

UK smoking rates continue to fall

October 8 2014



The UK has seen a fall in the number of adults who smoke in the country, according to [figures from the Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS).

Between 2012 and 2013, the proportion of over-18s who said they smoke cigarettes dropped 1.1 per cent to 18.7 per cent.

The latest figures suggest that the Government's plans to reduce [smoking rates](#) have so far been successful. But health experts stressed that further measures were needed to continue this [downward trend](#).

George Butterworth, tobacco policy manager at Cancer Research UK, highlighted that smoking caused more than a quarter of all cancer deaths, including more than eight in 10 UK cases of lung cancer.

"So it's great to see smoking rates continue to drop," he added.

"Successive government interventions such as tax rises, the ban on [tobacco advertising](#) and smoke free workplaces have stopped people starting and encouraged more smokers to quit," said Butterworth.

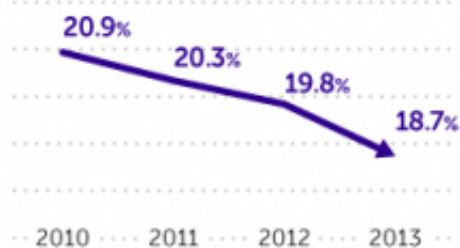
But he cautioned that rates wouldn't continue to drop without further government action.

"The Government needs to build on this success by safeguarding NHS [smoking cessation](#) services and protecting children from tobacco industry marketing by introducing plain, standardised packaging of [tobacco products](#) without delay."

Of the four UK nations, the drop in smoking rates was only statistically significant in England, where smoking rates for adults fell from 19.5 per cent in 2012 to 18.4 per cent in 2013.

SMOKING RATES FALL IN THE UK

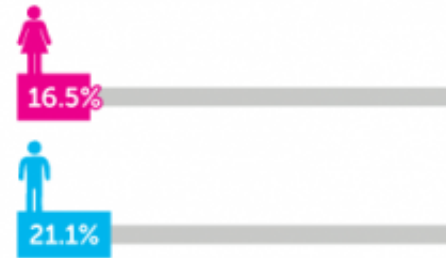
PERCENTAGE OF SMOKERS IN UK CONTINUES TO FALL



2010 & 2011 are financial-year figures. 2012 & 2013 are calendar-year figures. Ages 18+

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SMOKING RATES IN 2013 REMAIN LOWER IN WOMEN THAN IN MEN



 CANCER RESEARCH UK

According to the new statistics, Scotland remains the country in the UK with the highest proportion of adult smokers, at 21.1 per cent.

The figures also highlight a marked North/South divide in smoking rates in England, with rates notably higher in the North East, North West and Yorkshire compared with most other English regions.

Women in the UK are also far less likely to smoke than men, though the gap narrows after the age of 50. The biggest difference is seen in the 25 to 34 age range, where 27.8 per cent of men smoke, compared with 19.8 per cent of women.

The data was collected as part of the ONS's Integrated Household Survey, which questioned more than 260,000 people on issues of health behaviour and attitudes.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

Citation: UK smoking rates continue to fall (2014, October 8) retrieved 9 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-10-uk-fall.html>

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