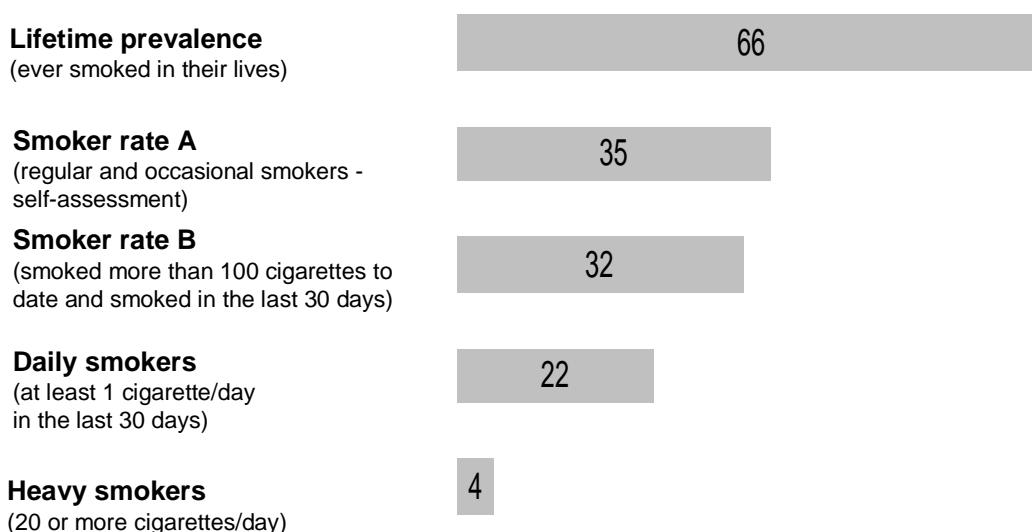
This finding points in the same direction as another result of the Drug Affinity Study in connection with alcohol consumption. There, too, information on the risks (of alcohol consumption) has a particularly strong impact (on risky alcohol-drinking) when taken in by health-conscious young people. (See in this context the BZgA publication "Drug Affinity among Young People in the Federal Republic of Germany 2004", Alcohol Report, Cologne 2004).

2. Current situation

This chapter documents the most important results of the Drug Affinity Study 2004 regarding tobacco consumption among 12 to 25 year-old young people in the Federal Republic of Germany. Several different indicators are used for this purpose. Several indicators are necessary because the promotion of not smoking is geared to several different goals.

One goal is to discourage as many young people as possible from smoking from the outset and thus, if possible, to reduce the proportion of people who have smoked at least one cigarette at some time in their lives (or to maximise the proportion of people who have never smoked to date). The indicator used to measure this is the lifetime prevalence. The smoker rate (or the complementary non-smoker rate) indicates the extent to which all non-smoker promotion measures together have proven capable of reducing the proportion of smokers. There are two versions of the current smoker rate. Version A enquires about the proportion of people who classify themselves as regular or occasional smokers. It has been included in the repeat surveys of the BZgA study "Drug Affinity among Young People" since 1972 and thus permits comparisons with the past development of tobacco consumption among 12 to 25 year-old young people. The newly created Version B covers the proportion of people who have smoked a greater or lesser number of cigarettes in the last 30 days (prior to the interview), provided they have so far smoked a minimum quantity of roughly one hundred cigarettes. It is intended to facilitate comparisons with the results of other, national and international studies on the smoking patterns of young people. In the course of time, partial successes of intervention can be gauged with the help of indicators based on the number of cigarettes smoked (daily smokers, heavy smokers). Moreover, these indicators react more directly to specific measures, such as price increases or extensive restrictions on smoking. The indicators compiled in Fig. 1 are examined more closely below.

Fig. 1 Indicators for the tobacco consumption of young people in percent

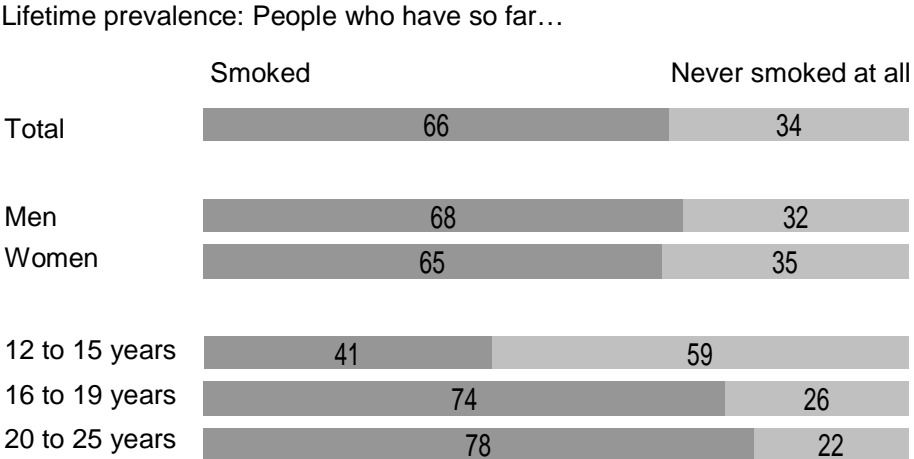


Experience with tobacco

Two-thirds (66%) of 12 to 25 year-old young people have so far smoked on some occasion (lifetime prevalence). This includes both people who have tried a cigarette with their friends at some time, and also those who regularly smoke 20 or more cigarettes per day, as well as former smokers who have long since given up smoking again.

One important indicator for prevention is the complementary figure, i.e. the proportion of people who have to date not smoked a single cigarette at all. This proportion of people who have never smoked encompasses one-third (34%) of 12 to 25 year-olds in 2004. There is only a slight difference between young men and young women as regards the percentage of people who have never smoked. It is marginally higher among young women (35%) than among young men (32%).

Fig. 2 Experience with tobacco in percent



With increasing age of the young people, the proportion of people who have never smoked becomes ever smaller. 59 percent of 12 to 15 year-olds have never smoked; the proportion of people who have never smoked is lower by more than half in the next-higher age group, then declining by a further 4 percentage points to 22 percent in the highest age group. In other words: four-fifths (78%) of 20 to 25 year-olds have smoking experience. The average age at which 12 to 25 year-olds smoke for the first time is 13.6 years; male and female young people have their first smoking experiences at the same age. Many young people stop smoking again after their initial experiences, while others then develop the habit of smoking regularly. This learning process takes an average of roughly two years: the average age at which 12 to 25 year-olds begin to smoke daily is 15.6 years. On average, daily smoking likewise begins at the same age among men and women.

Table 1 Start of smoking in years

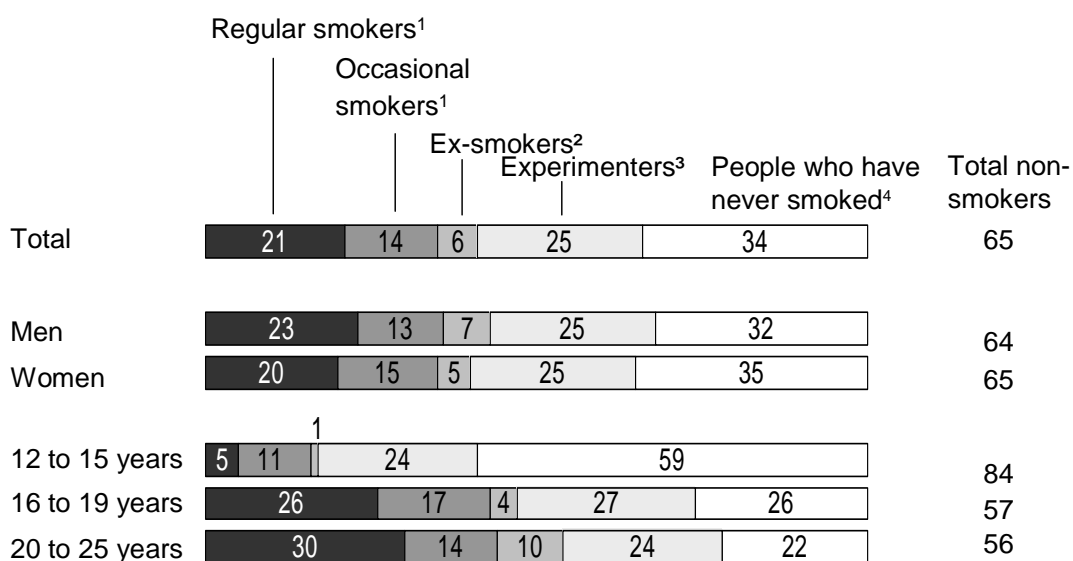
	Average age at the time of smoking the first cigarette	Average age at the time of starting to smoke daily
Total	13.6	15.6
Men	13.6	15.7
Women	13.7	15.6

Smoker rate

In 2004, the smoker rate among 12 to 25 year-old young people in Germany is 35 percent (smoker rate A). This figure comprises 21 percent who classify themselves as regular smokers and 14 percent who rate themselves as occasional smokers. Thus, almost two-thirds (65%) of young people are non-smokers. Along with the 34 percent who have never smoked, this total includes 25 percent experimental smokers (non-smokers with less than 100 cigarettes) and 6 percent who are ex-smokers (non-smokers with more than 100 cigarettes).

The smoker rate among young men is 36 percent, that among young women being 35 percent. However, a slightly larger proportion of young men are regular smokers (23%), fewer being occasional smokers (13%), whereas young women tend slightly less to be regular smokers (20%) and slightly more to be occasional smokers (15%).

