

Support for a Policy Regulating Nicotine in Cigarettes: Findings from The International Tobacco Control (ITC) Project

Cummings KM¹, Nahhas GJ¹, Smith TT¹, Fong GT^{2,3}, Hammond D², Chung-Hall J², McNeill A⁴, Hitchman S⁴, O'Connor RJ⁵, Borland R⁶, Yong HH⁶
¹Medical University of South Carolina; ²University of Waterloo; ³Ontario Institute for Cancer Research; ⁴King's College London; ⁵Roswell Park Cancer Institute; ⁶Cancer Council Victoria

BACKGROUND

On July 28, 2017, the FDA announced a new emphasis in the federal government's regulatory framework towards tobacco product regulation that would focus on nicotine and support innovations to promote tobacco harm reduction based upon the continuum of risk for nicotine-containing products.

The FDA announced a three-pronged regulatory strategy involving:

1. Reducing the nicotine in traditional cigarettes to non-addictive levels
2. Increasing the number of approved nicotine replacement therapies available to smokers
3. Recognizing the potential of electronic cigarettes (ECs) and other non-combustible nicotine delivery products to help smokers transition away from cigarettes

The purpose of this study was to examine support for a government policy that would render cigarettes non-addictive so long as people could get nicotine in products other than cigarettes.

METHODS

Data for this study were based on 10,652 adult (18+ years) current and former smokers and vapers who participated in the 2016 ITC Tobacco and E-Cigarette Survey conducted in Canada (CA), England (EN), and the United States (US).

Study participants completed the survey online and were recruited two sources:

1. re-contact smokers and recent quitters who participated in previous ITC surveys
2. smokers, recent former smokers, and regular vapers (use at least weekly) were recruited from commercial online panels in each country.

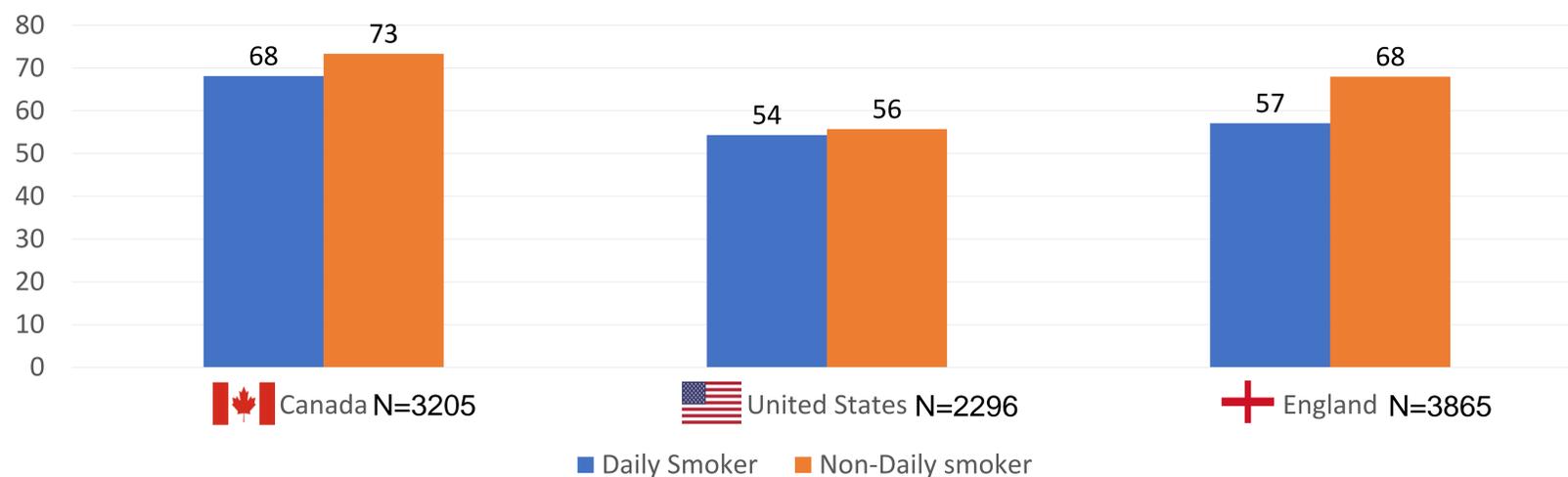
Participants were asked: **"If you could get nicotine in products other than tobacco, would you support or oppose a law that reduced the amount of nicotine in cigarettes and tobacco, to make them less addictive?"**

The three response options were:

