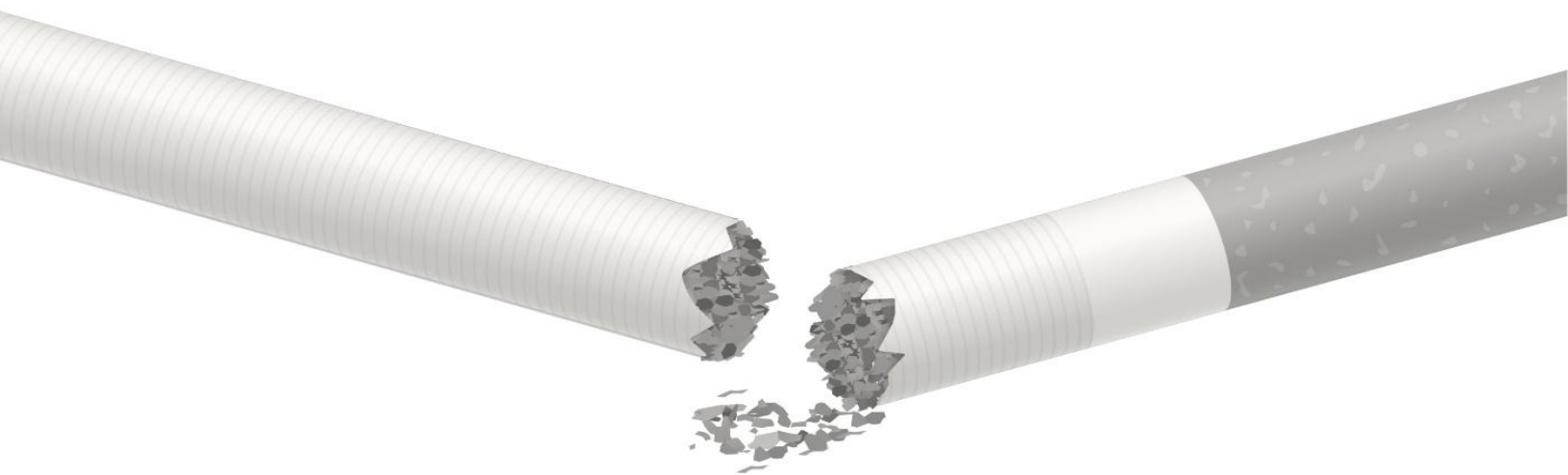




Gallup Pakistan Analysis Global of Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) Pakistan 2014 & 2024



PRESS RELEASE

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Adult Tobacco Use in Pakistan Fell by 3 Percentage Points in a Decade — But the Entire Decline Belongs to Men; Women's Rates Have Not Moved

Islamabad, September 4th, 2026

Adult tobacco use in Pakistan has declined meaningfully over the past decade. But that progress is not shared equally. Data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), conducted in Pakistan in 2014 and again in 2024 among adults aged 15 and older, shows that overall tobacco use fell from 19.1% to 16.1% — a fall of 3 percentage points. Among men, tobacco smoking fell from 22.2% to 15.8% — a fall of 6.4 percentage points that is statistically significant. Among women, tobacco smoking moved from 2.1% to 3.3% — a change that is not statistically significant. The decade's worth of progress, in other words, belongs almost entirely to men. Meanwhile, secondhand smoke exposure has fallen across every one of the ten locations measured in both surveys — yet restaurants still expose 55.2% of visitors, public transport 45.4%, and private buildings 54.8%. The decline in secondhand smoke burden is real and substantial, but the absolute levels in several settings remain high enough to represent an ongoing public health concern.

What is the Big Data Analysis Series by Gallup?

Gallup Pakistan's Big Data series was initiated by Bilal I. Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan. As he explains: *"Pakistan does not suffer from a lack of data, but from limited accessibility and weak translation of numbers into understanding. Gallup Pakistan bridges this gap by analyzing large, often under-used datasets — from PSLM and Labour Force Surveys to Economic Surveys and National Census data — so these statistics can meaningfully inform policy and public discourse."*

What data points this current edition covers:

This analysis is based on the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) Pakistan 2024 Fact Sheet and the GATS Pakistan 2014 & 2024 Comparison Fact Sheet. GATS is a nationally representative household survey of adults aged 15 and older, conducted in Pakistan in 2014 by the National Institute of Population Studies Training and Research (NIPS&TR) and repeated in 2024 under the same institution in coordination with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and the World Health Organization. The 2014 survey included 7,831 interviews (response rate 81.0%); the 2024 survey included 11,167 interviews (response rate 95.6%). Changes marked as statistically significant in the source documents are indicated as such throughout this analysis; all other changes should be interpreted with caution.

