



# **Impact of the removal of misleading cigarette pack labeling on smokers' beliefs about Light cigarettes: A cross-country comparison**

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on behalf of the ITC Four-Country team



*Presentation at the 14<sup>th</sup> WCTOH  
Mumbai, India, March 2009*



## FCTC Article 11

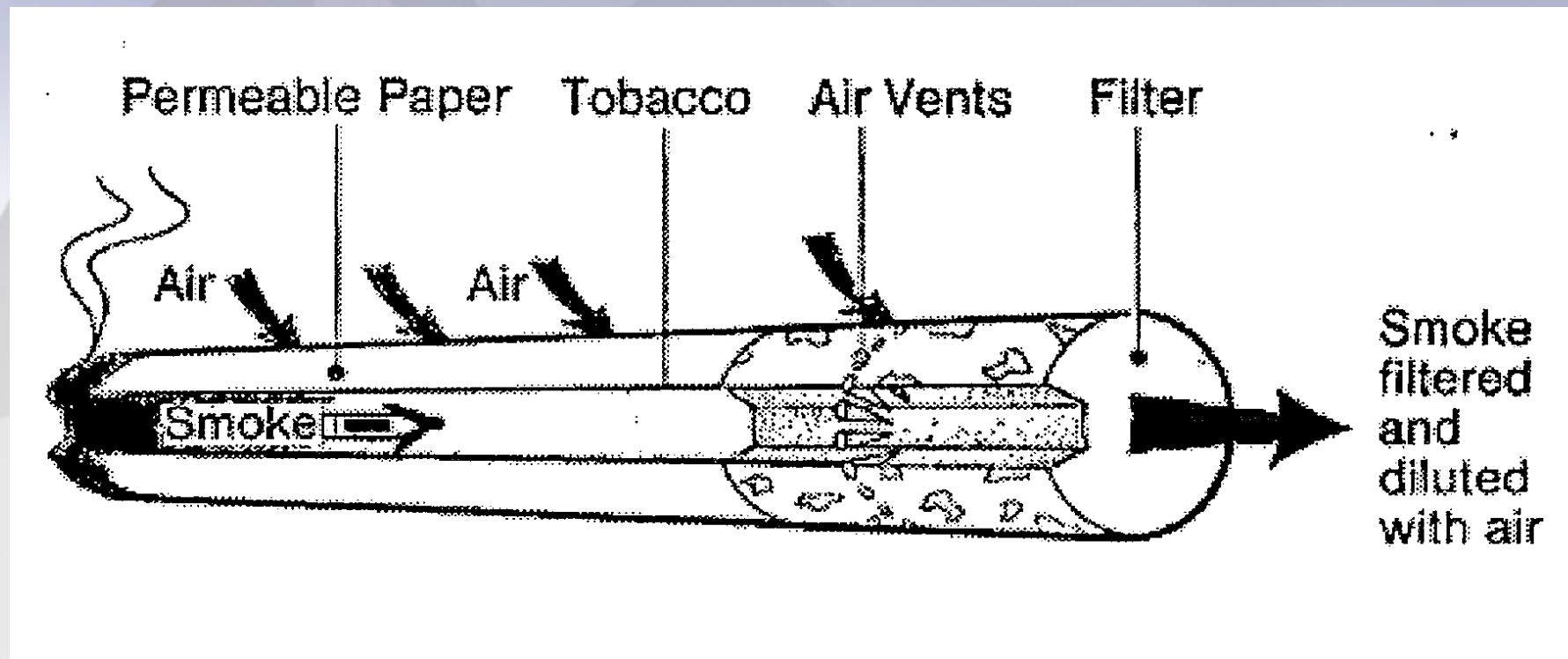
- **Each party shall....ensure that:**

*Tobacco product packaging and labelling do not promote a tobacco product by any means that are false, misleading, deceptive or likely to create an erroneous impression ..... that a particular tobacco product is less harmful than other tobacco products. These may include terms such as “low tar”, “light”, “ultra-light”, or “mild”*

# Light & mild brands

- **Taste lighter or milder**
- **Give lower machine tested tar/nicotine/CO**
- **Do not deliver less tar to smokers under real smoking conditions**
- **FCTC obliges ban on terms**

## The role of filter vents in the Light deception



Source: Physicians for a Smoke-free Canada, Research Report, January 2005


## The UK: Ban Sept 2003 supported by media campaign



A nice name doesn't make something less deadly.

Smoke 'Low tar', 'Lights' or 'Mild' cigarettes and despite their smooth taste, you are likely to inhale just as much tar and nicotine as from regular cigarettes. For all the facts visit [www.lowtarexposed.org](http://www.lowtarexposed.org) Low tar cigarettes. Death repackaged.