Fig. 3 Smoker rate A: regular and occasional smokers in percent



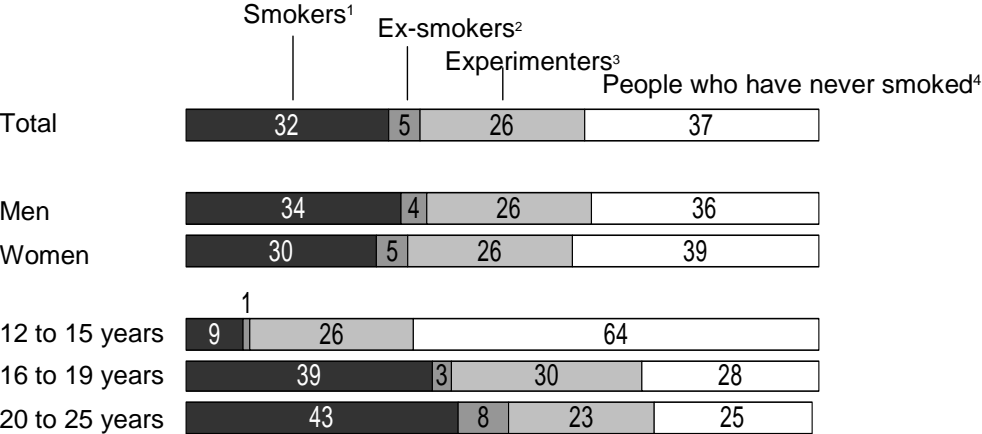
Difference from 100% = Don't know or no reply

- 1) People who rate themselves as regular or occasional smokers
- 2) Ex-smokers: non-smokers and smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their lives
- 3) Experimenters: non-smokers and less than 100 cigarettes in their lives
- 4) People who have never smoked: people who have never smoked at all in their lives

As in connection with tobacco experience, the smoker rate also displays a marked increase in tobacco consumption between 12 to 15 year-olds, with a proportion of 16 percent regular and occasional smokers, and 16 to 19 year-olds, with a smoker rate of 43 percent. Almost half (44%) of 20 to 25 year-olds then smoke. The higher the age, the higher the proportion of regular smokers, in particular. Almost one-third (30%) of 20 to 25 year-olds rate themselves as regular smokers. On the other hand, this age group has a relatively high cessation rate: 10 percent have already stopped smoking again by the age of 20 to 25 years.

The second indicator for the current prevalence of smoking is based on the current cigarette consumption of young people. It enquires about the number of days in the past 30 days on which they smoked cigarettes. These data are used to determine smoker rate B: the proportion of 12 to 25 year-olds who have smoked more than 100 cigarettes in total and smoked on at least one day in the past 30 days. This smoker rate was added to the catalogue of indicators of the Drug Affinity Study for the 2004 repeat survey, in order to enable comparisons with national and international studies on the tobacco consumption of young people.

Fig. 4 Smoker rate B: cigarette smoking, 30-day prevalence in percent



1) Smoked more than 100 cigarettes and smoked in the last 30 days
 2) Smoked more than 100 cigarettes and not smoked in the last 30 days
 3) Smoked less than 100 cigarettes
 4) Never smoked at all

According to this smoker rate, 32 percent of 12 to 25 year-olds smoke. The difference compared to smoker rate A is 3 percentage points. It primarily arises because the borderline between smokers and non-smokers cannot be drawn clearly in the case of young people. For instance, young people who rate themselves as occasional smokers in connection with the indicator based on self-assessment, count as non-smokers for the 30-day indicator, if the last drag on a cigarette to date was more than 30 days ago, or if they have so far only smoked a few cigarettes. Conversely, young people who rate themselves as non-smokers count as smokers, because they smoked their last cigarette within the last 30 days and do not want to smoke again. Another slight difference between the two indicators results from the fact that somewhat more young people see themselves as never having smoked in the 30-day indicator than in the self-assessment indicator.

Distinguishing by sex and age, the second smoker rate yields the same response pattern as the first. As with the proportion of regular and occasional smokers in smoker rate A, smoker rate B is slightly higher among young men than among young women. The breakdown by age groups is likewise comparable. It is worthy of note that the difference between the proportions of smokers for the two indicators is largest among the 12 to 15 year-olds (16% versus 9%) and smallest among the 20 to 25 year-olds (44% versus 43%). This once again points to the difficulties involved in measuring the smoker rate of the younger age group of young people, because trying and experimenting is very widespread among them.

Daily smokers

Another indicator used to measure the smoker rate among young people is the proportion of daily smokers, i.e. the percentage who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes to date and smoked at least one cigarette every day in the last 30 days.

Fig. 5 Daily smokers in percent

People who have smoked at least one cigarette per day in the last 30 days:

		Number of years of daily smoking ¹ :
Total	22	3.7
Men	23	3.5
Women	20	3.8
12 to 15 years	5	1.0
16 to 19 years	26	2.0
20 to 25 years	30	4.9

¹If smokers or ex-smokers (respondents with more than 100 cigarettes to date)

This figure is 22 percent for 12 to 25 year-olds. It is almost identical to the proportion of young people who classify themselves as regular smokers (21%). The two indicators likewise match in the various sub-groups of young people. For example, there are slightly more daily (and also regular) smokers among the young men than among the young women.

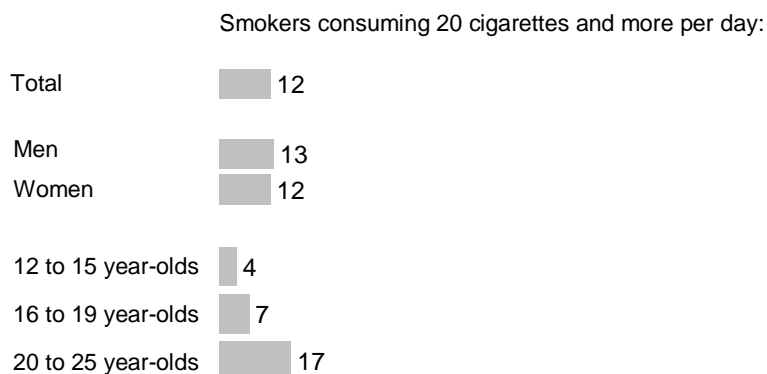
In the youngest age group of 12 to 15 year-olds, there are still only few daily smokers to be found, but the proportion of daily smokers rises as the young people grow older. 26 percent of 16 to 19 year-olds smoke every day, the figure for 20 to 25 year-olds being 30 percent.

The number of years for which young people have been smoking daily also increases with age. On average (including ex-smokers), 12 to 15 year-olds have so far been smoking daily for one year, and 20 to 25 year-olds for an average of 4.9 years. These figures are significant for tobacco prevention in that they once again point out how important it is to intervene against smoking as early as possible in the life of young people because, the longer young people smoke daily, the more smoking becomes a regular habit, it then becoming increasingly difficult to kick this habit.

Heavy smokers

The fact that the intensity of smoking increases substantially with age among young people is confirmed by the proportion of heavy smokers. According to a WHO definition, this means those (regular or occasional) smokers who smoke 20 cigarettes or more per day. This is the case for 12 percent of smokers or, referred to the total population of the interviewees, for 4 percent of 12 to 25 year-olds. The difference between young males and young females is slight.

Fig. 6 Heavy smokers in percent



The proportion of smokers consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day increases very rapidly with age. It is 4 percent among 12 to 15 year-olds, almost doubling in the next-higher age group, then even more than doubling again among 20 to 25 year-olds, reaching a figure of 17 percent. The longer people have been smoking, not only the more smoking increasingly becomes a habit, but also the greater the number of cigarettes smoked in the course of time.

3. Development of tobacco consumption from 1973 to 2004

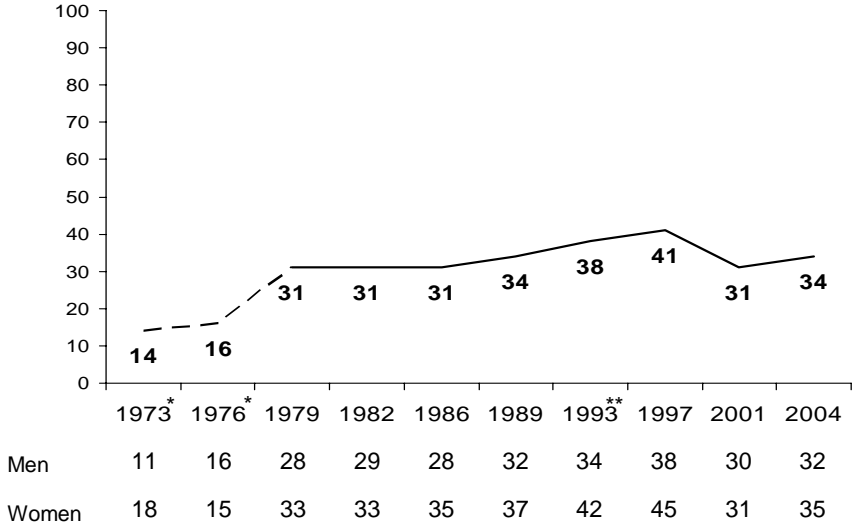
Since 1973, the Drug Affinity Study has been observing two important target parameters for tobacco prevention. First, the proportion of young people who have so far never smoked in their lives (lifetime prevalence/people who have never smoked); second, the proportion of regular and occasional smokers (smoker rate A). The times series for these two indicators since 1973 are documented below.

Of particular interest is the tobacco consumption of the younger age groups. This is the reason for reporting on how the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-olds has changed in the last ten years, from 1993 to 2004. The development in the average age at the time of smoking the first cigarette, and in the proportion of heavy smokers (20 cigarettes and more), is likewise examined for the period from 1993 to 2004.

People who have never smoked

The development in the proportion of young people who have never smoked a cigarette does not display a consistent trend over the observation period from 1973 to 2004. The proportion of people who had never smoked was very low in the first two repeat surveys, conducted in 1973 and 1976. The reason for this is the age limit of the sample of young people used in these years. At that time, 14 to 25 year-olds were interviewed and, because many young people try their first cigarette by the age of 14, this age limit results in a large number of respondents who have already smoked once at some time, and correspondingly few without any experience of smoking at all. 1979 was the first time that young people aged between 12 and 25 were interviewed, the consequence being that the proportion of people who had never smoked than amounted to 31 percent.

