

# Death Rate from Smoking

Gallup Pakistan Analysis of Global Burden of Disease

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## [PRESS RELEASE](#)

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According to the Global Burden of Disease 2024, Pakistan reports an annual death rate from smoking of 91.1 per 100,000 people, notably higher than the averages for South Asia (78.1) and the rest of the world (72.6). – **Death Rate from Smoking**

Islamabad, January 14th, 2025

Gallup Pakistan, as part of its Big Data Analysis initiative, is looking at Death Rate from Smoking, which can be found [HERE](#).

#### **What is the Big Data Analysis Series by Gallup?**

Gallup Pakistan's Big Data series was started by Bilal I Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan. Bilal explains the rationale of the series: *"The usual complaint from academics and policy makers is that Pakistan does not have data availability. Our experience negates that. Pakistan has lots of data, but it is not available in a usable form and not widely accessible. At Gallup we plan to bridge this gap in terms of accessibility and use of data. The Gallup Big Data series has earlier worked with data sets such as [PSLM](#), [Labour Force Survey](#), and [Economic Survey reports](#) as well as [National Census Reports](#) and [Election Commission Data sets](#). The current series is using the [Global Burden of Disease dataset](#), which provides a variety of health-related statistics. We hope that these series are useful, and we welcome both feedback as well as possible collaborations as we create a public good in the form of useful data sets in Pakistan."*

#### **What data points this current edition covers:**

This series aims to present the important learnings about death rate from smoking, for policy makers, the public, as well as for marketers in an easy and understandable way. This edition looks at the Global Burden of Disease 2024 dataset. The series' main aim is to provide data. Implications of these data points for development sector as well as wider socio-political ramifications is something we would like to trigger in relevant circles.

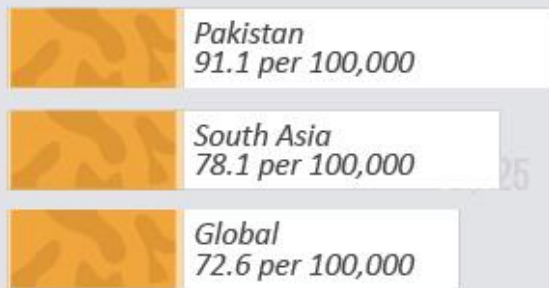
# Death Rate from Smoking

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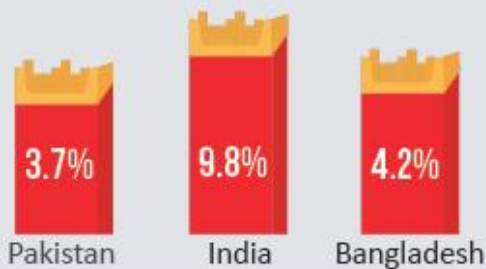
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Between 1990 and 2021, Pakistan experienced a 35% relative decrease in smoking-related death rates, which is lower than the reductions achieved by India (37%), South Asia (38%), and the global average (42%).



According to the World Health Organization, purchasing 100 packs of the most-sold cigarette brand in Pakistan requires 3.7% of the GDP per capita. This figure is considerably lower than India's 9.8% and Bangladesh's 4.2%



According to a Gallup Pakistan opinion poll conducted in 2022, an overwhelming 80% of smokers expressed a desire to quit smoking.



Source: Global Burden of Disease 2024, analysis by Gallup Pakistan  
[www.gallup.com.pk](http://www.gallup.com.pk)