CANCER RESEARCH UK 

 THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

Source: Cancer Research UK internal report to the UK Government, November 2004

**Low tar cigarettes are as deadly as any other, whatever name they are given.**

## Labelling change in Australia

- **Australia's consumer watchdog (ACCC) reached a court enforceable agreement with 3 major tobacco manufacturers to remove light and mild from cig packaging in 2005.**
- **Two complied by second half of 2005 and the third by early 2006.**
- **Tobacco manufacturers also agreed to fund a corrective media advertising to educate the public.**

# Australian Ban late 2005: Supported by Media campaign



**They are all equally toxic.**

# Evaluation of Light/mild Ban

- **ITC survey has a number of features that make it well-suited to evaluate the effects of a ban.**
  - **Pre- post data available.**
  - **longitudinal design.**
  - **control/comparison group.**
- **In the ITC survey, we included measures of common misperceptions about “light/mild” cigarettes.**
- **Added extra questions post-bans**

## Measures of beliefs about “light/mild” cigarettes used in the ITC survey

- **Light cigarettes are less harmful than regular cigarettes.**
- **Smokers of light cigarettes take in less tar than smokers of regular cigarettes.**

**NB: Each statement above was rated on a 5-point likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.**

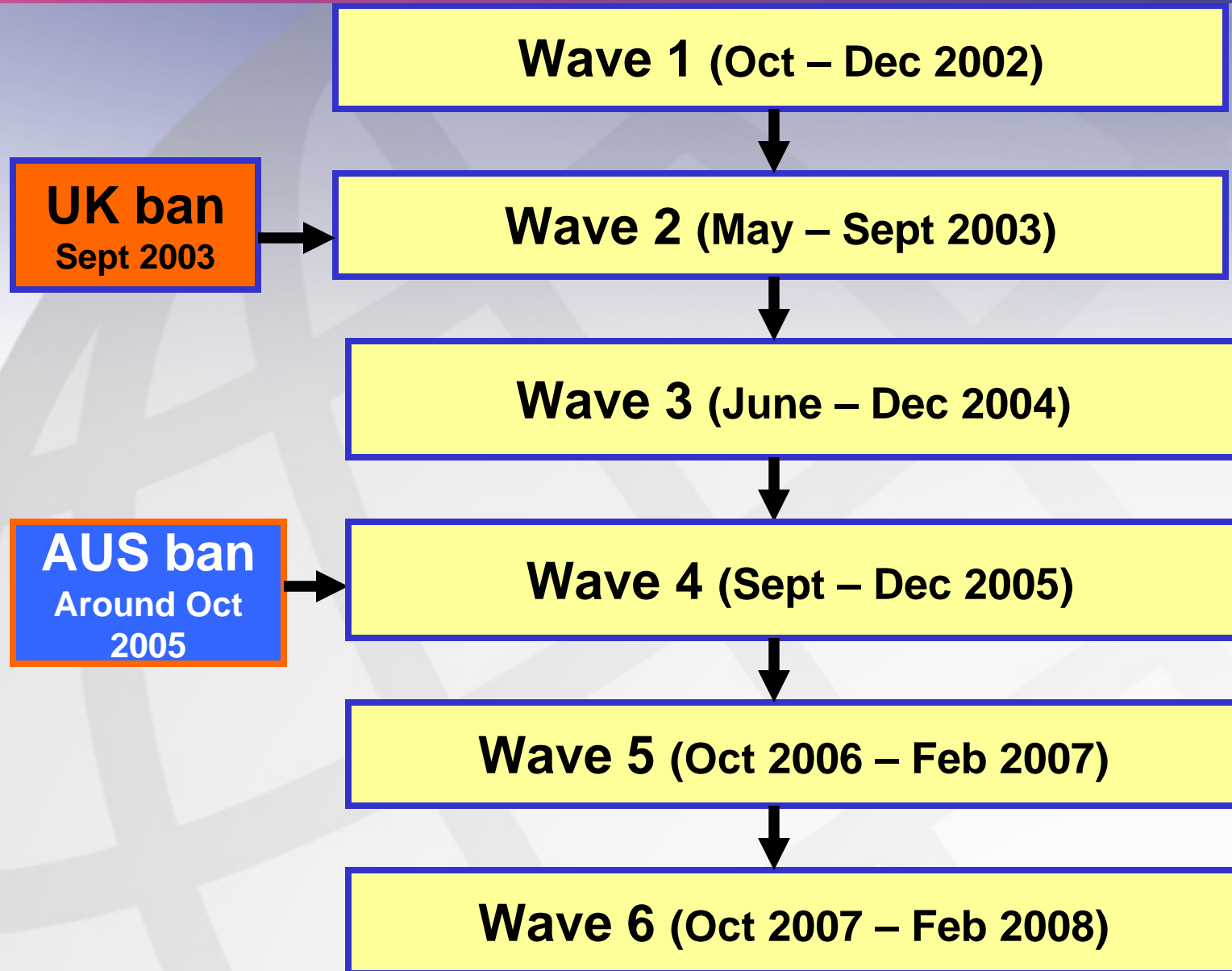
## Aim

**To examine the impact of the removal of “Light” and “Mild” labeling on smokers’ beliefs about “light/mild” cigarettes in UK and Australia as compared to Canada and US where the labeling was unchanged.**