Fig. 7 People who have never smoked, 1973 to 2004 in percent



* 14 to 25 year-olds
 ** Including the new Federal Länder from 1993

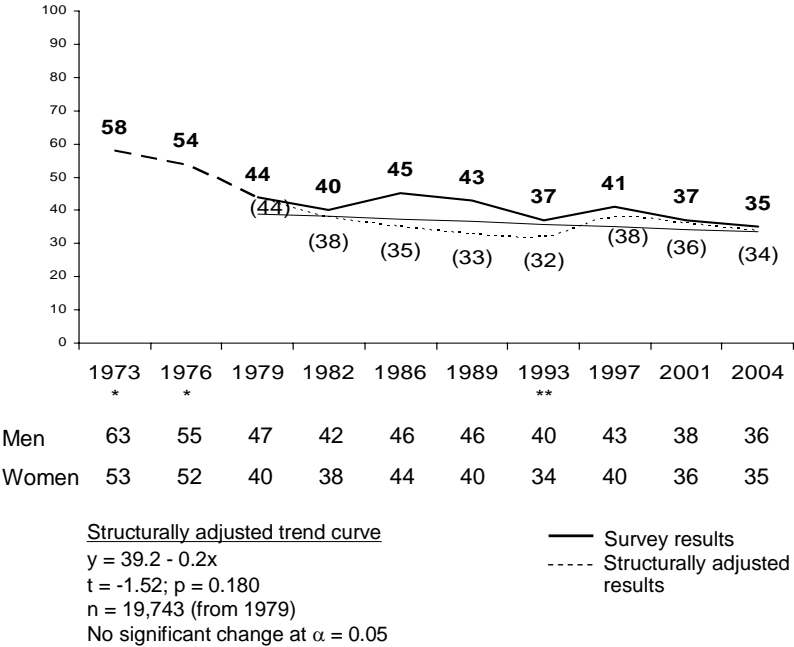
This proportion remained constant in the first half of the 1980s. It then rose with every repeat survey, reaching 41 percent in 1997. Between 1997 and 2001, the proportion of people who had never smoked then declined again very rapidly: it fell to 31 percent and thus to the level of the 1980s. However, this decline did not continue. Between 2001 and 2004, the proportion of people who had never smoked rose again, from 31 percent to 34. This trend is to be seen among both young males and young females, except that the proportion of people who had never smoked fell even more strongly among young women than among young men in 2001.

Taking up a recommendation of the World Health Organization regarding the definition of low cigarette consumption to date, and using the proportion of people who have either not smoked at all in the past, or not more than 100 cigarettes (people who have never smoked plus experimenters), the result for 2004 is 59 percent - a value which has likewise risen compared to 2001, when it was 51 percent.

Smoker rate

The time series presented in Fig. 8 for the proportion of regular and occasional smokers (smoker rate A) among 12 to 25 year-olds clearly indicates that tobacco consumption among young people has declined substantially in the last 30 years. In 1973 and 1976, more than half of adolescents and young adults smoked. It must again be borne in mind here that these two repeat surveys did not cover 12 and 13 year-olds, an age group with a low level of tobacco consumption. However, even in 1979, the first year in which interviewees upwards of the age of 12 were included, 44 percent of young people were still regular or occasional smokers.

Fig. 8 Regular and occasional smokers in percent



* 14 to 25 year-olds
 ** Including the new Federal Länder from 1993

After that, the smoker rate initially declined, but then rose again. However, this increase was the result of a change in the age structure of 12 to 25 year-olds owing to the declining birth rate. The consequence of this was that fewer younger-aged young people (with a lower level of tobacco consumption) were growing into the age group of 12 to 25 year-olds in the mid-

1980s, meaning that the proportion of older young people (with a higher level of tobacco consumption) grew and the smoker rates seemingly increased.

To check this "demographic factor", the age structure of 1979 was kept constant and corresponding, structurally adjusted values were calculated for each repeat survey, these being shown below the time series curve in Fig. 8. These values indicate the changes in the tobacco consumption of young people without the effects resulting from the changes in the age structure. Up to 1993, these structurally adjusted data reveal a constant decline in the smoker rate, from 44 percent in 1979 to 32 percent in 1993.

However, the subsequent repeat survey in 1997 showed a marked rise in the smoker rate, which was now not attributable to a renewed change in the age structure, but must instead be interpreted as being a pronounced, real increase in tobacco consumption among young people. The proportion of regular and occasional smokers increased from 37 percent to 41 between 1993 and 1997 (or from 32 percent to 38 after adjustment for age-related effects). The smoker rate has now been on the decline again since 1997, falling by 6 percentage points up to 2004.

A trend curve was calculated for the structurally adjusted data for the entire period from 1979 to 2004. It, however, does not show a marked, downward trend, since the pronounced decline in the smoker rate between 1979 and 1993 was interrupted by the renewed rise in 1997. A significance test for the slope of the trend curve does not indicate a significant change.

The development of the smoker rate among men and women was largely similar. One point worthy of note is that the two smoker rates have become increasingly close in the past decade.

The development of the smoker rate also explains the decline in the proportion of people who have never smoked. The short-term increase in the smoker rate in the mid-1990s meant that, in particular, young people of younger age started to smoke, or at least experimented with smoking cigarettes. As a consequence of this, a lower percentage of young people who had never smoked was then obtained in 2001.

Development of the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-old young people

The most striking change in the mid-1990s was the increase in the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-old young people. The Federal Centre for Health Education reported on the subject in depth at the time. It is for this reason that the time series results for 12 to 17 year-olds from 1993 to 2004 will again be considered separately here, especially in order to also examine how the smoker rate among young people of younger age has developed in recent years.

From 1993 to 1997, the proportion of smokers among young people in the younger age group had displayed a remarkably strong increase - from 20 percent to 28. The figure for young men rose from 21 percent to 27 percent, that for young women rising slightly more strongly still, from 20 percent to 29. The increase among 18 to 25 year-olds was less pronounced, especially in Western Germany. In the mid-1990s, there was apparently an epidemic spread of cigarette smoking, especially among young people in the younger age group.

Table 2 Smoker rate by sex and age, 1993 to 2004 in percent

	12 to 17 year-olds:			18 to 25 year-olds:		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
<u>All young people</u>						
1993	21	20	20	51	44	47
1997	27	29	28	54	47	51
2001	27	28	28	46	42	45
2004	24	23	23	45	44	44
<u>Young people in Western Germany</u>						
1993	20	22	21	52	46	49
1997	27	26	27	53	46	50
2001	26	27	26	46	42	44
2004	22	20	21	44	42	43
<u>Young people in Eastern Germany</u>						
1993	24	16	20	48	37	43
1997	28	41	34	59	52	56
2001	31	33	33	48	44	47
2004	32	35	33	49	51	50

This trend was intensified in Eastern Germany by the tobacco consumption of young women catching up with that of young men, as expressed by the particularly strong increase in the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-old females in Eastern Germany between 1993 and 1997. Above and beyond this, the smoker rate among 18 to 25 year-olds in Eastern Germany also rose in 1997, presumably as a result of the massive expansion of the cigarette market in the new Federal Länder in the early 1990s.

In 2001, the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-olds remained at the 1997 level. In contrast, a substantial decline could be seen among 18 to 25 year-olds in 2001. This can, however, be interpreted as being a delayed consequence of the comparatively low level of consumption in the late 1980s: many of the people who had remained non-smokers as adolescents at that time counted among the young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 years in 2001. These lower values for older young people explain the decline, reported in the preceding section, among the entire population of 12 to 25 year-olds by 4 percentage points.

Between 2001 and 2004, the smoker rate among 12 to 17 year-olds then also declined again: from 28 percent to 23 percent in total, from 27 percent to 24 among men and from 28 percent to 23 among women.

It is remarkable, however, that this development occurred only in Western Germany, where the figure again reached the low level of 1993, when 21 percent of 12 to 17 year-olds smoked in Western Germany. Among young women, the smoker rate of 20 percent is even below that for 1993, which was 22 percent. The smoker rate among young men in Western Germany has not declined quite so strongly, amounting to 22 percent in 2004.

In Eastern Germany, in contrast, the proportion of 12 to 17 year-olds who smoke regularly or occasionally is stagnating at about one-third. In 2004, the overall proportion of smokers there is 33 percent, the figure for young men being 32 percent and that for young women 35 percent.

Age at the time of first-time consumption

The spread of tobacco consumption among young people in the younger age group in the mid-1990s did not have any effect on the age at which young people try their first cigarette. Table 3 shows that there is only little variation between 1993 and 2004 as regards the average age of 12 to 25 year-olds when smoking their first cigarette. No downward trend can be detected.

Table 3 Age when smoking the first cigarette in years

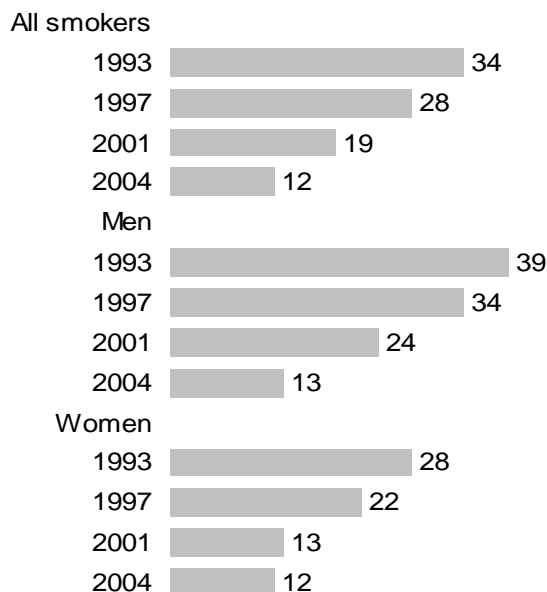
	Average age when smoking the first cigarette:		
	Men	Women	Total
<u>All respondents</u>			
1993	13.7	13.9	13.8
1997	13.9	14.1	14.0
2001	13.5	13.7	13.6
2004	13.6	13.7	13.6

Heavy smokers

In addition to the slow decline in the smoker rate, which can be observed over a relatively long period of time, a further trend towards a generally lower level of tobacco consumption can be seen in recent years. Among young smokers, there has been a constant decline in the proportion of heavy smokers consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day. One-third (34%) were heavy smokers in 1993. This proportion has fallen since that time, to 28 percent in 1997, then further to 19 percent in 2001, and a renewed decline to 12 percent can also be seen in 2004.

Fig. 9 Heavy smokers, 1993 to 2004 in percent

Smokers consuming 20 cigarettes and more per day:



The decline in intensive smoking occurred both among young men and among young women. This development has also led to a situation where the previous difference between men and women as regards heavy smoking has almost disappeared. In 1993, 39 percent of 12 to 25 year-old male smokers consumed 20 cigarettes or more per day, compared to 28 percent of female smokers. In 2004, the proportion of heavy smokers (among the smokers) is slightly more than one-tenth, both among men (13%) and among women (12%).