Adult Tobacco Use in Pakistan Fell by 3 Percentage Points in a Decade — But the Entire Decline Belongs to Men; Women's Rates Have Not Moved

Overall tobacco use fell from **19.1%** in 2014 to **16.1%** in 2024 — a fall of 3 percentage points. Among men, tobacco use fell from **31.8%** to **25.8%** a fall of 6 percentage points. Among women, the change from **5.8%** to **5.9%** is not statistically significant.

2014

19.1%

NATIONAL
TOBACCO USE
RATE
PREVALENCE

2024

16.1%

NATIONAL
TOBACCO USE
RATE
PREVALENCE

Current smokeless tobacco use stands at **7.3%** overall — **11.3%** among men and **2.9%** among women. Current waterpipe (hookah/shisha) use stands at **2.6%** overall, virtually equal between men (**2.7%**) and women (**2.4%**).

2014

14.9%

SUCCESSFULLY QUIT
EVER-DAILY MALE SMOKERS
PREVALENCE

2014

6.8%

SUCCESSFULLY QUIT
EVER-DAILY FEMALE SMOKERS
PREVALENCE

The average number of cigarettes smoked per day among daily smokers fell from **13.6** in 2014 to **11.8** in 2024 — a reduction of **1.8** cigarettes per day.

2014

13.6

AVERAGE DAILY USE
DAILY SMOKERS
NATIONAL USAGE RATE
PREVALENCE

2024

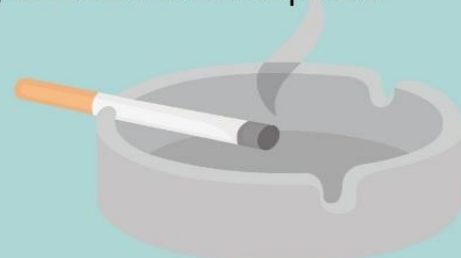
11.8

AVERAGE DAILY USE
DAILY SMOKERS
NATIONAL USAGE RATE
PREVALENCE



Secondhand smoke exposure declined significantly across all 10 locations measured — the largest fall was at workplaces (**69.1%** to **35.9%**, a fall of **33.2** percentage points) and restaurants (**86.0%** to **55.2%**, a fall of 30.8 percentage points).

Schools recorded the largest fall in secondhand smoke exposure — from **25.1%** to **11.5%**, a fall of **13.6** percentage points. Yet **11.5%** of adults visiting schools are still exposed.



Key Findings:

1. Overall tobacco use fell from 19.1% in 2014 to 16.1% in 2024 — a fall of 3 percentage points. Among men, tobacco use fell from 31.8% to 25.8% — a fall of 6 percentage points. Among women, the change from 5.8% to 5.9% is not statistically significant.
2. Tobacco smoking declined from 12.4% to 9.8% overall — a fall of 2.6 percentage points. Men drove this: from 22.2% to 15.8%, a fall of 6.4 percentage points. Women's change from 2.1% to 3.3% is not statistically significant.
3. Current smokeless tobacco use stands at 7.3% overall — 11.3% among men and 2.9% among women. Current waterpipe (hookah/shisha) use stands at 2.6% overall, virtually equal between men (2.7%) and women (2.4%).
4. Among ever-daily male smokers, only 14.9% had successfully quit by 2024 — and among ever-daily female smokers, only 6.8% — meaning the vast majority of those who ever smoked daily are still smoking.
5. The average number of cigarettes smoked per day among daily smokers fell from 13.6 in 2014 to 11.8 in 2024 — a reduction of 1.8 cigarettes per day.
6. Secondhand smoke exposure declined significantly across all 10 locations measured — the largest fall was at workplaces (69.1% to 35.9%, a fall of 33.2 percentage points) and restaurants (86.0% to 55.2%, a fall of 30.8 percentage points).
7. Restaurants remain the highest-exposure location for secondhand smoke at 55.2%, followed by private buildings (54.8%) and public transportation (45.4%).
8. Schools recorded the largest fall in secondhand smoke exposure — from 25.1% to 11.5%, a fall of 13.6 percentage points. Yet 11.5% of adults visiting schools are still exposed.
9. The proportion of smokers who noticed health warnings on cigarette packages declined from 77.5% to 58.1% — a fall of 19.4 percentage points — despite warning size being increased in 2018 and 2019. Those who considered quitting because of the warnings also fell, from 29.7% to 20.2%.
10. Quit attempts remained statistically unchanged: 24.7% in 2014 versus 24.1% in 2024. Nearly half of smokers who visited a healthcare provider were advised to quit (49.9%), but only 24.1% actually attempted to do so.
11. The inflation-adjusted cost of 20 cigarettes rose from PKR 120.6 in 2014 to PKR 236.3 in 2024 — a rise of PKR 115.7 — yet average monthly cigarette expenditure among smokers also rose, from PKR 2,263.7 to PKR 3,852.9, suggesting that remaining smokers are spending more rather than smoking less.

