

# 6

## Girls' tobacco use

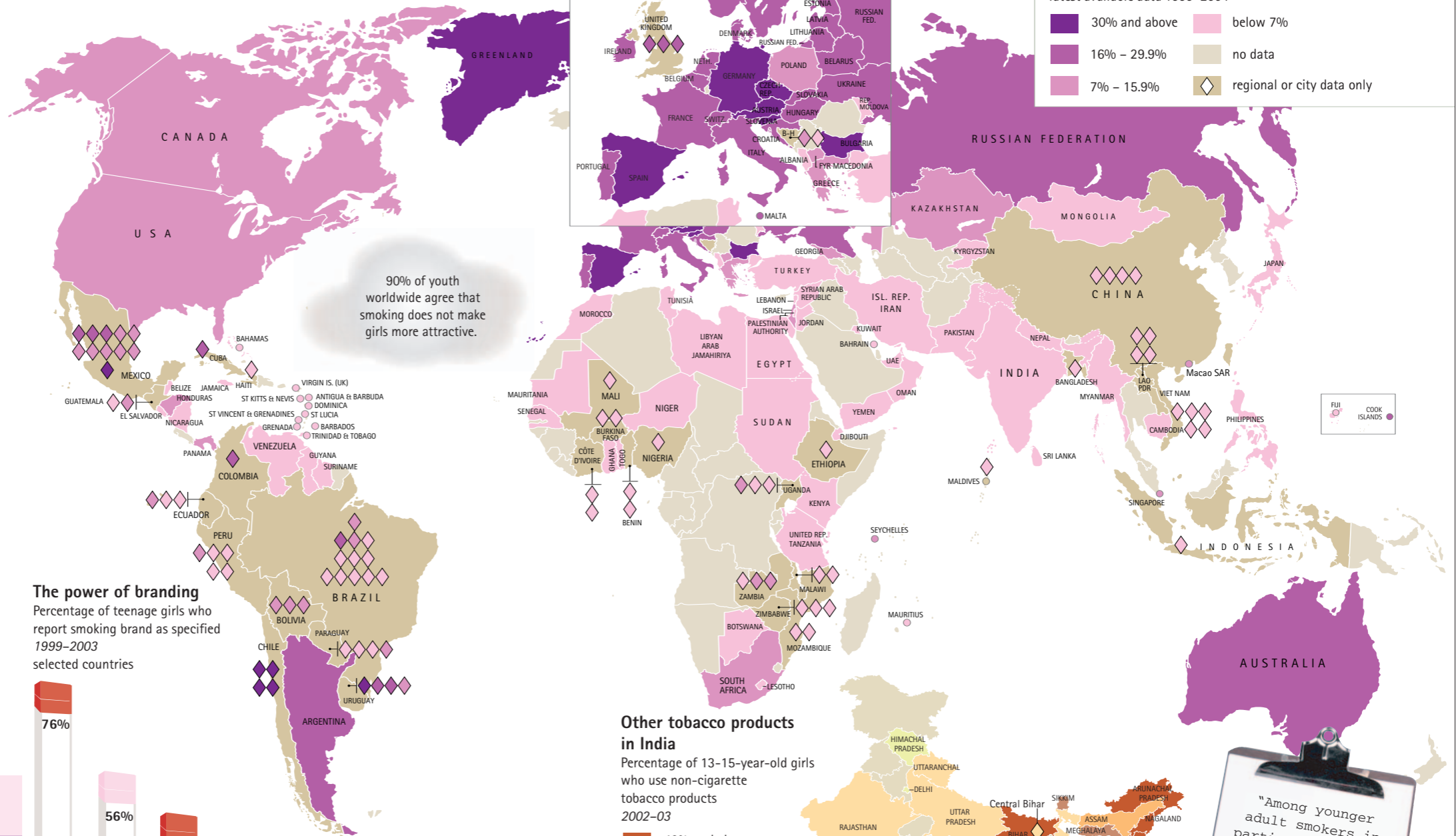
The differences in smoking rates between girls and boys are not as large as one would expect. In half of countries surveyed in the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS), there were no gender differences in cigarette smoking. Similarly, in 70 percent of countries surveyed, there were no differences in other tobacco use. Worldwide, tobacco use among girls is increasing, and in parts of Europe and South America, girls are smoking more than boys. As with boys, the overwhelming majority of female smokers use tobacco before they reach adulthood.