4. To smoke, or not to smoke

This chapter reports on the extent to which young people intend to maintain or change their current behaviour of either not smoking or smoking. The willingness of non-smokers to start smoking is examined first, followed by the willingness and intention of smokers to stop smoking.

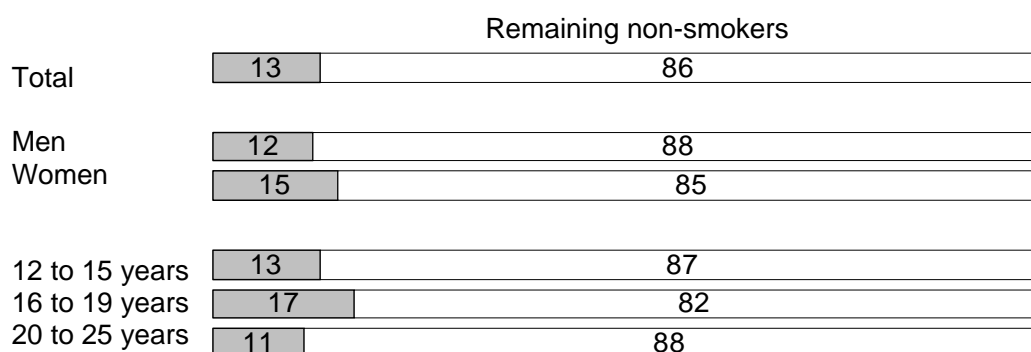
Willingness to smoke

The very great majority of 12 to 25 year-old non-smokers intend to remain non-smokers in the foreseeable future: 86 percent firmly intend not to smoke under any circumstances. In contrast, 13 percent of non-smokers could imagine themselves smoking, at least occasionally, in the next 12 months. Young females are slightly more willing to change: 15 percent can imagine starting to smoke in the near future. Among young men, this figure is 12 percent, and almost nine-tenths (88%) intend not to start smoking under any circumstances.

Fig. 10 Willingness to smoke

in percent

Non-smokers who could imagine themselves smoking
in the next 12 months



Difference from 100% = Don't know

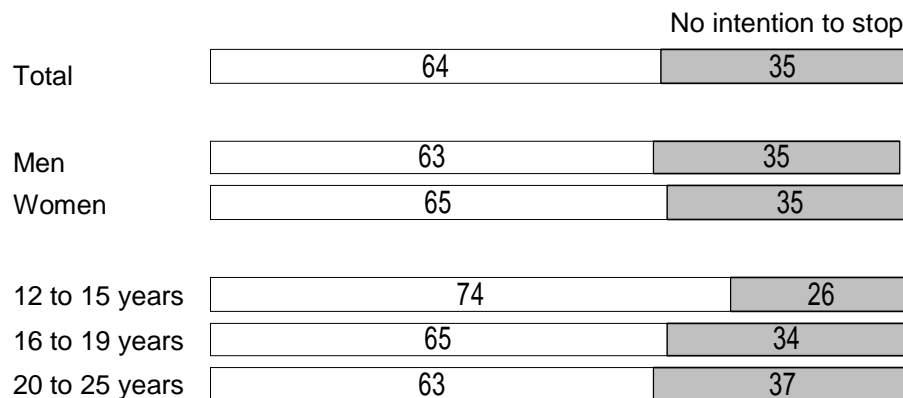
The risk is particularly high among 16 to 19 year-olds: 17 percent of current non-smokers in this age group could imagine themselves smoking in the next 12 months.

Willingness to stop

Most young smokers are in no way convinced smokers. Only one-third (35%) would not like to stop in the future. All others (64%) are currently thinking about whether they really ought to continue smoking, or whether they ought to stop (within the next 6 months). The willingness to stop is greatest in the youngest (but also smallest) group of smokers, aged between 12 and 15 years. There, 74 percent are thinking about whether they ought to stop. However, 26 percent want to continue smoking.

Fig. 11 Willingness to stop in percent

Smokers who are thinking about stopping smoking within the next 6 months:

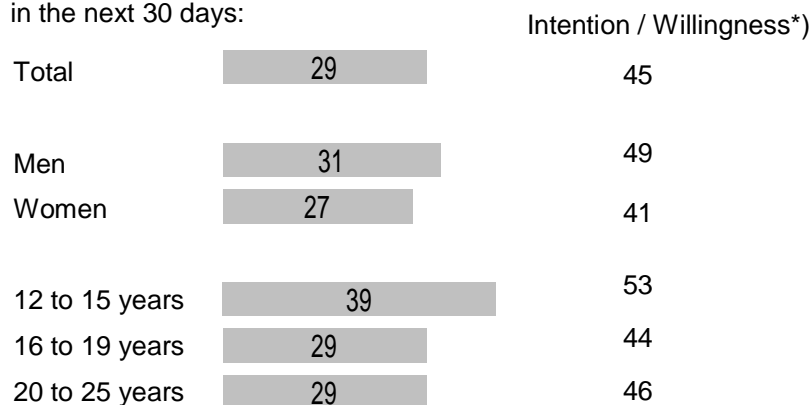


Difference from 100% = Don't know

A remarkable number of young people firmly intend to give up smoking in the near future. 29 percent say then plan to stop smoking in the next 30 days. This is almost half (45%) of those who are currently thinking about whether they want to stop in the near future.

Fig. 12 Intention to stop in percent

Proportion of smokers who plan to stop smoking in the next 30 days:



*) Proportion intending to stop in the next 30 days, divided by the proportion thinking about stopping in the next 6 months

Young men are more likely to intend to stop: 31 percent, compared to 27 percent of women. In addition, more men convert vague thoughts about giving up smoking in the future into a concrete, current intention. Of the men who are generally willing to stop, 49 percent have the intention of putting their plan into practice in the next 30 days, whereas the figure for women is 41 percent.

Once again, it is the smokers in the youngest age group who most frequently (39%) intend to stop as soon as possible. In addition, it is also in this group that the proportion of people who turn vague thoughts into current plans is particularly high, at 53 percent.

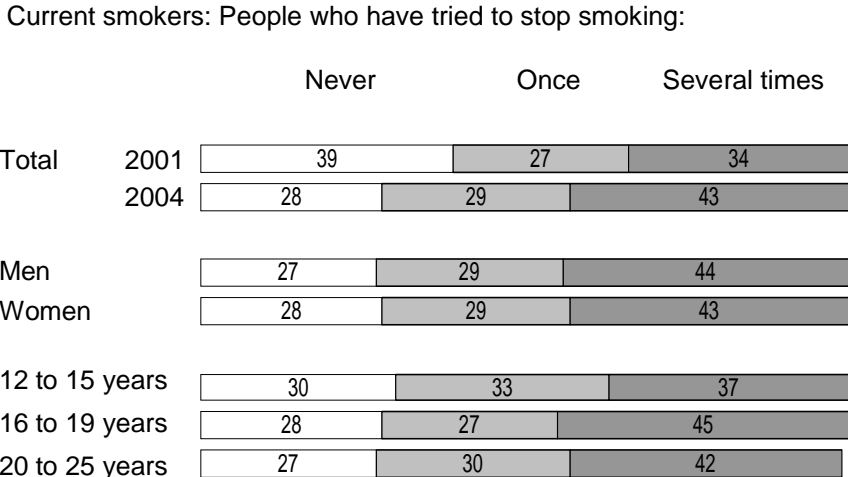
Something else also becomes clear: the older the young people are, the higher the proportion that intends to continue smoking. This proportion increases from 26 percent among 12 to 15 year-olds, and 34 percent among the next-higher age group, to 37 percent among 20 to 25 year-olds. This is also a consequence of the length of time for which people have smoked. The longer people have been smoking, the less willing they are to give up smoking, possibly because they are increasingly less confident about really being able to give up smoking.

Difficulties with giving up smoking

Almost three-quarters (72%) of young smokers have already made one or more attempts to give up smoking. This is a further indicator of the widespread willingness of young people to stop smoking.

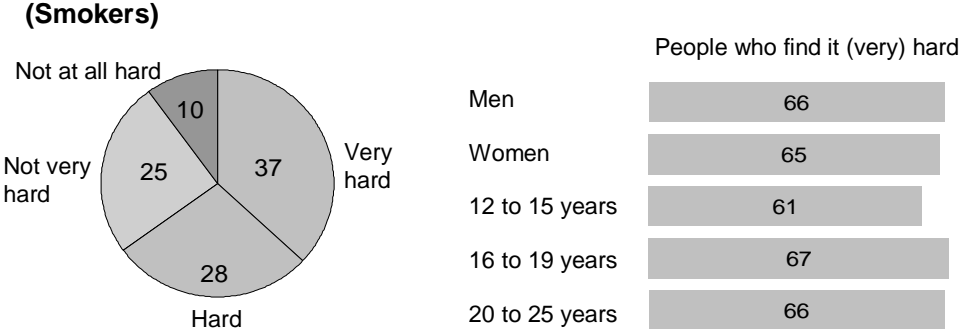
Cessation attempts have increased substantially since 2001. At that time, 61 percent had tried to stop once (27%) or several times (34%). This proportion had risen by 11 percentage points to 72 percent by 2004. This increase in cessation attempts can be viewed as an expression of the great willingness to stop smoking, as reported in the preceding section. However, it also says something about the difficulties encountered by young smokers when trying to turn their desire not to smoke into actually not smoking.

Fig. 13 Cessation attempts in percent



One of the prerequisites for giving up smoking is the ability not to smoke even when other people you are with are smoking a lot. Only 10 percent of young smokers said that they did not find it at all hard not to smoke in this kind of situation. In total, 65 percent find it very hard (37%) or hard (28%).

Fig. 14 How hard is it not to smoke when others are smoking a lot? in percent



It is apparently possible to learn how to resist the "risk of infection". The presence of other smokers in no way automatically leads to a person absolutely having to smoke. This can be confirmed by the example of ex-smokers. Only 10 percent of them say they find it either very hard or hard not to smoke in the presence of other smokers; 62 percent say they do not find it at all hard. Despite their past experience with smoking, ex-smokers have obviously learned to resist the temptation that arises in a situation where people are smoking.