The full dataset is accessible through the Gallup Pakistan Digital Analytics dashboard — Pakistan Tobacco Insights — at galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/pakistan-tobacco-insights/

1. The Gender Gap: A Decade of Progress That Left Women Behind

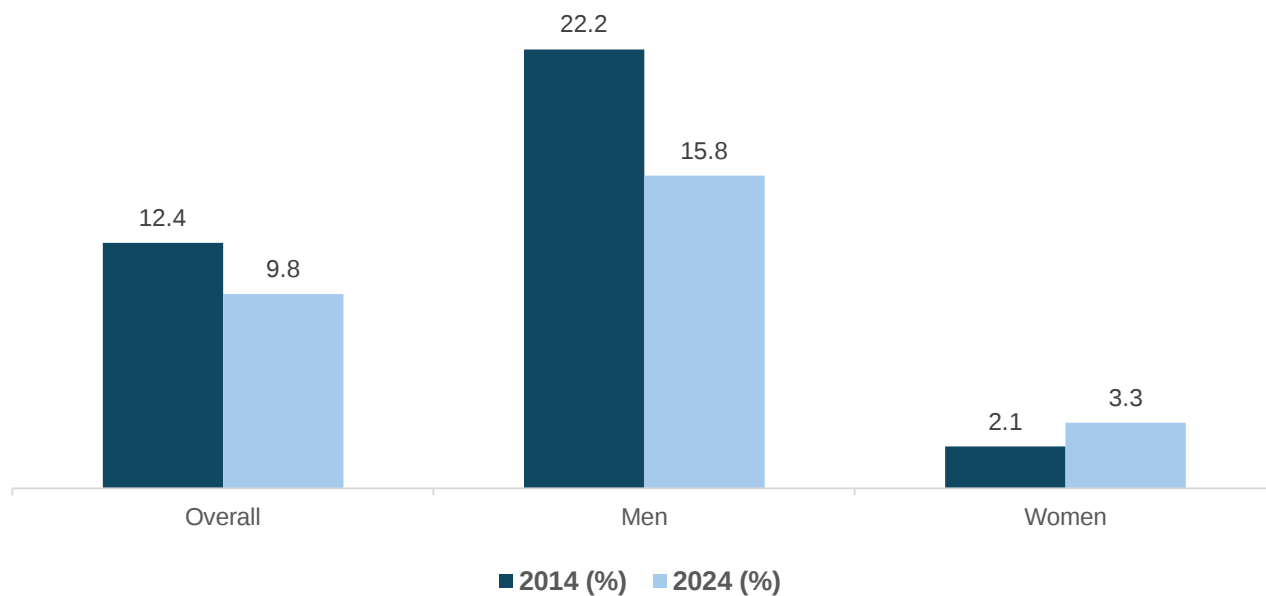
Between 2014 and 2024, Pakistan reduced male tobacco use substantially. The male tobacco smoking rate fell from 22.2% to 15.8% — a fall of 6.4 percentage points that is statistically significant. Male tobacco use in its broadest sense fell from 31.8% to 25.8% — a fall of 6 percentage points. These are real, substantive reductions achieved over a decade of tobacco control effort. But they describe only half the adult population.

Among women, neither tobacco use (5.8% to 5.9%) nor tobacco smoking (2.1% to 3.3%) shows a statistically significant change. The numerical values suggest a possible increase in female smoking, but the surveys caution that this change does not meet the threshold of statistical significance. The analytically important conclusion is not that female smoking has risen, but that it has not fallen — in a decade during which male rates fell by 6.4 percentage points. Whatever combination of policy, price, and public health messaging drove the male decline either did not reach women or did not reach them in a way that changed behavior.

