

Press Release

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First-ever Demographic and Health Survey in Ukraine reveals high levels of hypertension and smoking

Kiev, Ukraine. Twenty-five percent of women and 32 percent of men have hypertension reports the [2007 Ukraine Demographic and Health Survey](#). The majority of these women and men are unaware of their hypertensive status. Hypertension increases dramatically as women and men age. Over half of women and men age 45 and older have some form of hypertension, indicating that high blood pressure is a serious public health problem in Ukraine.

Smoking is a growing problem in Ukraine. More than half of Ukrainian men and 15 percent of women smoke, and men start smoking earlier than women. However, in recent years, smoking has increased more rapidly among young women than among young men. The number of women who started smoking before age 20 has more than doubled over the past two decades. Despite these high levels of smoking, the majority of women and men support banning smoking from the work place and all public places.

Alcohol use is common in Ukraine—62 percent of women and 77 percent of men had at least one alcoholic drink in the past month. In general, women who do drink do not consume alcohol on a regular basis—38 percent of women consume alcohol less than once a month. Men consume alcohol more frequently than women, 29 percent of men had an alcoholic drink 1-2 times a week compared with 9 percent of women.

The UDHS found positive fertility and family planning indicators. The total fertility rate in Ukraine is quite low—women in Ukraine have an average of 1.2 children. Overall, family planning use is high among Ukrainian women. Almost half of married women are using a modern contraceptive method. Use of modern contraception is particularly high among unmarried, sexually active women; 79 percent are currently using modern contraception. Condoms are their contraceptive method of choice (59 percent). High rates of contraceptive use, however, do not appear to decrease the number of abortions. One-quarter of pregnancies in the three years before the survey ended in abortion. Forty-five percent of women who had an abortion have had two or three abortions.

Despite these promising trends in women's health, spousal violence is high among Ukrainian women. Overall, 13 percent of ever-married women report having experienced physical violence from their husband. Additionally, 3 percent of women have experienced sexual violence by their current or most recent husband/partner. Women are also more likely to be victims of human trafficking. Eight percent of all Ukrainians who worked abroad in the past three years have experienced some form of human trafficking. Experiences with human trafficking are highest in the South (18 percent).

The 2007 Ukraine Demographic and Health Survey interviewed 6,841 women age 15-49 and 3,178 men age 15-49 and was conducted by the Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms (UCSR) in collaboration with the State Statistical Committee of Ukraine. Macro International Inc. provided technical assistance as part of the Demographic and Health Surveys project (MEASURE DHS). Funding for the survey was provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Additional information about the 2007 UDHS may be obtained from the Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms, 26, Panasa Myrnogo Street, Kyiv, 01011, Ukraine; telephone: (380-44)280-8201; email: ucsr@mail.ru or State Statistical Committee of Ukraine, 3, Shota Rustaveli str., Kyiv-23, 01023, Ukraine; telephone: (380-44) 287-24-33; email: office@ukrstat.gov.ua