

Novel Methodological Features of the New Zealand Arm of the ITC Project

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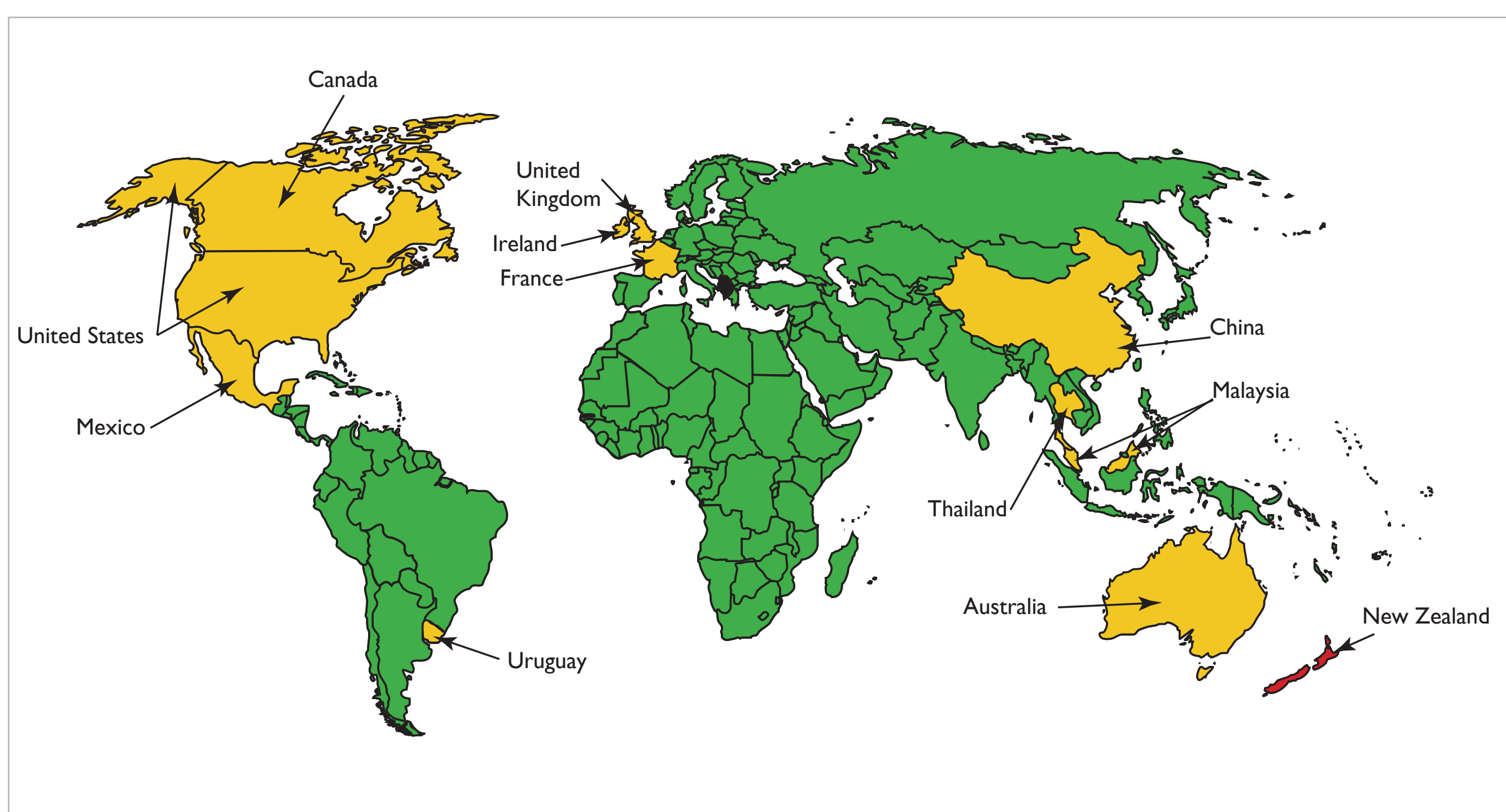
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Aim

To describe the novel features of an arm of the International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Survey (ITC Project) commencing in New Zealand.

Background

The ITC Project is an international collaboration of tobacco control researchers whose mission is to evaluate the psychosocial and behavioral effects of national-level tobacco control policies throughout the world. To date the Project has undertaken multiple survey waves of over 8,000 adult smokers throughout four countries: Canada, United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. Additional countries (see map) are also at various stages of involvement. Survey waves are conducted annually and a particular focus for evaluation efforts are the policies covered by the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The evaluation framework uses multiple country controls, a longitudinal design and a pre-specified, theory-driven conceptual model to test hypotheses about the anticipated effects of specific policies (Fong et al, Tobacco Control 2006; 15 Suppl 3:iii 3-11).



Work on the New Zealand arm to the ITC project commenced in 2006 and interviewing of smokers begins in February 2007.

Major features of tobacco use and tobacco control in New Zealand

- 1990 – Tobacco advertising, sponsorship and promotion banned
- 1999 – Start of a national Quitline service (combined with subsidised NRT from 2000)
- 2004 – Comprehensive smokefree workplace legislation (including bars and restaurants)
- 2006 – Smoking prevalence 24% overall; Māori 45%; Pacific peoples 37%. Very high rates of loose tobacco use (48% of smokers)

ITC Information

<http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~itc/>

<http://www.wnmeds.ac.nz/itcproject.html>

ITC NZ Features

Recruitment of smokers is via the NZ Health Survey (NZHS) an existing national survey involving face-to-face interviews and oversampling Māori and Pacific people. Initial data indicate that 85% of smokers in the NZHS agreed to be recontacted subsequently for additional questions – and these smokers will constitute the sampling frame for the ITC project (NZ arm). The response rate for 2006/2007 NZHS is not yet established but previous surveys exceeded 70%.

Advantages:

- Reduced costs and difficulties identifying, recruiting & maintaining a nationally representative cohort of smokers.
- Sharing expertise and research outputs with the funder of the NZHS –Ministry of Health
- Data linkage to NZHS data (such as data on physical and mental health status, use of alcohol, socioeconomic position, perceived racism & healthcare service utilisation). This is unique to the New Zealand arm and will enable analysis of other important influences on smoking over time.

For example:

Sample questions & analyses possible at baseline and in subsequent waves by both cross-sectional and cohort analyses

1. Pictorial warnings on packs (to be introduced to NZ in February 2008):
“In the last month have the warning labels stopped you from having a cigarette when you were about to smoke one?”
2. Knowledge of health effects of Roll Your Own (RYO) cigarettes; of health effects of light and mild cigarettes
3. Impact of smoking cessation support services using questions related to quitting and quit attempts (e.g. use of Quitline or NRT)

Responses can be stratified and analysed by ethnic group, socioeconomic position, mental health and SF36 scores, presence of smoking-related conditions and cardiovascular risk factors

Recruitment of Māori (indigenous New Zealanders): Around 40% of cohort will be Māori, enabling separate analyses & questions of specific interest to Māori and providing useful data with relevance to the impact of policies on indigenous peoples (other ITC countries have only small numbers of indigenous peoples). Some separate analyses may also be possible with Pacific peoples.

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Presenter information

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