The age-group data from the 2024 survey illuminates where the tobacco burden is concentrated. Among men, tobacco use rises steeply with age — from 12.0% among those aged 15–24 to 29.2% among 25–44 year olds and 33.9% among those 65 and above, with the highest rate of 37.2% in the 45–64 group. Among women, the picture is different: rates are low among younger cohorts — 2.5% at ages 15–24 and 6.3% at ages 25–44 — but rise to 13.7% among those aged 65 and above, more than double the rate among younger women. This concentration of tobacco use among older women is consistent with tobacco use having been more common among women of earlier generations and less common among women today. The overall female rate of 5.9% therefore masks an important internal distribution, where older women's tobacco use is substantially higher than the headline figure implies.

The product mix in 2024 adds further context to the gender picture. Smokeless tobacco is used by 11.3% of men and 2.9% of women. Waterpipe is the most gender-equal product, used by 2.7% of men and 2.4% of women — the smallest male-female gap of any tobacco category. E-cigarettes remain marginal: current use stands at 0.5% among men and 0.1% among women, though 27.2% of men and 13.5% of women have at least heard of e-cigarettes, indicating growing awareness of the product category even if uptake remains low.

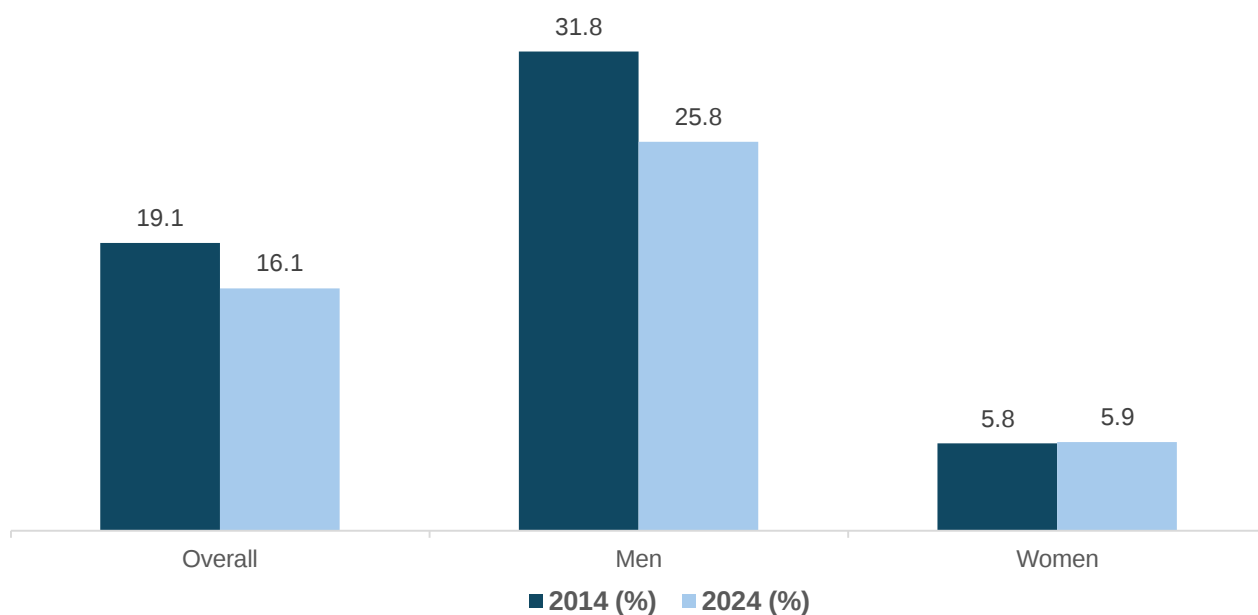
Current tobacco smoking: 2014 vs 2024, by sex (%)



Source: GATS Pakistan 2014 and 2024 Fact Sheets; GATS Pakistan 2014 & 2024 Comparison Fact Sheet.

