

Cigarette Consumption Survey

Background and Objectives

In 2009 the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in conjunction with the Office of Tobacco Control contracted Ipsos MRBI to conduct nationwide research amongst adult smokers as to the source of their cigarettes. The research was conducted amongst the broad Irish smoking population, including resident foreign nationals. The purpose of this research was to estimate the volume of illegal cigarettes being consumed in Ireland annually.

Key Findings of 2009 survey

Legality of packs

- 14% of all respondents` packs were classified as illegal. This accounts for 138,175 smokers. In this context “illegal cigarettes” means contraband or counterfeit cigarettes which were neither tax paid in the State, nor brought into the State by way of legal cross-border purchases.
- 6% of all packs were found to be legal Non-Irish Duty Paid, i.e. legal cross-border purchases.

Consumption Estimates

- Population estimates were combined with smoking prevalence and consumption rates to provide an estimate of total cigarette consumption in Ireland in 2009.
- The total cigarette consumption in Ireland in 2009 was estimated to be 6.22 billion, based on claimed smoking behaviour.
- Using the 14% illegal pack figure, it was estimated that approximately 42,474,304 illegal packs, or 849m cigarettes, were consumed in Ireland in 2009

Loss to Revenue

- The consumption of 849m illegal cigarettes represented a loss to Revenue (Excise Duty + VAT) of approximately €285m