## Key Findings:

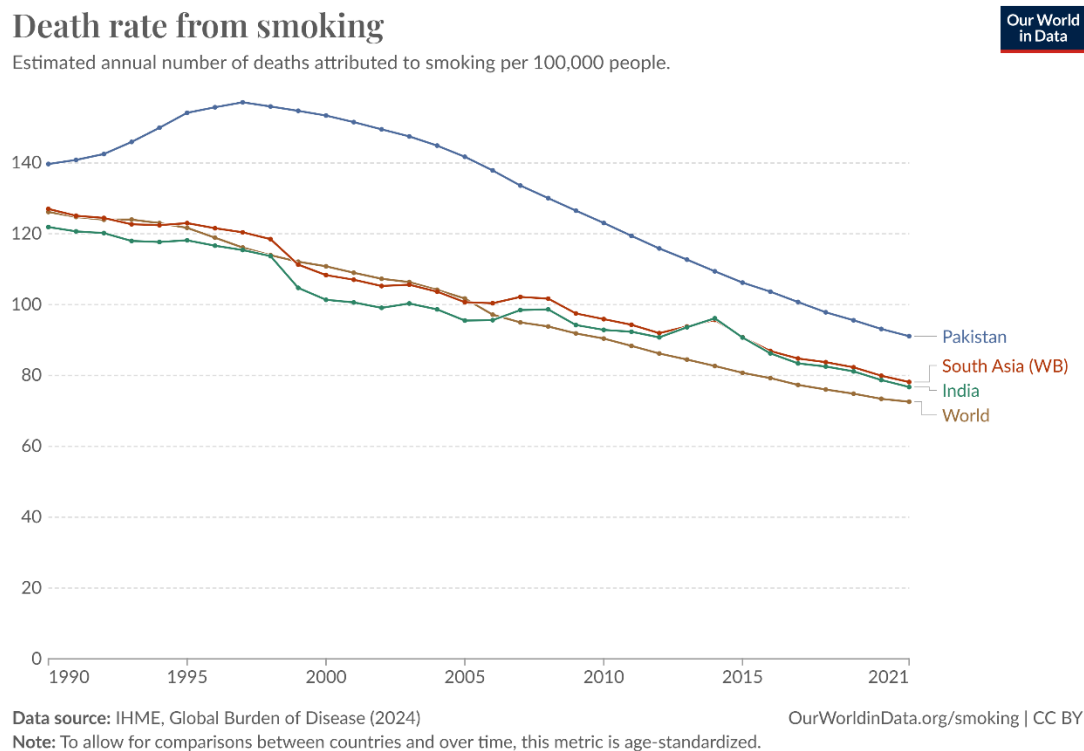
1. According to the Global Burden of Disease 2024, Pakistan reports an annual death rate from smoking of 91.1 per 100,000 people, notably higher than the averages for South Asia (78.1) and the rest of the world (72.6).
2. Between 1990 and 2021, Pakistan experienced a 35% relative decrease in smoking-related death rates, which is lower than the reductions achieved by India (37%), South Asia (38%), and the global average (42%).
3. According to the World Health Organization, purchasing 100 packs of the most-sold cigarette brand in Pakistan requires 3.7% of the GDP per capita. This figure is considerably lower than India's 9.8% and Bangladesh's 4.2%.
4. From 2012 to 2022, the share of GDP per capita required to purchase 100 packs in Pakistan has increased by 38%, reflecting rising cigarette prices.
5. According to a Gallup Pakistan opinion poll conducted in 2022, an overwhelming 80% of smokers expressed a desire to quit smoking.

**1. According to the Global Burden of Disease 2024, Pakistan reports an annual death rate from smoking of 91.1 per 100,000 people, notably higher than the averages for South Asia (78.1) and the rest of the world (72.6).**

This burden of smoking-related deaths is particularly pronounced, with Pakistan attributing 18.5 more deaths per 100,000 people to smoking than the global average and 13 more than the South Asian average. In comparison, neighboring India reports 76.8 deaths per 100,000 people attributed to smoking, underscoring Pakistan's relatively higher burden within the region.

While the timeline from 1990 to 2021 indicates a general decline in Pakistan’s smoking-related death rate, there are clear anomalies, such as the peak in 1997 when the death rate soared to 157.1 per 100,000 people. Despite the downward trend, the gap between Pakistan and the South Asian regional average has persisted, with Pakistan consistently reporting higher death rates due to smoking. This sustained disparity highlights structural or systemic challenges unique to Pakistan that have hindered more substantial progress.

*Figure 1: Death rate from smoking*



Source: Global Burden of Disease 2024<sup>1</sup>, analysis by Gallup Pakistan

**2. Between 1990 and 2021, Pakistan experienced a 35% relative decrease in smoking-related death rates, which is lower than the reductions achieved by India (37%), South Asia (38%), and the global average (42%).**

These comparative figures suggest that while efforts have been made to address the issue, Pakistan has lagged in mitigating the impact of smoking on public health.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/death-rate-smoking?tab=chart&country=PAK-WB\\_SA-OWID\\_WRL](https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/death-rate-smoking?tab=chart&country=PAK-WB_SA-OWID_WRL)

This slower progress can likely be attributed to multiple factors. Lapses in anti-smoking legislation, such as insufficient taxation on tobacco products or weak enforcement of public smoking bans, may contribute to continued tobacco consumption. Additionally, awareness campaigns aimed at discouraging smoking might be underfunded or ineffective in reaching key demographics. Another critical factor could be the lack of accessible treatment for smoking-related health conditions or inadequate support for cessation programs, which hampers efforts to reduce smoking rates and improve long-term health outcomes.

