

# How the cigarette affordability can affect the smoking prevalence rate in Brazil

Ana Paula Leal Teixeira

Tânia Maria Cavalcante

Brazilian Cancer Institute, Ministry of Health Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

## BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

Brazilian cigarette has been considered one of the most affordable in the world. Every attempts to increase tobacco taxation tobacco industry claimed it would result in increasing smuggling and decreasing revenues from tobacco taxation.

## INTERVENTION OR RESPONSE

Since 2005 Brazil is a member State of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). FCTC Article 6 provides that "measures relating to prices and taxes are effective and important means of reducing tobacco consumption by various segments of the population, in particular young people" (WHO, 2005). In December 2011, the Brazilian government adopt a measure that resulted in a 30% increase of the federal taxation on cigarettes and adopted a policy of minimum prices for cigarettes. To evaluate the impact of this measure, we calculated the cigarette affordability rate in Brazil, considering that affordability refers to the price of the product in relation to income, as measured by the proportion of the annual per capita GDP required to purchase 100 packs of cigarettes of the most popular brand. The higher the index, the lower the economic access to cigarettes. We compared the evolution of affordability rate between 2006 and 2014 with the cigarette consumption based on the smoking prevalence data from the Risk and Protective Factors Surveillance for Chronic Diseases Telephone Survey (VIGITEL) in the same period

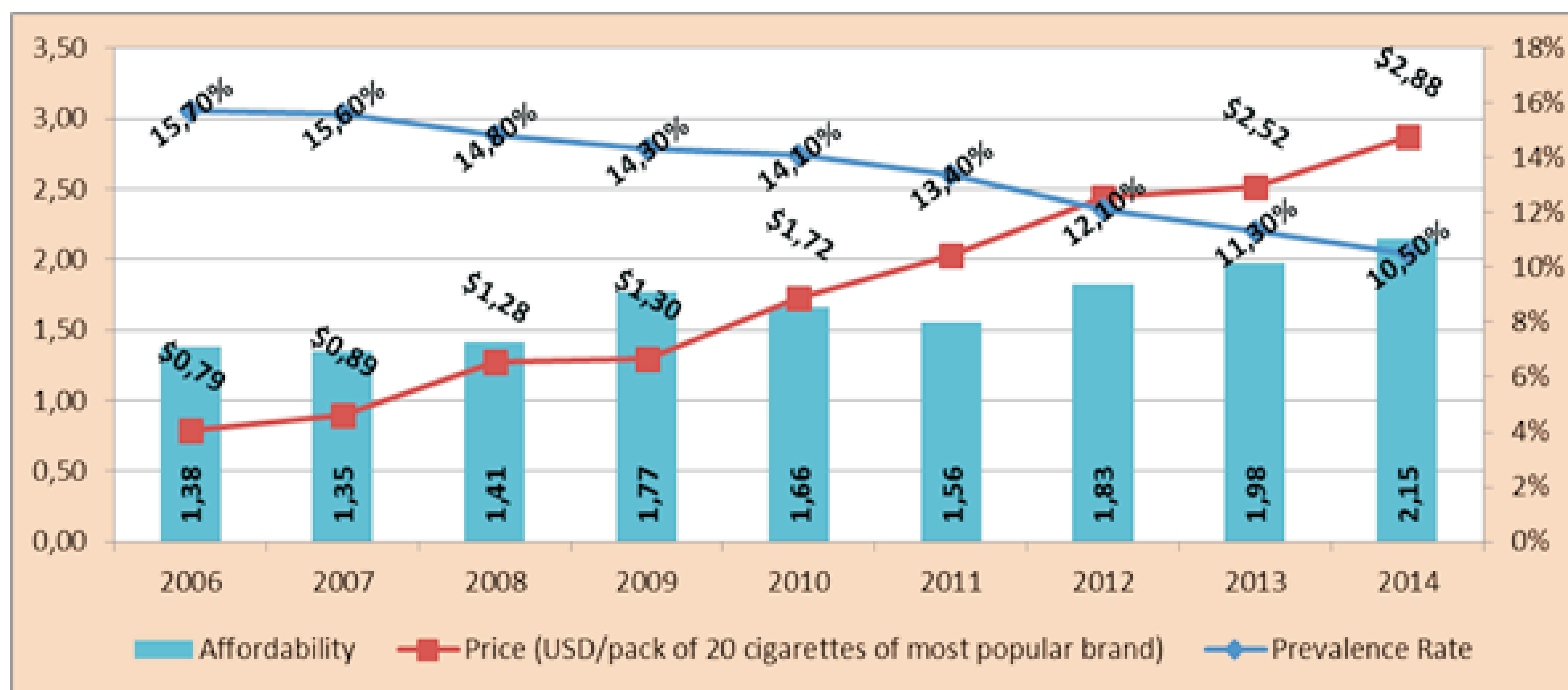
## RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNT

This measure is the main responsible for raising the cigarette affordability in 37% and decreasing the smoking prevalence between 2011 and 2014 in 22% according to data form the Annual Surveys on Risk and Protective Factors for Chronic Diseases (VIGITEL). While the cigarette tax revenue increased 37%.

The increase in cigarette prices in recent years have been raising the accessibility rate in Brazil, even it representing a low dollar value, to the national income it is getting higher and reducing the consumption of the product.

In Brazil, especially from the new tax measure adopted in 2011, the prevalence rate has decreased almost 3% in the prevalence of smokers aged 18 or older, of both sexes, between the years of 2011 and 2014.

Tobacco and a number of different cancers are strongly associated based on several studies of renowned researchers and publications. Reducing the smoking prevalence can provide an important reduction on tobacco-related cancers death, such as esophagus and bronchi/lung in ten years ahead.



## CONCLUSIONS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Cigarette affordability level is more important than just the price and determines cigarette consumption. It has different levels comparing developing countries with developed ones where cigarettes are more expensive but the high levels of income make cigarettes more affordable. Strong and effective tobacco control policies, aligned with the affordability level leads to decrease cigarette consumption and guarantee the reduction of cancer related to tobacco and other diseases in the future.