



Article Title

Impact of the Irish smoking ban on sales in bars using a large business-level data set from 1999 to 2007

Citation

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Background

Ireland introduced comprehensive smoke-free workplace legislation in 2004. This study evaluates the economic impact of the workplace smoking ban on the value of sales in bars.

Methods

Data on the value of bar sales were derived from a large, nationally representative, annual business-level survey from 1999 to 2007. The economic impact of the smoking ban was evaluated according to geographical region and bar size. Analysis was based on an econometric model which controlled for background changes in population income and wealth and for investments made by the bars during this period.

Results

The overall impact of the Irish smoking ban on bar sales appears to be very small. The ban was associated with an increase in sales among medium to large bars in the Border-Midland-West (more rural) region of Ireland, and a small reduction in sales among large bars in the more urban, South-East region. We failed to find any evidence of a change in bar sales in the remaining categories studied.

Conclusions

The results indicate that although some bars saw positive effects and some negative, the overall impact of the smoking ban on the value of sales in bars was negligible. These findings provide further supporting evidence that comprehensive smoke-free workplace legislation does not harm hospitality businesses while having positive health effects.