*Figure 2: Change between 1990-2021*

Age-standardized deaths from all causes attributed to smoking per 100,000 people deaths per 100,000 people

Country/area ↓	↑↓ 1990	↑↓ 2021	↑↓ Absolute Change	↑↓ Relative Change
India	121.9	76.8	-45.1	-37%
Pakistan	139.7	91.1	-48.6	-35%
<b>Other</b>				
South Asia (WB)	127.0	78.1	-48.9	-38%
World	126.2	72.6	-53.6	-42%

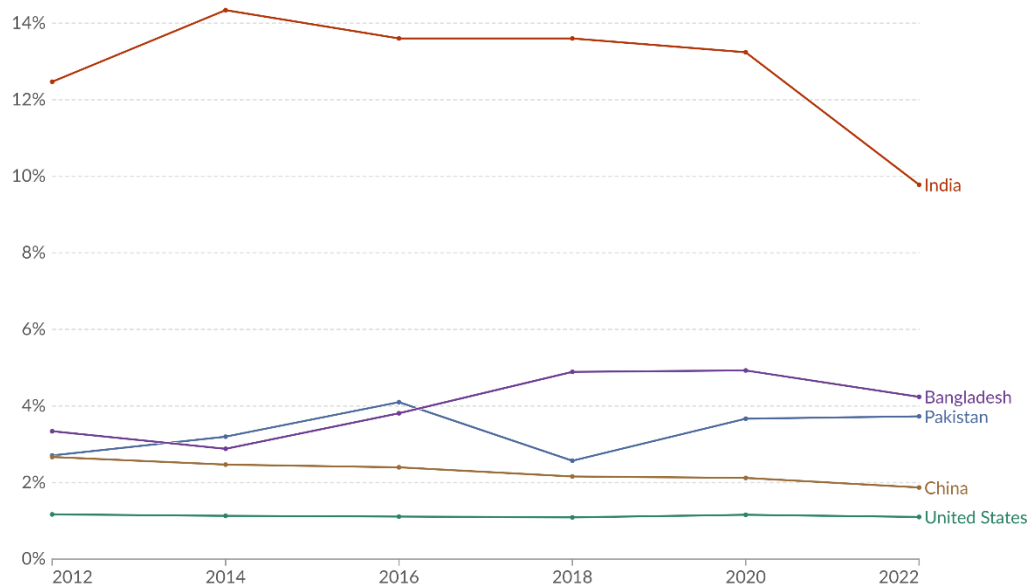
Source: Global Burden of Disease 2024, analysis by Gallup Pakistan

Affordability of cigarettes is a critical factor that can influence smoking prevalence and, by extension, smoking-related deaths. Lower barriers to cigarette purchasing, such as lower prices, can make smoking more accessible, particularly to younger or economically disadvantaged individuals, thereby increasing consumption. Conversely, higher prices can deter a segment of potential smokers or reduce the intensity with which current smokers consume cigarettes. This dynamic underscores the role of economic measures, such as taxation and pricing, in public health strategies aimed at reducing smoking.

*Figure 3: Affordability of cigarettes*

### Affordability of cigarettes

Share of the average GDP per capita required to purchase 100 packs of the most-sold brand of cigarettes in a given country. This price includes taxes.



Data source: World Health Organization - Global Health Observatory (2024)

OurWorldinData.org/smoking | CC BY

Source: World Health Organization, analysis by Gallup Pakistan



- 3. According to the World Health Organization, purchasing 100 packs of the most-sold cigarette brand in Pakistan requires 3.7% of the GDP per capita. This figure is considerably lower than India's 9.8% and Bangladesh's 4.2%, suggesting that cigarettes are relatively more affordable in Pakistan.**

By comparison, China (1.9%) and the United States (1.1%) are on the lower end of the affordability spectrum. However, both China and the U.S. have implemented strong anti-smoking policies, including public smoking bans, aggressive awareness campaigns, and strict regulations on advertising, which act as effective deterrents despite the lower cost.

- 4. From 2012 to 2022, the share of GDP per capita required to purchase 100 packs in Pakistan has increased by 38%, reflecting rising cigarette prices.**

On the other hand, affordability has increased in India and Bangladesh over the same period by 22% and 30%, respectively. Notably, even with these reductions, India's affordability metric (9.8%) is nearly three times higher than Pakistan's. This suggests that while cigarette prices in Pakistan are increasing, they have not yet reached levels that might meaningfully impact smoking behavior on a larger scale.

*Figure 4: Relative change in affordability of cigarettes (2012-2022)*

Affordability of cigarettes: percentage of GDP per capita required to purchase 2000 cigarettes of the most sold brand percent

Country or region ↓	↑↓ 2012	↑↓ 2022	↑↓ Absolute Change	↑↓ Relative Change
Bangladesh	3.34%	4.24%	+0.90 pp	+27%
China	2.67%	1.87%	-0.80 pp	-30%
India	12.47%	9.78%	-2.69 pp	-22%
Pakistan	2.71%	3.73%	+1.02 pp	+38%
United States	1.17%	1.10%	-0.07 pp	-6%

Source: World Health Organization<sup>2</sup>, analysis by Gallup Pakistan

The data highlights the need for a multifaceted approach to tobacco control in Pakistan. Monetary restrictions, such as increased taxes and higher price points, are vital but insufficient on their own. These measures must be paired with long-term interventions addressing the broader cultural acceptance of smoking. Awareness campaigns that clearly communicate the risks of smoking, robust support for cessation programs, and rehabilitation facilities for smokers are essential components of a successful strategy. Without these complementary measures, the affordability of cigarettes in Pakistan will continue to undermine efforts to curb smoking and its associated health burdens.

