

Research Institute of Public Health

# Target group profiles in tobacco prevention

Development of segmentation models for appropriately addressing adolescents and adults in the context of tobacco prevention and smoking cessation.

## Background

For successful communication, it is important to know and define the target groups as precisely as possible. While the advertising messages of the tobacco companies are already tailored to their various target groups, there is still great potential in the area of market segmentation on the part of tobacco prevention.

So far, basic characteristics such as age, gender or socioeconomic status have been considered, but there is a lack of knowledge about the values and needs of the respective target groups. Accordingly, prevention messages often target overarching arguments such as promoting public health rather than individual realities. This is problematic because tobacco prevention measures are likely to often bypass the individual needs of clients and thus be less effective and efficient and be rejected.

Given that the majority of smokers would like to quit, tobacco prevention misses an opportunity here that should be seized.

## Objective

The aim of the project is to create basic and application-oriented tools for prevention actors. They are to receive detailed information on the lifeworlds, values and needs of children, adolescents and adults in order to be able to address them specifically on tobacco prevention or smoking cessation. Beyond the information, recommendations for the orientation of offers and communication are to be developed on the basis of clearly segmented target group profiles.

## Method and procedure

Various research methods are being applied to achieve these goals.

In a first phase, in order to obtain an overview of the current state of knowledge on factors influencing the start or stop of smoking, a comprehensive search of scientific and gray literature and project databases in Switzerland and abroad was performed. Furthermore, interviews with experts have been conducted.

In a second phase, the perspective of the target groups have been collected in the course of 47 interviews and 9 focus groups with children and adolescents at schools as well as 53 interviews with adults. Smokers, non-smokers and former smokers

have been interviewed to obtain information on supporting factors and barriers. The qualitative interviews and focus groups have been complemented by two field assessments in mobile youth clubs.

On the basis of the collected data, hypotheses were derived about attributes that describe certain segments adequately as well as possible with a high degree of selectivity and at the same time have a high expected predictive power with regard to the primary target behavior - refraining from starting to smoke or initiating to stop to smoke. To this end, structuring and analytical methods such as qualitative cluster analysis, nominal brainstorming, anonymous pooling, and crowd-polling have been used.

The hypotheses obtained on the segments then validated in an online survey with 3,000 youth and adults. Finally, the segmentation model developed in this way will be mirrored, further validated and refined in a workshop with the practice support group and stakeholders from tobacco prevention.

In order to make the results usable for tobacco prevention actors, concrete tools will be developed in the third project phase, such as target group profiles, scales, manuals and personas, and disseminated via websites, social media, scientific publications as well as online courses and webinars.

### **Results**

The results will be published after completion of the project in spring/summer 2022.

### **Project co-management**

Prof. Dr. Frank Wieber, Dr. Steffen Müller

### **Project duration**

01.05.2021 – 31.05.2022

### **Project team**

Dr. Kurt Ackermann  
Dr. Szilvia Altwicker-Hámori  
Dr. Jesse Bächler  
Alissia Brüllmann  
Prof. Dr. Julia Dratva  
Dr. Pia Furchheim  
Anthony Klein, Bsc. cand.  
Simona Marti, MSc.  
Matthias Meyer, MSc.  
Leah Reicherzer, MSc.  
Dominik Robin, lic. phil.  
Aylin Wagner, MA  
Dr. Annina Zysset

### **Client**

Internal funding The project was commissioned by the Tobacco Prevention Fund

### **Status**

Ongoing

### **Contact**

ZHAW School of Health Professions  
Research Public Health  
Frank Wieber  
Katharina-Sulzer-Platz 9  
CH-8400 Winterthur

Phone +41 58 934 43 47  
frank.wieber@zhaw.ch  
[www.zhaw.ch/en/health/](http://www.zhaw.ch/en/health/)

### **Contact**

ZHAW School of Management and Law  
Behavioral Marketing  
Steffen Müller  
Theaterstrasse 17  
CH-8400 Winterthur

Phone +41 58 934 79 24  
steffen.mueller@zhaw.ch  
[www.zhaw.ch/en/psychology/](http://www.zhaw.ch/en/psychology/)