

# Consumers' access to the illicit cigarettes in six Brazilian cities

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Despite a significant reduction in the prevalence of smokers in Brazil since the FCTC ratification (15.7% in 2006 to 10.2% in 2016 according the surveillance system of risk factors for chronic diseases - VIGITEL), a study developed by INCA showed that the proportion of remaining smokers who smoke illicit cigarettes has increased<sup>1</sup>.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was developed to identify the characteristics of illicit cigarettes sale in informal market and by street vendors. The methodology used was the market research called Secret Shopper - the researcher went to specific locations in 3 capitals and 3 inner cities as a potential consumer to monitor procedures used in offering a product.

## RESULTS

In all cities visited the researcher easily bought illegal cigarettes in popular shopping areas. Those cigarettes are sold without any sanitary or fiscal surveillance, and without consumer's age or price controls.

Counterfeit cigarettes were also found next to illicit cigarettes. For example, in Rio de Janeiro the counterfeiting of the best-selling cigarette brand (Derby) was found with prices even lower than the smuggled cigarettes. While the minimum price of a legal cigarette pack in Brazil is US\$ 1.7, smuggled cigarettes are sold for US\$ 1.0, and counterfeit cigarettes were found for US\$ 0.8 cents.

In the inner cities, smuggled cigarettes were found being sold also in small bars and neighborhood markets.

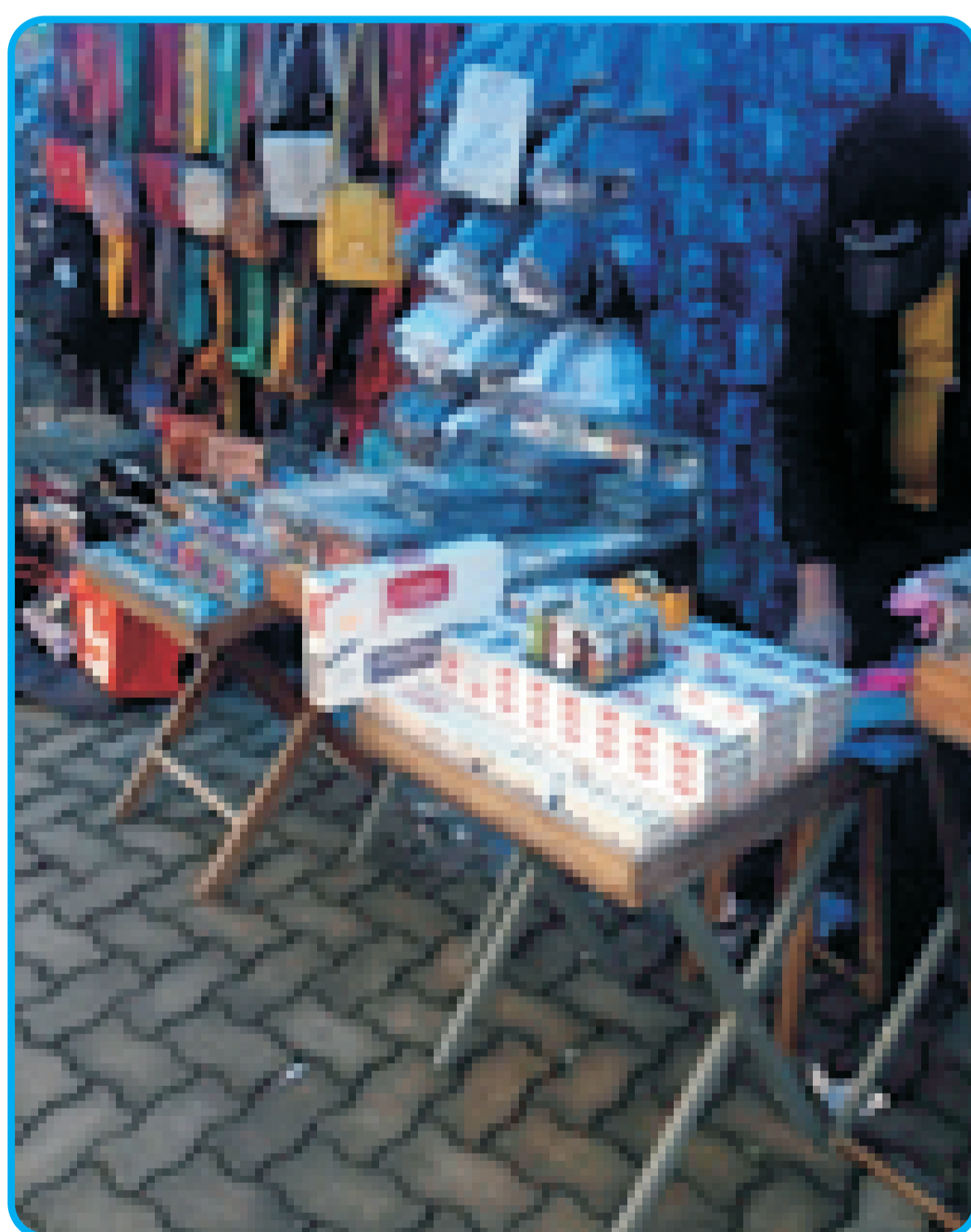


Fig 1. Illegal cigarettes in popular shopping areas



Fig 2. Counterfeiting of the best-selling cigarette brand



Fig 3. Counterfeiting on street vendor

## CONCLUSIONS

The current anti smuggling policies in Brazil were not efficient in preventing illegal cigarette access at cheaper prices.

The Brazilian government urgently needs to strengthen the product inspection in country borders, preventing the entry of illegal tobacco products especially along Paraguay, fight against sale of smuggled cigarettes in popular shopping and strengthen international cooperation policies.

Another important measure is ratify and implement the FCTC Protocol to Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, which is under analyses in the Parliament.

## REFERENCE

1- <http://www2.inca.gov.br/wps/wcm/connect/97855b0040a8c87da668be6d5dab20b5/Tob+Control-2017-Iglesias-53-9.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=97855b0040a8c87da668be6d5dab20b5> Iglesias, R. M., Szkló, A. S., de Souza, M. C., & de Almeida, L. M. (2016). Estimating the size of illicit tobacco consumption in Brazil: findings from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey. Tobacco control, tobacco control-2015.