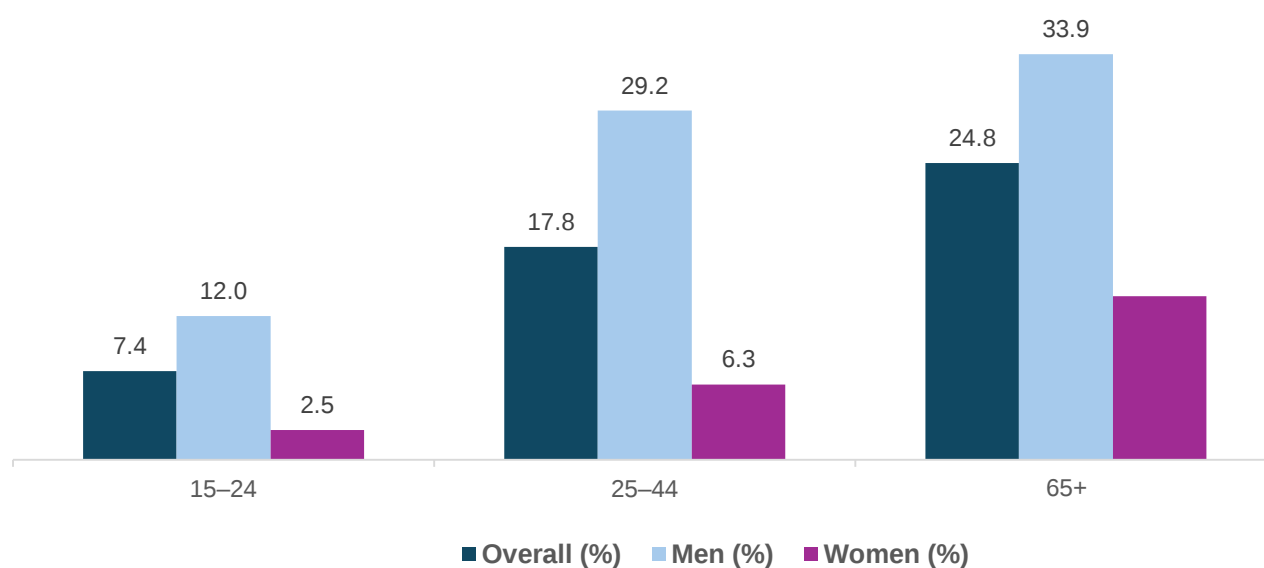
Current tobacco use: 2014 vs 2024, by sex (%)

Adults 15+. Female changes are not statistically significant. Male declines are significant.



Current tobacco use by age group and sex, 2024 (%)

Adults 15+. Source: GATS Pakistan 2024 Fact Sheet.



Note: Female tobacco use/smoking changes are NOT statistically significant. Male declines are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Female 45-64 age group value not available in published fact sheet.

Source: GATS Pakistan 2014 and 2024 Fact Sheets; GATS Pakistan 2014 & 2024 Comparison Fact Sheet.