Nevertheless, it can be seen that very many young smokers want to kick this habit, and also obviously undertake attempts to succeed. And a relatively large number really are successful: thus, there are 6 percent former smokers among 12 to 25 year-olds.

5. Social influences on smoking and not smoking

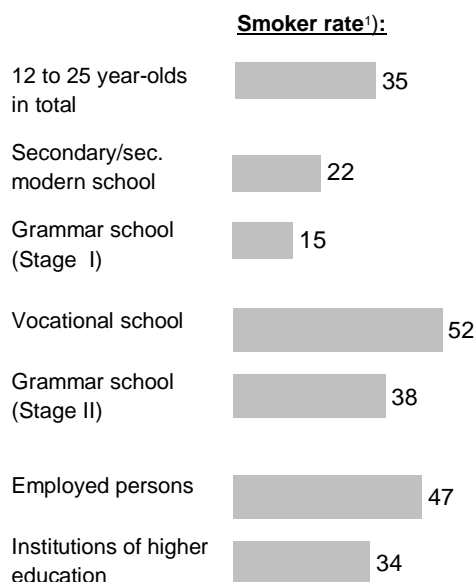
This chapter uses data from the Drug Affinity Study to examine how influences exerted by the social environment of young people affect their decision to smoke or not to smoke, and what role is played in this context by the school or the place of work and, in particular, the family and groups of friends.

School and vocational education

The smoker rate, i.e. the proportion of people who classify themselves as regular or occasional smokers, varies according to the type of school and the stage of education (see Fig. 15). The greatest difference can be seen between pupils in the first and second stages of secondary education. This difference is, however, not so much connected with the type of school, but is primarily attributable to the age differences of the pupils.

However, the smoker rate also varies within the individual stages of schooling, vocational education and occupational activity. In the first stage of secondary education, for example, it is 7 percentage points higher among pupils of secondary and secondary modern schools than among grammar school pupils. In the second stage of secondary education, it is 14 percentage points higher among pupils of vocational schools than among sixth-form pupils at grammar schools. And at the "tertiary" level, too, the proportion of young people already in gainful employment who smoke is 13 percentage points higher than among students. So, more young people smoke in the educational channel that typically takes them from a secondary or secondary modern school to vocational education and a relatively early entry into gainful employment, than in the educational channel leading from a grammar school to an institution of higher education.

Fig. 15 Proportion of smokers by type of school in percent



¹⁾ Self-assessment as regular or occasional smokers (smoker rate A)

These differences are not, however, caused by the school, but mainly by extramural influences: families that tend to send their children to secondary or secondary modern school smoke more than the families from which grammar school pupils come (see also Fig. 16 in this context). Experience with smoking in the family is more likely to predispose pupils of secondary and secondary modern schools to smoke themselves, and the correspondingly higher smoker rates at their schools provide additional encouragement to smoke. Thus, the different types of school only indirectly play a role in maintaining stratum-specific smoker rates. A status and income-dependent choice of school, on the one hand, and stratum-specific experience with smoking in the family, on the other, along with the additional influence of a higher smoker rate at school, make up one of the social mechanisms that transmit the higher tobacco consumption of the various social strata from one generation to the next.

Different smoker rates at various types of school could theoretically also be attributable to the great potential of tobacco prevention work for reaching and convincing school pupils being less effectively exploited in some types of school than in others. However, the current data from the Drug Affinity Study cannot be used to examine whether this is the case or not.

Another possible way of exerting a targeted influence on the tobacco consumption of young people at schools is to regulate smoking, e.g. by means of smoking bans. In this connection, the Drug Affinity Study examines how many pupils perceive whether smoking is allowed during breaks; trainees and employed persons are correspondingly asked whether smoking is allowed at the workplace.

Table 4 Perception of smoking regulations in percent

Smoking is allowed during breaks:			
	Total	Men	Women
Secondary/secondary modern school			
2001	14	14	12
2004	17	17	16
Grammar school - Stage I			
2001	44	42	45
2004	52	54	49
Grammar school - Stage II			
2001	90	90	90
2004	89	90	89
Vocational schools			
2001	89	87	90
2004	91	92	90
Institutions of higher education			
2001	81	82	80
2004	59	60	57
Smoking is allowed at the workplace:			
Employed persons and trainees			
2001	51	59	42
2004	52	57	48

The result: In the first stage of secondary education, relatively few pupils say that smoking is allowed in the breaks between lessons; and it is mainly pupils at secondary and secondary modern schools who are aware of the existence of smoking bans. Only 17 percent of them are of the opinion that smoking is allowed during breaks at their school, this being a slight increase compared to 2001. In contrast, grammar school pupils in the first stage of secondary education are more frequently (52%) of the opinion that smoking is allowed at their school,

apparently because they see that older fellow pupils smoke during breaks. Compared to 2001, it is striking to note that, in 2004, more grammar school pupils in the first stage of secondary education say that smoking is permitted in the breaks between lessons. This may well be an unintended effect of the enforcement of smoking bans: discussions about setting up smoking rooms or areas, for example, make it visible and clear to many of the younger pupils at these schools that smoking is allowed at their school - albeit only within limits.

In the second stage of secondary education, roughly nine-tenths of the pupils are allowed to smoke during breaks; this applies both to the sixth form at grammar schools (89%) and to vocational schools (91%). There has been no change here compared to 2001.

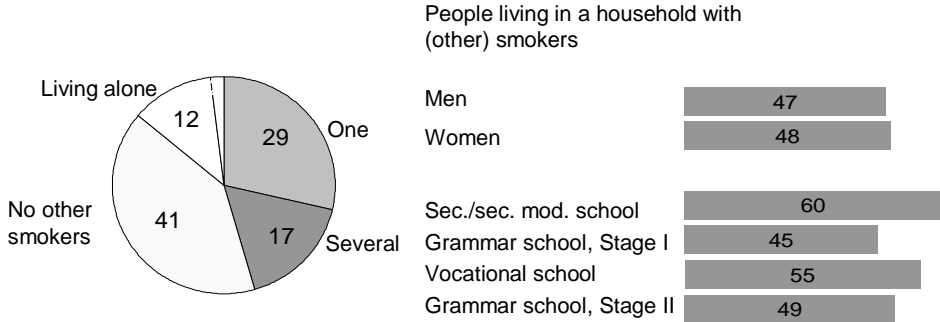
In contrast, there has been a major change in the situation at institutions of higher education. While 81 percent of students still said that smoking was allowed between lectures at their institution in 2001, the figure in 2004 is 59 percent.

There appear to be smoking regulations in many companies. Half (52%) of the trainees and young people in employment say smoking is allowed at their workplace. In this quarter, no change can be seen compared to 2001.

Smokers in the household

The majority of 12 to 25 year-old young people live in a household with other people, mainly (74%) with one or both parents. Upwards of the age of 20, more young people live with a partner (11% in total) or in shared accommodation (4% in total). According to the results of the Drug Affinity Study, 12 percent of young people live on their own.

Fig. 16 Smokers in the household in percent

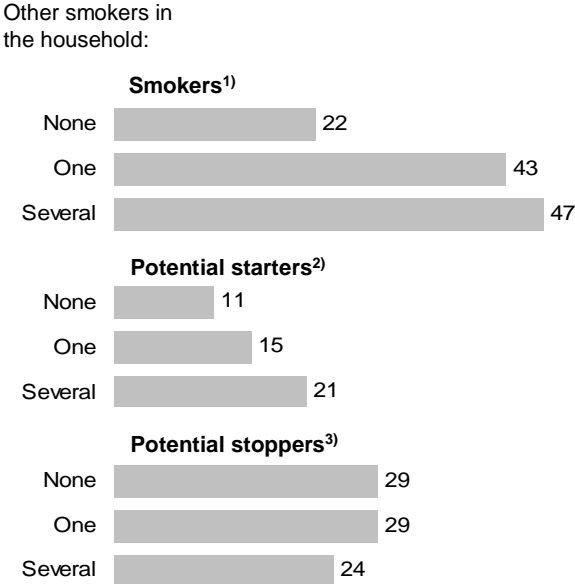


People smoke in more than half (55%) of the households in which 12 to 25 year-old young people live. This also includes those households in which only the interviewed young people smoke, such as single-person households of young smokers. As far as the social influence exerted by the household on the decision to smoke or not to smoke is concerned, it is more important to know the proportion of young people who live in a household together with at least one *other* smoker. This applies to slightly less than half (46%) of 12 to 25 year-olds. In the case of 29 percent, one (other) member of the household smokes, there even being several other smokers in the case of 17 percent. So, smoking is a natural part of their daily lives for half the young people, simply because they live with smokers in their families, partnerships or shared accommodation. There is no difference between young males and females as regards their belonging to smoker or non-smoker households.

It is striking that pupils of secondary and secondary modern schools come substantially more frequently from households in which other members of the household smoke than is the case with grammar school pupils in the first stage of secondary education. The same difference exists between pupils of vocational schools and those of the sixth form of grammar schools, although it is not so great in this case. Thus, the proportion of young people from smoker households is particularly high at the types of school where the smoker rates are also above average. It appears logical to assume that there is a link in this context between smoking in the family from which pupils come and smoking at school. The prerequisite for a link of this kind is that membership of a smoker household really does increase the likelihood of people smoking themselves.

That this is indeed the case can be confirmed by the results presented in Fig. 17. First of all, it can be seen there that young people from households with other smokers smoke substantially more frequently: 22 percent of those living exclusively with non-smokers are themselves smokers, the proportion of smokers doubling to 43 percent if there is only one (other) smoker in the household, and rising further to 47 percent if there are several smokers.

Fig. 17 Smokers in the household and smoking in percent



1) Self-assessment as regular or occasional smokers (smoker rate A)
 2) Proportion of non-smokers who could imagine themselves smoking in the next 12 months
 3) Proportion of smokers wanting to stop in the next 30 days

Moreover, the willingness of non-smokers to start smoking is influenced by their experience with smoking in the family, partnership or shared accommodation. 11 percent of young non-smokers from households where nobody smokes at all say they could imagine themselves smoking in the next 12 months. This proportion increases to 15 percent if there is one smoker in the household; if there are several smokers, the proportion of non-smokers who might possibly be willing to start smoking rises to 21 percent and is thus almost twice as high as in the case of young people from non-smoker households.