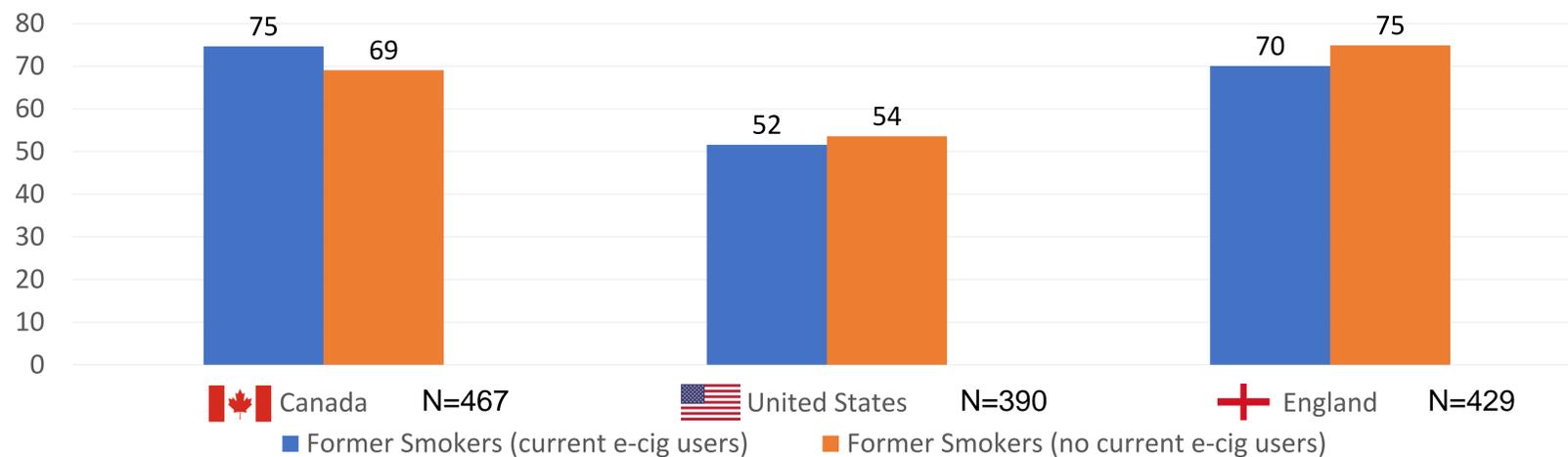
1. Support
2. Oppose
3. Don't know.

RESULTS

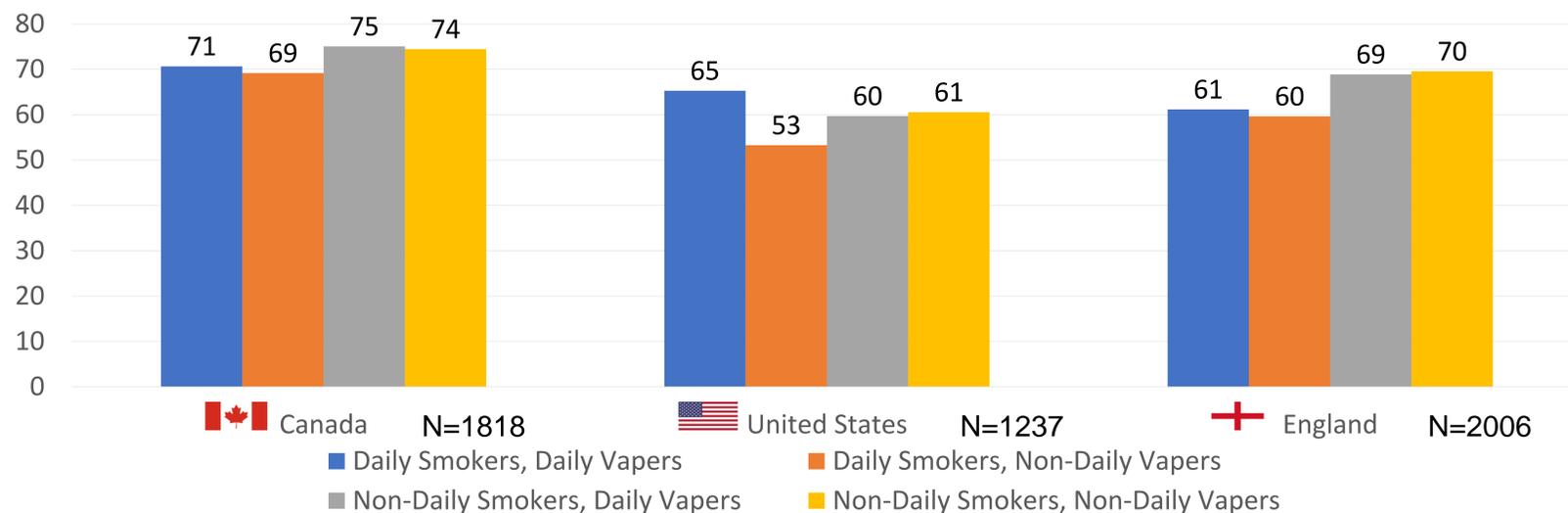
Support for low nicotine cigarettes of smokers by country (%)



Support for low nicotine cigarettes of former smokers by country (%)



Support for low nicotine cigarettes of daily/non-daily smokers and vapers by country (%)



CONCLUSIONS

❖ In all three countries, the majority of smokers and former smokers indicated support for a government policy that would render cigarettes non-addictive so long as people could get nicotine in products other than cigarettes.

❖ Support for the policy differed by country with support highest in CA (70%), followed by EN (64%) and the US (54%). All pairwise differences were significant at $p < 0.05$.

❖ In the US and CA, support for the policy was strongest among young adults, but in EN support was more consistent across age groups (data not shown).

❖ Support for the policy was slightly higher among non-daily smokers compared to daily smokers.

❖ Support for the policy was strong among former smokers regardless of vaping status.

❖ Support for the policy was strong among dual users of cigarettes and vaping products.



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 Contact: cummingk@musc.edu