2. Secondhand Smoke: Every Location Improved, But the Absolute Burden Remains High

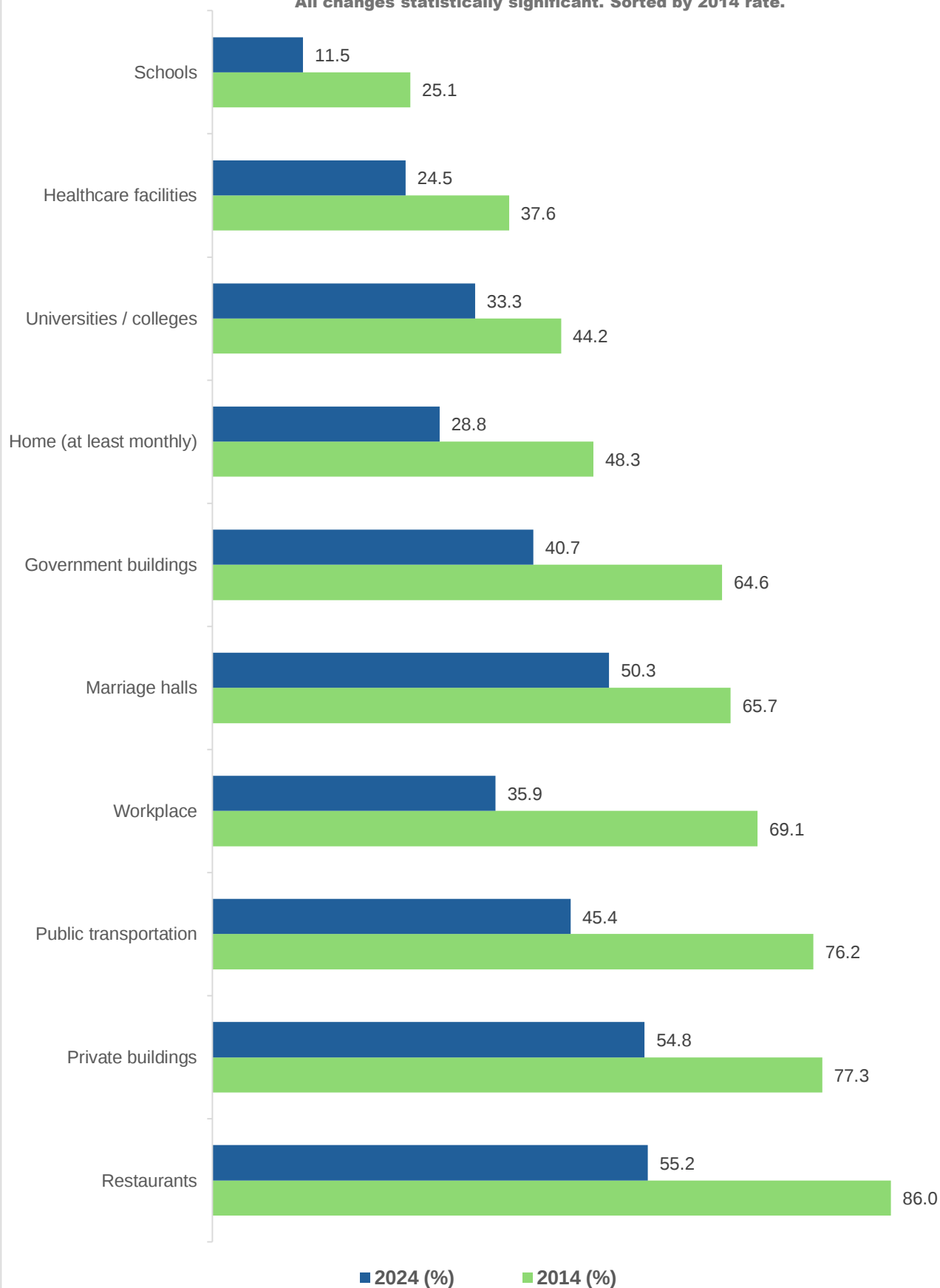
One of the most consistently positive findings in the GATS 2014–2024 data is the decline in secondhand smoke exposure across all ten locations measured in both surveys — and every single change is statistically significant. The workplace recorded the largest fall: from 69.1% of indoor workers exposed in 2014 to 35.9% in 2024, a fall of 33.2 percentage points. Restaurants followed closely: from 86.0% to 55.2%, a fall of 30.8 percentage points. Public transportation fell from 76.2% to 45.4% — also 30.8 percentage points. Homes fell from 48.3% to 28.8%, meaning that 28.8% of adults — equivalent to 40.0 million people — are still exposed to tobacco smoke inside their own homes at least monthly.

The school figure deserves particular attention on both its improvement and its remaining level. Schools dropped from 25.1% to 11.5% — a fall of 13.6 percentage points, the largest absolute fall among the more lightly exposed locations. This is a meaningful achievement in a setting where secondhand smoke exposure directly affects children. Yet 11.5% of adults visiting schools still report exposure, which means tobacco smoking on or near school premises has not been eliminated despite the statutory regulatory framework. A similar observation applies to healthcare facilities: they fell from 37.6% to 24.5% — an improvement, but a rate of nearly one in four adults still being exposed to tobacco smoke when visiting a health facility is difficult to reconcile with these institutions' mandate to promote health.

The locations with the highest remaining exposure in 2024 — restaurants (55.2%), private buildings (54.8%), and public transportation (45.4%) — are all settings where non-smokers have limited ability to remove themselves. A restaurant patron, a commuter, or a visitor to a private office building cannot choose not to be in the space without forfeiting its purpose. This structural compulsion makes the remaining secondhand smoke burden in these settings more than a statistical residual — it represents involuntary exposure for large numbers of adults on a routine basis. The 2024 figures are substantially better than 2014, but the progress takes on different meaning when the absolute levels are considered alongside the scale of Pakistan's adult population.

Secondhand smoke exposure across 10 locations: 2014 vs 2024 (%)

All changes statistically significant. Sorted by 2014 rate.



Source: GATS Pakistan 2014 and 2024 Fact Sheets; GATS Pakistan 2014 & 2024 Comparison Fact Sheet.