The decision to give up smoking is, however, not influenced by whether someone (else) in the household smokes - no noteworthy statistical relationship can be detected between experience with smoking in the household and willingness to stop smoking again.

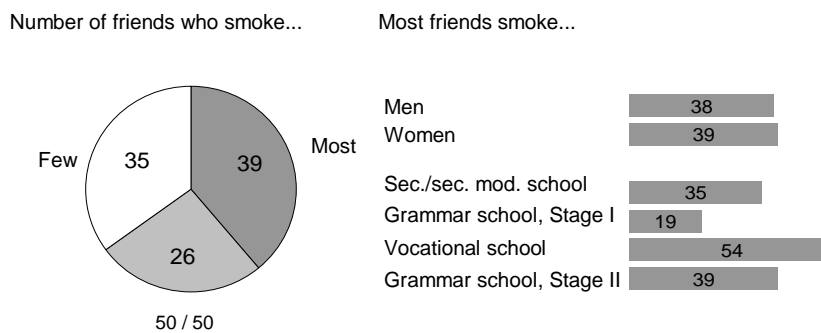
Smoking in the circle of friends

Whether the groups of friends that young people belong to have a similar influence to that of the family on smoking or not smoking will be examined below. Again, it can be assumed that the daily perception that many friends and acquaintances smoke could increase the probability of smoking.

However, it is much more difficult to quantify how many friends smoke. On the other hand, it is easily possible to estimate when many or few friends smoke. With the help of an indicator of this kind, it can be seen that roughly one-third (35%) of young people belong to groups of friends where only few people smoke. Two-thirds (65%) belong to groups of friends where at least half are smokers; this figure includes 39 percent who say that most of their friends smoke. Again, there are no differences between young males and young females.

Fig. 18 Smokers in the circle of friends

in percent



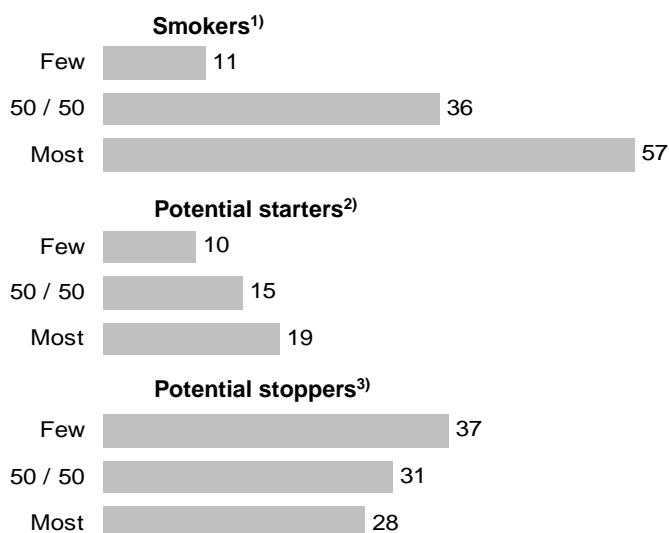
Here, too, there is again a link between smokers in the circle of friends and the type of school, and it is particularly pronounced in this case. The proportion of pupils whose friends are mostly smokers is 16 percentage points higher at secondary and secondary modern schools than in the first stage of secondary education at grammar schools. At vocational schools, this proportion is 15 percentage points higher than in the sixth form of grammar schools. These differences are a reflection of the higher smoker rates at secondary, secondary modern and vocational schools, where these smoker rates in turn increase the likelihood of more pupils belonging to groups of friends with many smokers.

Groups of friends with many smokers then again produce additional smokers. This can be confirmed by the results in Fig. 19, which again presents the relationship between smoking in the circle of friends and the decision to smoke or not to smoke. As is to be expected, it is first apparent that young people who have only few smokers among their friends mostly also do not smoke themselves, and that, conversely, those who belong to a group of friends who are predominantly smokers also often smoke themselves.

Furthermore, the influence of the peer group on the decision to start smoking can again be demonstrated here. 10 percent of non-smokers belonging to groups of friends with a low level of smoking say they could imagine starting to smoke in the next 12 months. In contrast, where the majority of friends smoke, the proportion of non-smokers willing to smoke is almost twice as high at 19 percent.

Fig. 19 Smokers in the circle of friends and smoking in percent

Smokers in the circle of friends:



- 1) Self-assessment as regular or occasional smokers (smoker rate A)
- 2) Proportion of non-smokers who could imagine themselves smoking in the next 12 months
- 3) Proportion of smokers wanting to stop in the next 30 days

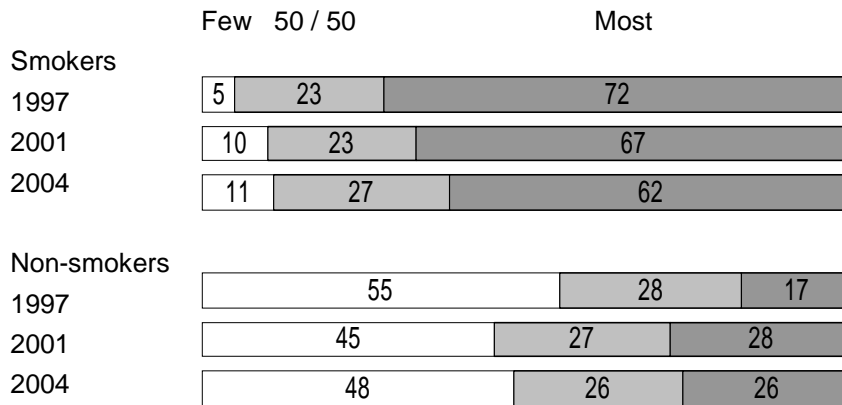
Unlike the households, however, the group of friends also has an influence on the willingness of smokers to give up smoking. 28 percent of young people whose friends are predominantly smokers want to give up smoking in the next 30 days. In peer groups with few smokers, the willingness to stop is substantially greater, with 37 percent of young smokers saying they would like to stop smoking in the near future.

These results point to an important social mechanism of tobacco prevention: the smoker rate has an influence on the number of smokers in the social environment of young people. At the same time, the perception of whether smoking is commonplace or only a rare exception in the family or the group of friends, increases or reduces the likelihood of becoming or remaining a smoker. Whether the decrease or increase in the smoker rate gathers or loses speed, depends on this mechanism. The perception of the prevalence of smoking in the household and in the group of friends thus constitutes two important indicators for monitoring tobacco prevention.

The development of one of these indicators, the perception of smoking in groups of friends, between 1997 and 2004 is presented in Fig. 20. It can be seen there that it is mainly among smokers that the impression is declining that the majority of their friends smoke: this was said by 72 percent of young smokers in 1997, compared to 62 percent in 2004. On the other hand, the proportion of people with few smokers in their groups of friends rose from 5 percent in 1997 to 11 percent in 2004. If this trend is also confirmed in the future, smokers will thus have a greater chance of giving up smoking.

Fig. 20 Smoking in the circle of friends, 1997 to 2004 in percent

Number of friends who smoke...

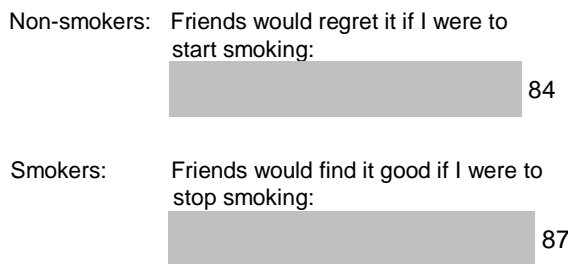


Among non-smokers, there was an increase between 1997 and 2001 in the proportion who say that most of their friends smoke. This is possibly a consequence of the marked spread of smoking in the mid-1990s.

Support of not smoking in groups of friends

The social influence of groups of friends on smoking must not be taken as meaning group pressure that irresistibly forces non-smokers into smoking. The opposite is more the case. The greater part of young people have the impression that their friends are more in favour of not smoking. This is revealed by the responses to a question directed at non-smokers, where they were asked how their friends would react if they were to start smoking. 84 percent of young non-smokers believe their friends would regret such a step.

Fig. 21 Not smoking as a social norm in percent



This result is backed by a second question, directed at the smokers this time, which asked how their friends would react if they were to stop smoking. 87 percent believe their friends would find it good. Not smoking is apparently the desirable social norm among non-smokers and smokers alike.

6. Attitudes to smoking

To conclude, the influence of attitudes on smoking or not smoking will be examined. On the one hand, this means attitudes that encourage smoking in that they give young people grounds for starting or continuing to smoke. On the other hand, it relates to health-consciousness as a key attitude opposing smoking. The reaction of young people to the warnings introduced on cigarette packs in 2003 is likewise investigated.

Reasons for smoking

The motives leading young people to smoke are measured as attitudes in the Drug Affinity Study: in the interview, young people were given ten statements that ascribe certain, positively rated effects to smoking and can serve young people as reasons for smoking. Using a 4-point scale, the respondents could wholly agree with these items, tend to agree with them, tend to reject them or wholly reject them.

Table 5 documents the results, expressed as the percentage who either wholly agreed with the statements, or tended to agree with them.