The factors that increase the risk of girls smoking are broadly similar to those of boys: tobacco industry promotion, easy access to tobacco products, low prices, peer pressure, their peers, parents and siblings using tobacco and approving of smoking, and the misperception that smoking enhances social popularity.

In addition, young girls smoke to stay thin, although cigarette smoking is not associated with a lower BMI (body mass index) in younger women. Smoking prevention and cessation programmes designed for girls may benefit from the inclusion of content related to body image.

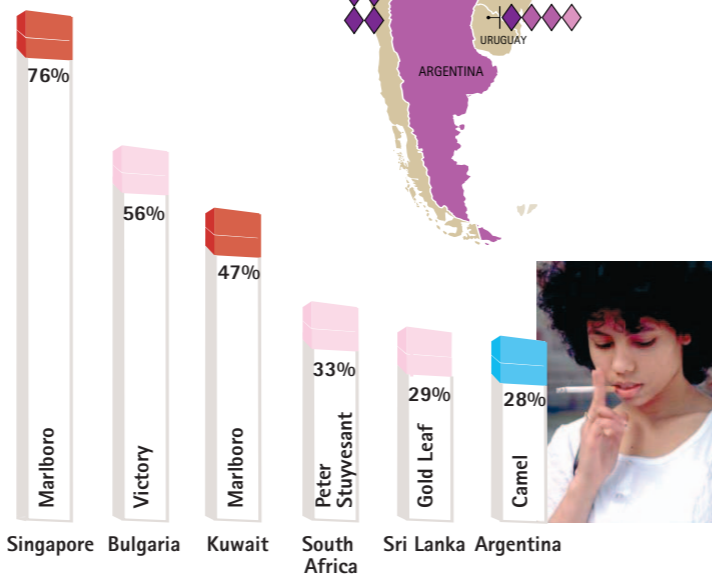
### Reasons why more young women smoke

- global trends in women's emancipation
- greater concern with weight, looks and style
- marketing campaigns targeting women
- positive images of smoking in movies, magazines and youth culture
- changing economic conditions for some women
- a more drug-positive culture in some countries



### The power of branding

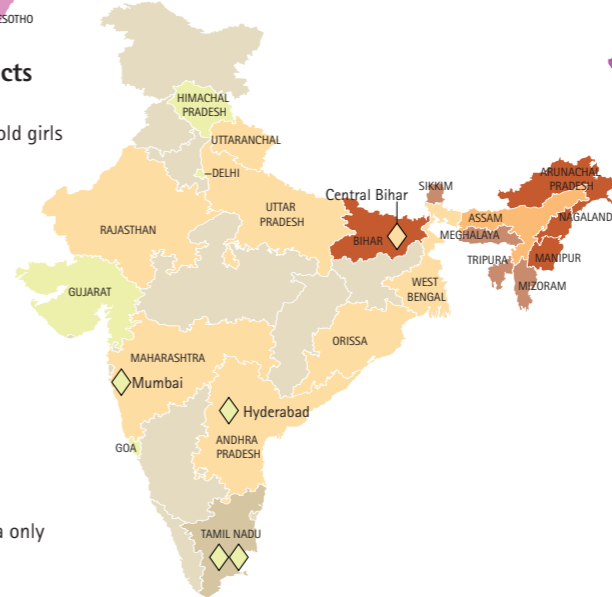
Percentage of teenage girls who report smoking brand as specified 1999-2003 selected countries



### Other tobacco products in India

Percentage of 13-15-year-old girls who use non-cigarette tobacco products 2002-03

- 40% and above
- 25% - 39.9%
- 15% - 24.9%
- 5% - 14.9%
- below 5%
- no data
- regional or city data only



"Among younger adult smokers in particular, female smokers are now as large a smoker share opportunity as are male smokers."

RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co, 1986