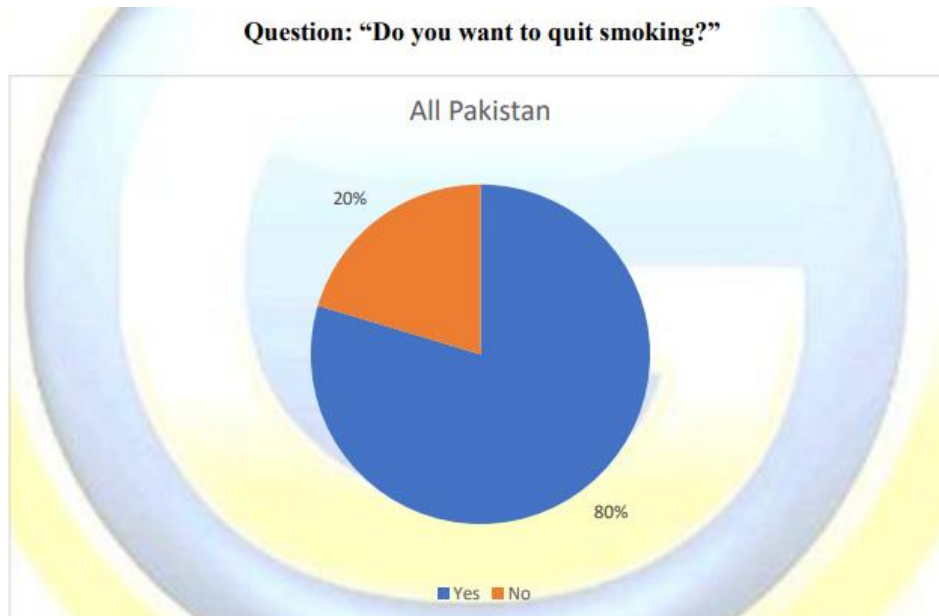
- 5. According to a Gallup Pakistan opinion poll conducted in 2022, an overwhelming 80% of smokers expressed a desire to quit smoking.**

The survey posed a straightforward question to a nationally representative sample of adult men and women who smoke: "Do you want to quit smoking?" While 80% responded affirmatively, acknowledging their wish to quit, 20% stated they had no intention of doing so.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/affordability-cigarettes?tab=chart&country=PAK~IND~CHN~USA~BGD>

This data reveals a critical insight: the vast majority of smokers are already aware of the negative implications of their habit and are open to the idea of cessation. This acknowledgment creates a significant opportunity for public health interventions. A well-structured combination of awareness campaigns, accessible cessation programs, and community support could effectively guide this large pool of willing individuals toward quitting.

*Figure 5: Pakistani smokers who want to quit*



Source: Gallup & Gilani Pakistan, 2022<sup>3</sup>

However, the data also raises important questions. If such a substantial proportion of smokers wish to quit, what barriers prevent them from doing so? These could include lack of access to smoking cessation resources, insufficient awareness about available programs, or societal and psychological factors such as stress and peer influence. Addressing these barriers through targeted interventions—such as subsidized cessation aids, counseling services, and sustained public education campaigns—can significantly enhance the likelihood of successful quitting.

This widespread willingness to quit smoking among Pakistan's smokers underscores the potential for impactful tobacco control policies. By leveraging this motivation with strategic nudges and support, policymakers can reduce smoking prevalence and the associated health burdens, improving overall public health outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> [https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/21st-Dec\\_21-Dec\\_merged.pdf](https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/21st-Dec_21-Dec_merged.pdf)



### **Wish to Contribute to Gallup Big Data Analysis?**

Gallup Pakistan is looking for collaboration with researchers to expand the Big Data Analysis project. If you have any ideas, please write to Bilal I Gilani, Project Director, Big Data Analysis at Gallup Pakistan.

### **Wish to know more about the Global Burden of Disease?**

The Global Burden of Disease Study is a comprehensive regional and global research program of disease burden that assesses mortality and disability from major diseases, injuries, and risk factors. GBD is a collaboration of over 3600 researchers from 145 countries.

You can find more information on Death Rate from smoking, and complete tables, on <https://www.healthdata.org/research-analysis/gbd>

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