3. Health Warnings, Cessation, and a Paradox in the Price Data

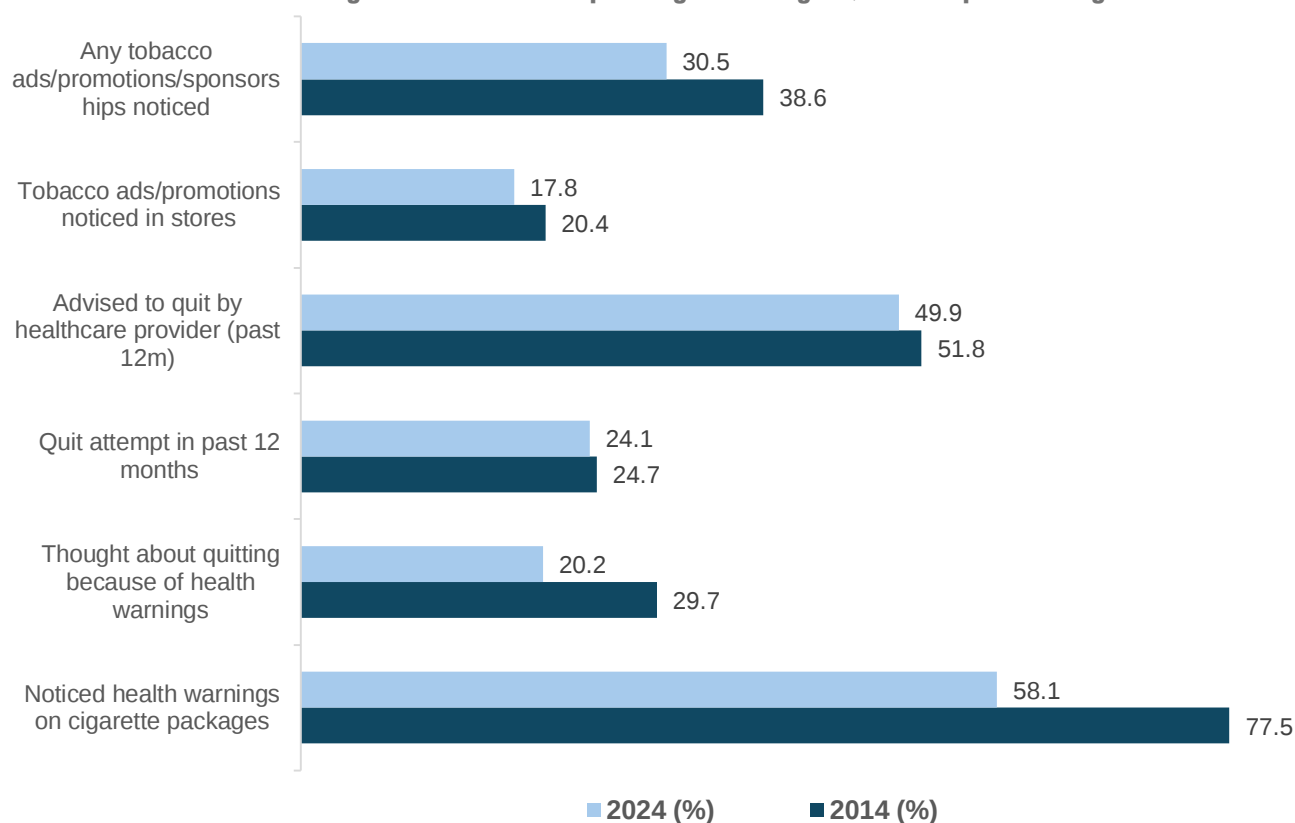
Pakistan strengthened its cigarette health warning requirements twice during the survey period — increasing pictorial warning size from 40% to 50% in 2018, and from 50% to 60% in 2019, with the addition of the "Smoking causes gangrene" warning line. Despite these interventions, the proportion of current smokers who noticed health warnings on cigarette packages fell from 77.5% in 2014 to 58.1% in 2024 — a fall of 19.4 percentage points. Those who thought about quitting because of the warnings also fell, from 29.7% to 20.2% — a fall of 9.5 percentage points. The health warning system is reaching fewer smokers in 2024 than it was in 2014, even after being enlarged and strengthened.