Table 5 Reasons for smoking by sex and age

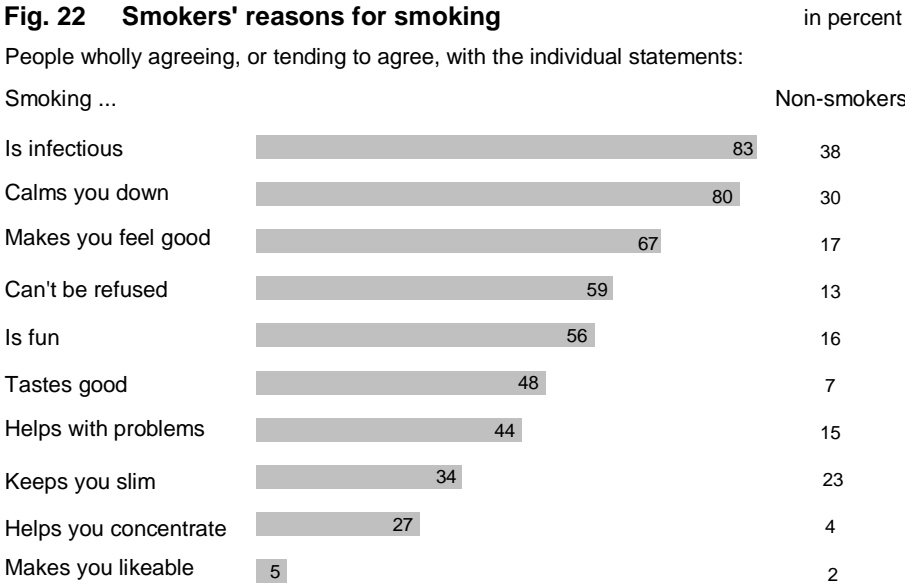
	Total	Men	Women	12 to 15 years	16 to 19 years	20 to 25 years
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Smoking is infectious in company	52	54	51	43	56	56
Smoking calms you down	46	48	43	33	52	51
A cigarette break makes you feel good	33	35	30	18	37	40
It's fun to smoke with friends	29	29	29	19	31	35
You can't say no when offered a cigarette	27	28	27	19	31	31
Smoking keeps you slim	26	28	25	20	27	30
Smoking helps you get through difficult situations	24	23	26	21	26	26
Smoking tastes good	20	21	18	11	22	24
Smoking helps you concentrate	11	13	10	6	14	14
People who smoke are likeable	3	4	3	3	3	3

The most widely accepted statement says that smoking is infectious in company. In second place comes the statement "Smoking calms you down". Relatively high acceptance is found for the statements that a cigarette makes you feel good (third place) and that it is fun to smoke together with your friends (fourth place). Fifth place goes to the statement that you can't say no when offered a cigarette.

Comparatively few people (11%) subscribe to the view that smoking helps you concentrate. There is hardly any agreement (3%) with the statement: "People who smoke are likeable".

The differences in Table 5 between men and women, and also between the age groups, are probably mainly the result of experience with smoking. Since there are only slight differences in smoking behaviour between the sexes, the attitudes of young men and young women to smoking are also very similar. In contrast, the agreement values among 12 to 15 year-olds are substantially lower than among older young people. The values deviate particularly strongly for the items that formulate smoking as a means of reducing emotional stress. For example, 33 percent of 12 to 15 year-olds agree with the statement "Smoking calms you down", this value increasing to 52 percent among 16 to 19 year-olds. 18 percent of 12 to 15 year-olds say that a cigarette break makes you feel good, agreement in the next-higher age group doubling to 37 percent.

The attitude items are apparently of only little importance for the majority of non-smokers as well. They agree with them much less frequently than the smokers. (The only statement with relatively similar degrees of acceptance is "Smoking keeps you slim". This view is held by 23 percent of non-smokers and 34 percent of smokers.)



There are two statements with which the great majority of young smokers wholly agree, and that are thus of the greatest importance for justifying smoking. 83 percent say that smoking is infectious in company, and 80 percent agree with the statement: "Smoking calms you down". The statement that a cigarette break makes you feel good is also largely undisputed, with 67 percent agreeing with it. The other two statements agreed with by the majority relate to smoking in the group of friends. 59 percent are of the opinion that you can't say no when offered a cigarette. 56 percent say it is fun to smoke with friends. In summary, these results can be interpreted as follows: among young people, smoking is very strongly associated with two emotional moods: with the group experience, on the one hand, and with the feeling of calm and well-being, on the other.

One striking finding is that less than half rate the taste of cigarettes as being a motive for smoking. 48 percent of young people are of the opinion that smoking tastes good, while 52 percent are obviously not so convinced about the matter.

Fewer young smokers seem to ascribe smoking the ability to help improve their personal situation. 44 percent of smokers agree with the statement that smoking helps you get through difficult situations. 27 percent are of the opinion that smoking has the effect of promoting concentration. Hardly any of the young smokers believe that a cigarette can enhance their personal appearance.

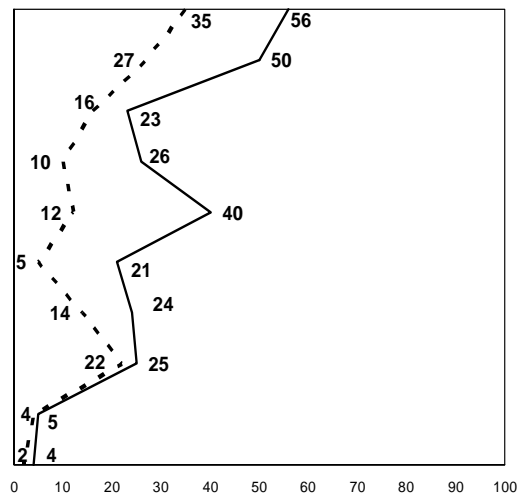
In addition, the results of the questions addressing attitudes provide information on why non-smokers want to smoke, and why smokers would like to give up smoking. To this end, the first point to examine is the attitudes in relation to which non-smokers who could imagine starting to smoke in the next 12 months differ from those who would not like to start smoking under any circumstances. This is done in Fig. 23, which compares the attitude profiles of these two groups. The gap between the two curves indicates where the biggest differences in attitude lie.

Fig. 23 Reasons for smoking - Potential starters

People wholly agreeing, or tending to agree, with the individual statements:

Smoking ...

- Is infectious
- Calms you down
- Makes you feel good
- Can't be refused
- Is fun
- Tastes good
- Helps with problems
- Keeps you slim
- Helps you concentrate
- Makes you likeable



Figures in percent

— Non-smokers who could imagine themselves smoking - - - Non-smokers who on no account want to smoke

The difference is greatest in connection with the attitude according to which it is fun to smoke with friends. 40 percent of potential starters say this, whereas only 12 percent of steadfast non-smokers are of this opinion. Potential starters also agree substantially more often with other attitudes relating to smoking in a group (smoking is infectious; you can't say no when offered a cigarette). Those who would like to start smoking have possibly more often experienced than other non-smokers that smoking is an important element of the group culture of their circle of friends. The impact of group influences is also indicated by the result of the preceding chapter, according to which non-smokers in peer groups including numerous smokers tend to be more willing to start smoking.

In addition to the influence of the group of friends, the notion that smoking calms you down also plays a relatively important role for potential starters. The proportion of people agreeing with this item is almost twice as high among potential smokers as among non-smokers who would like to maintain this status at all events. Moreover, the proportion of potential smokers

who think that smoking would taste good is unusually high for non-smokers; after all, only 7 percent of *all* non-smokers agree with this view.

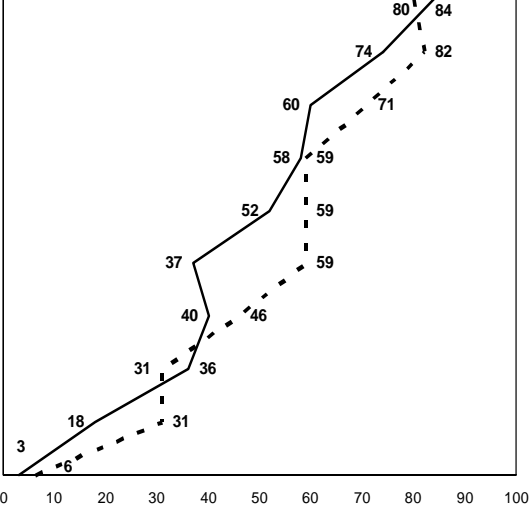
Figure 24 compares the attitude profile of smokers wanting to give up smoking in the next 30 days with that of smokers not wanting to quit. The comparison reveals that the profiles of the two groups do not differ to any great degree. Relatively large differences exist as regards four attitudes. The potential stoppers are slightly less often convinced (- 8 percentage points) that smoking calms you down, and likewise slightly less that a cigarette break makes you feel good (- 11 percentage points). Furthermore, fewer agree with the attitude that smoking helps you concentrate (- 13 percentage points). The largest difference (- 22 percentage points) is found for the item "Smoking tastes good". 37 percent of potential non-smokers agree with this statement, as opposed to 59 percent of convinced smokers - a particularly high value, even in comparison with the total population of smokers.

Fig. 24 Reasons for smoking - Potential stoppers

People wholly agreeing, or tending to agree, with the individual statements:

Smoking ...

- Is infectious
- Calms you down
- Makes you feel good
- Can't be refused
- Is fun
- Tastes good
- Helps with problems
- Keeps you slim
- Helps you concentrate
- Makes you likeable



Figures in percent

— Smokers who want to stop within 30 days - - - Smokers who do not want to stop

One common feature of all four items is that they express the expectation that cigarettes are capable of creating certain feelings, such as calmness, well-being, concentration and tasty enjoyment. Young people who want to stop smoking obviously believe to a lesser degree that smoking cigarettes is a way of achieving more pleasant feelings.

Perception of warnings on cigarette packs

Since October 2003, cigarette packs have borne newly formulated and designed EU warnings that draw attention to the health-related consequences of smoking. So, the Drug Affinity Study in early 2004 offered an opportunity to examine the reaction of 12 to 25 year-old young people to this measure in the first three months since its introduction.