The cessation data tells a story of stalled effort. Quit attempts in the past 12 months stood at 24.7% in 2014 and 24.1% in 2024 — a change that is not statistically significant. Nearly half of smokers who visited a healthcare provider in the past 12 months were advised to quit (49.9%), but this counselling is not translating into quit attempts at a higher rate. Among ever-daily male smokers, only 14.9% have successfully quit; among ever-daily female smokers, only 6.8%. The pool of people who once smoked daily and have permanently stopped is remarkably small relative to those who are still smoking — indicating that cessation, when it does occur, tends not to be permanent, or that the conditions enabling permanent cessation are not yet widely present.

The economics data introduces the most analytically complex finding of the decade. The inflation-adjusted cost of 20 manufactured cigarettes rose from PKR 120.6 in 2014 to PKR 236.3 in 2024 — a rise of PKR 115.7. If higher prices suppressed demand, average monthly expenditure among smokers should have fallen — they would buy fewer cigarettes. Instead, average monthly expenditure rose from PKR 2,263.7 to PKR 3,852.9 — a rise of PKR 1,589.2 in real terms. This means that the smokers who remained in 2024 are on average spending more on tobacco in real terms than smokers in 2014, not less. The interpretation is not straightforward: some of this reflects the selection effect of price-sensitive smokers having quit, leaving a harder-core remaining population willing to absorb higher costs. But it also signals that price increases alone — without stronger cessation support, warning effectiveness, or access restrictions — may not be sufficient to drive the remaining smokers out of the market.

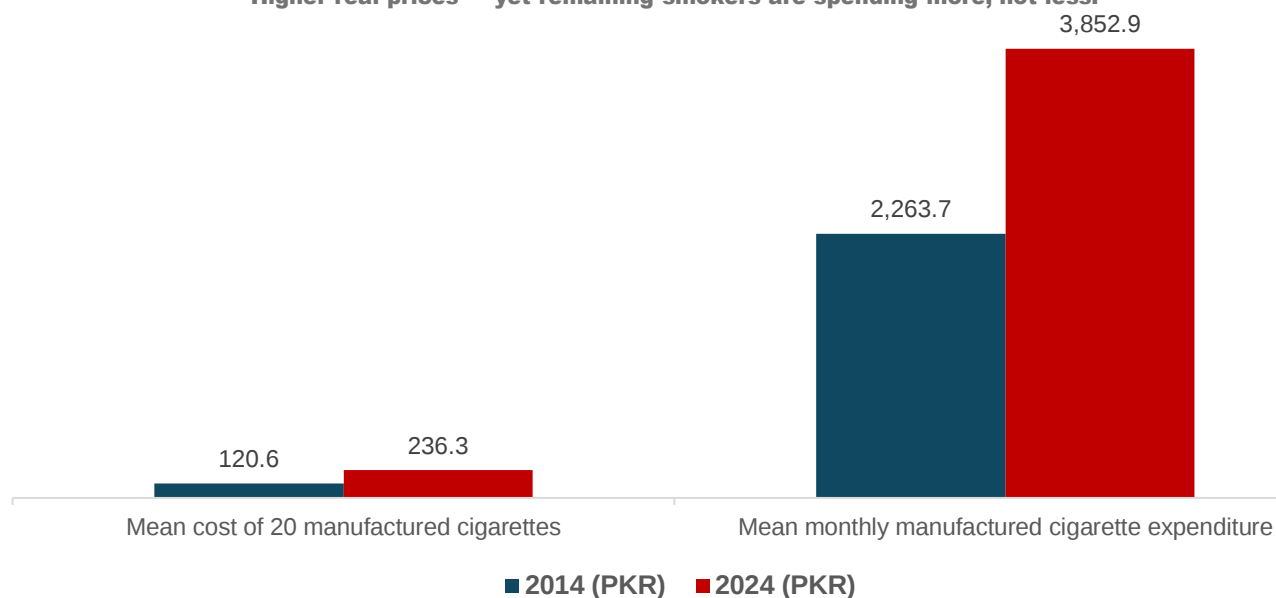
Health warning effectiveness and cessation: 2014 vs 2024 (%)

Warning reach declined despite larger warnings. Quit attempts unchanged.



Cigarette prices and monthly expenditure: 2014 vs 2024 (PKR, inflation-adjusted)

Higher real prices — yet remaining smokers are spending more, not less.



Note: Prices adjusted for inflation using IMF World Economic Outlook October 2025 Database. All figures calculated among current manufactured cigarette smokers.

Source: GATS Pakistan 2014 and 2024 Fact Sheets; GATS Pakistan 2014 & 2024 Comparison Fact Sheet.



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.

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