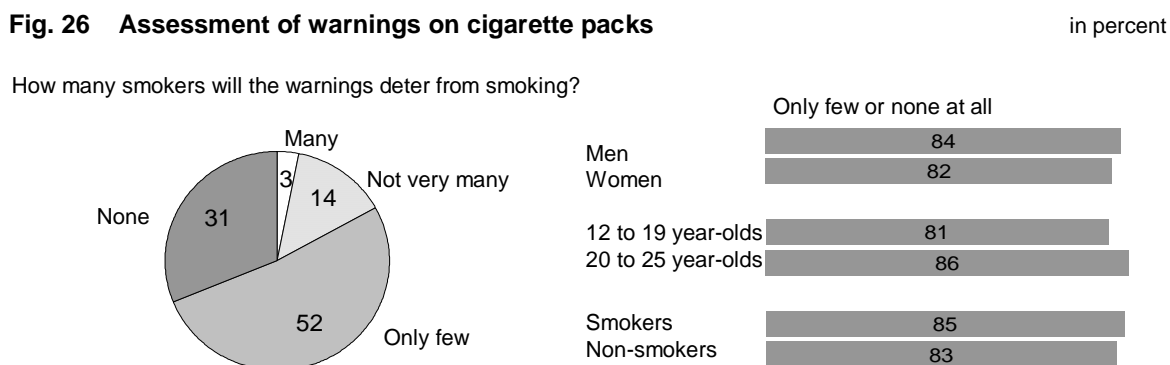
Fig. 25 Perception of health warnings on cigarette packs



¹⁾ Percentage basis: 12 to 25 year-olds purchasing packs of cigarettes

Success has obviously been achieved in getting a relatively large proportion of young people who buy packs of cigarettes to actually pay attention to the health warnings printed on them. 31 percent read them very often, 23 percent read them often, meaning that a good half (54%) of 12 to 25 year-old smokers regularly take in messages about the consequences of smoking. Roughly one-third (35%) only read the warnings occasionally or rarely, and 10 percent say they never read the warnings. Young women and girls read them more often (59%) than young men or boys (51%). Interest is substantially greater in the younger age groups of smokers: 63 percent of 12 to 19 year-olds say they read the warnings very often or often, while only 49 percent of 20 to 25 year-olds do so.

Fig. 26 Assessment of warnings on cigarette packs

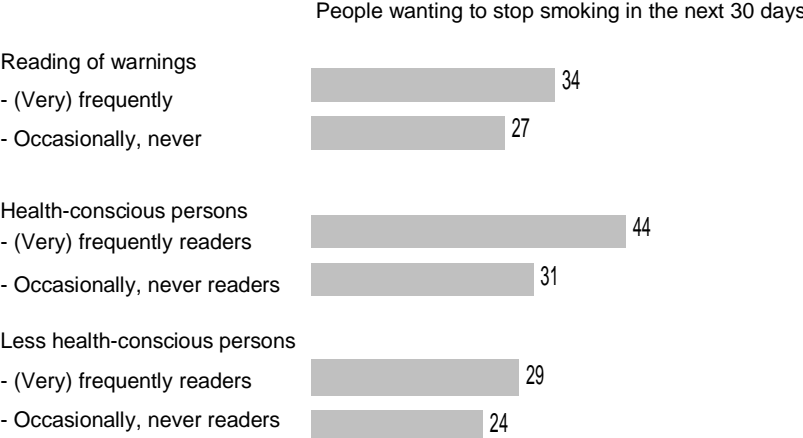


As far as the success of the measure is concerned, most young people (meaning all 12 to 25 year-olds in this case) are sceptical and do not believe that the warnings deter people from smoking. Only 3 percent believe that many smokers will give up because of them; a further 14 percent are of the opinion that a few will, but not very many.

The great majority (83%) believe the warnings will only deter a few people from smoking, or no one at all. This widespread scepticism is to be found both among men and among women, both in the younger age groups and in the older age groups. Nor is the lack of conviction about the effectiveness of the warnings restricted to smokers; a similarly high proportion of non-smokers are also convinced of the ineffectiveness of the measure. However, the low expectations of young people regarding the effectiveness of this education measure are in no way identical to its actual effectiveness.

The results of the Drug Affinity Study suggest that the warnings certainly do influence the behavioural intentions of young people as regards tobacco consumption. This is illustrated in Fig. 27, which shows the proportion of young smokers who want to stop smoking in the next 30 days - for those who read the warnings very often or often, and for those who perceive them only occasionally, rarely or never. It can be seen that the attentive readers of the warnings are more willing to quit smoking: 34 percent of them say they want to stop smoking in the next 30 days, as opposed to 27 percent of those who only rarely or never look at the warnings.

Fig. 27 Attention to warnings and cessation of smoking in percent



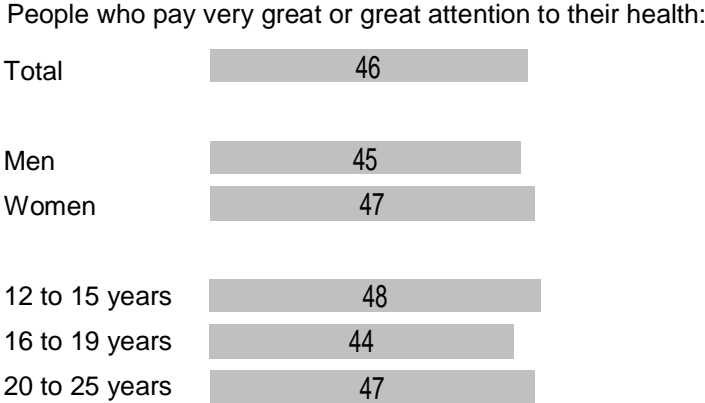
If this relationship between the perception of warnings and the willingness to give up smoking is examined separately for people who pay (very) great attention to their health (health-conscious persons) and people who pay only little or no attention to their health (less health-conscious persons), it becomes apparent that the effect of the warnings is based on interaction between health-consciousness and information on the health-related consequences of smoking. The willingness to give up smoking is particularly great if the readers of this information are young people who pay (very) great attention to their health. For example, among health-conscious persons, there is a marked difference of 13 points between readers and non-readers of the warnings: of those who read the warnings, 44 percent intend to stop smoking in the next 30 days; of those who read the warnings rarely or not at all, 31 percent want to give up smoking.

Among the less health-conscious people, the difference between readers and non-readers of the warnings is very much smaller, amounting to only 5 percentage points. So, the warnings alone have a relatively weak influence on willingness to quit smoking, but develop a relatively strong effect if health-consciousness creates the prerequisites for taking in the health-related information and putting it into practice.

Health-consciousness

The term health-consciousness means an attitude that does not relate specifically to tobacco consumption, but is a general expression of the importance young people attach to their health. The importance of health is measured by asking to what extent young people pay attention to their health. Respondents who say they generally pay very great or great attention to their health are classified as health-conscious persons. Those who reply that they pay moderate, less great or absolutely no attention to their health are rated as less health-conscious. On this basis, roughly half (46%) are health-conscious, including 9 percent who pay very great attention to their health. Accordingly, 54 percent of 12 to 25 year-olds can be regarded as being less health-conscious. Compared to the adult population of the Federal Republic of Germany aged 16 years and over, where the proportion of health-conscious persons is 56 percent (results of the representative BZgA survey "Public Awareness of AIDS 2003"), young people are slightly less health-conscious. It is remarkable that, when it comes to the subject of health-consciousness, there are no major differences between male and female young people, and that the age groups also hardly differ at all.

Fig. 28 Health-consciousness in percent

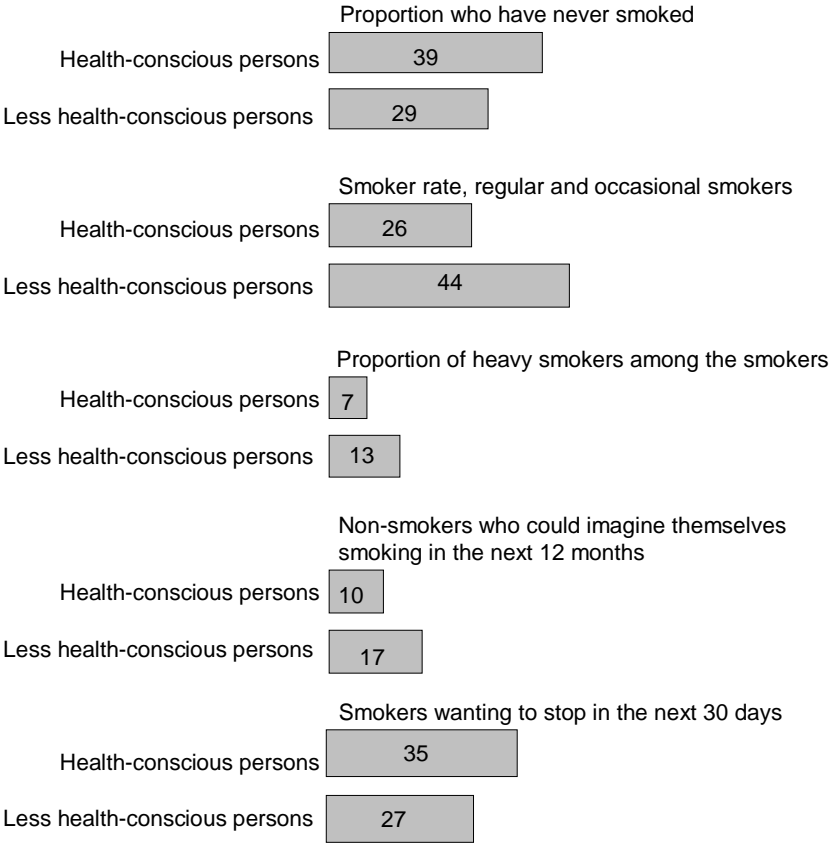


However, health-consciousness also generally has an influence on smoking. It obviously helps young people remain non-smokers. For instance, at 39 percent, the proportion of people who have never smoked is substantially higher among health-conscious persons than among less health-conscious persons, of whom 29 percent have never smoked to date. Moreover, there are fewer potential starters and more potential stoppers among health-conscious persons. Thus, the proportion of young non-smokers who could imagine smoking in the next 12 months is 10 percent among health-conscious persons, as opposed to 17 percent among less health-conscious persons. The proportion of smokers who want to stop in the next 30 days is 35 percent, compared to 27 percent among less health-conscious persons.

Conversely, the proportion of regular or occasional smokers is far higher among less health-conscious persons, amounting to 44 percent, compared to 26 percent among health-conscious

persons. Moreover, at 13 percent, the proportion of heavy smokers (smokers consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day) among less health-conscious smokers is roughly twice as high as among health-conscious smokers (7%).

Fig. 29 Health-consciousness and smoking in percent



These results make it logical to assume that a further spread of health-consciousness among young people has an influence on the development of not smoking in the long term. The data available from the Drug Affinity Study cannot be used to examine the effect of other measures, such as the ongoing "rauchfrei" ("smokeless") campaign of the Federal Centre for Health Education, on smoking and not smoking among young people. This campaign is to be evaluated by means of separate studies, the results of which will be published in the coming years.