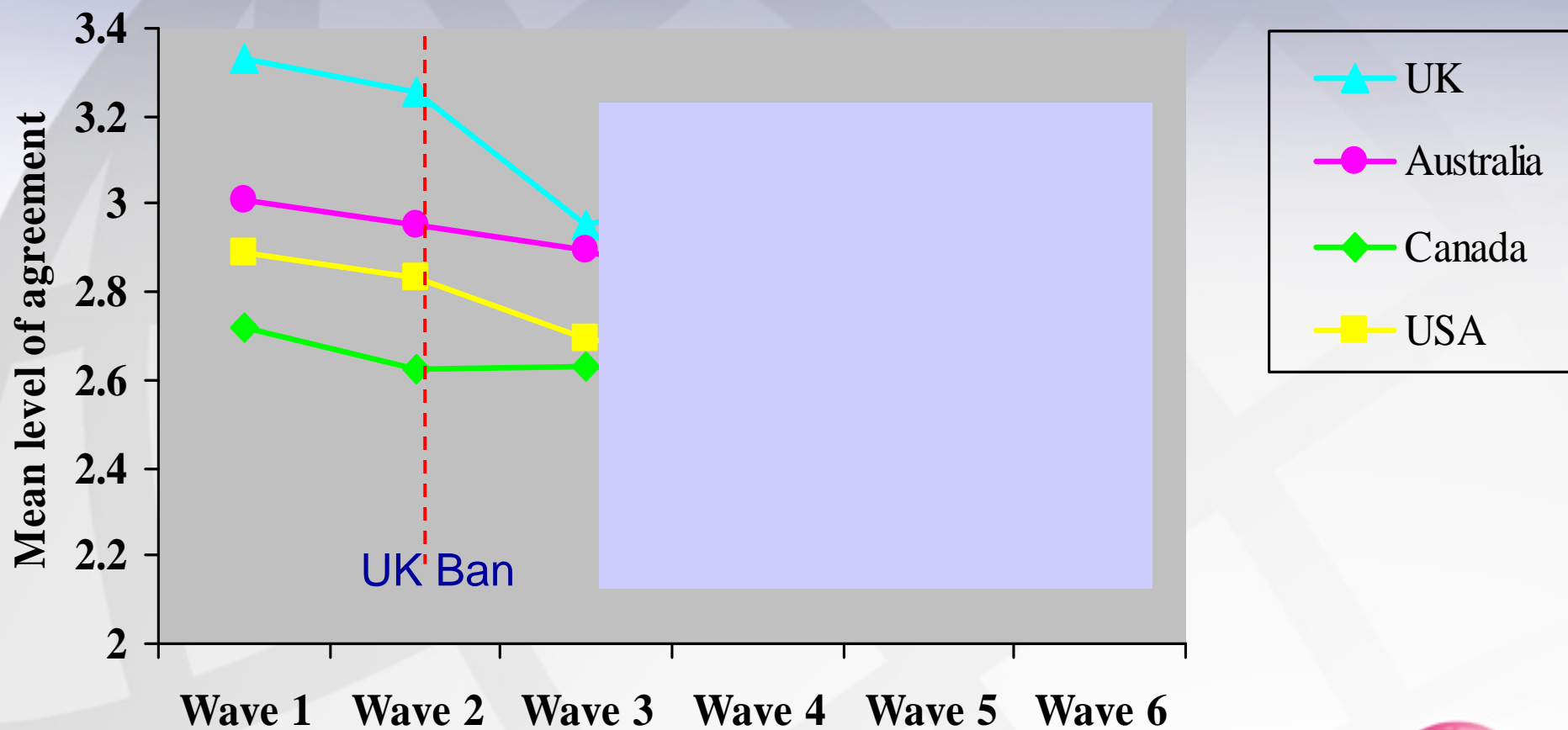
## Methods

- **Representative national samples of adult smokers from four countries: US, Canada, UK and Australia.**
- **In each country, the initial cohort consisted of over 2,000 adult smokers recruited via random digit dialled telephone survey and they were followed up annually. Those lost were replaced.**
- **GEE modeling based on over 19000 individual cases who provided data on at least one of the six waves of the ITC study.**

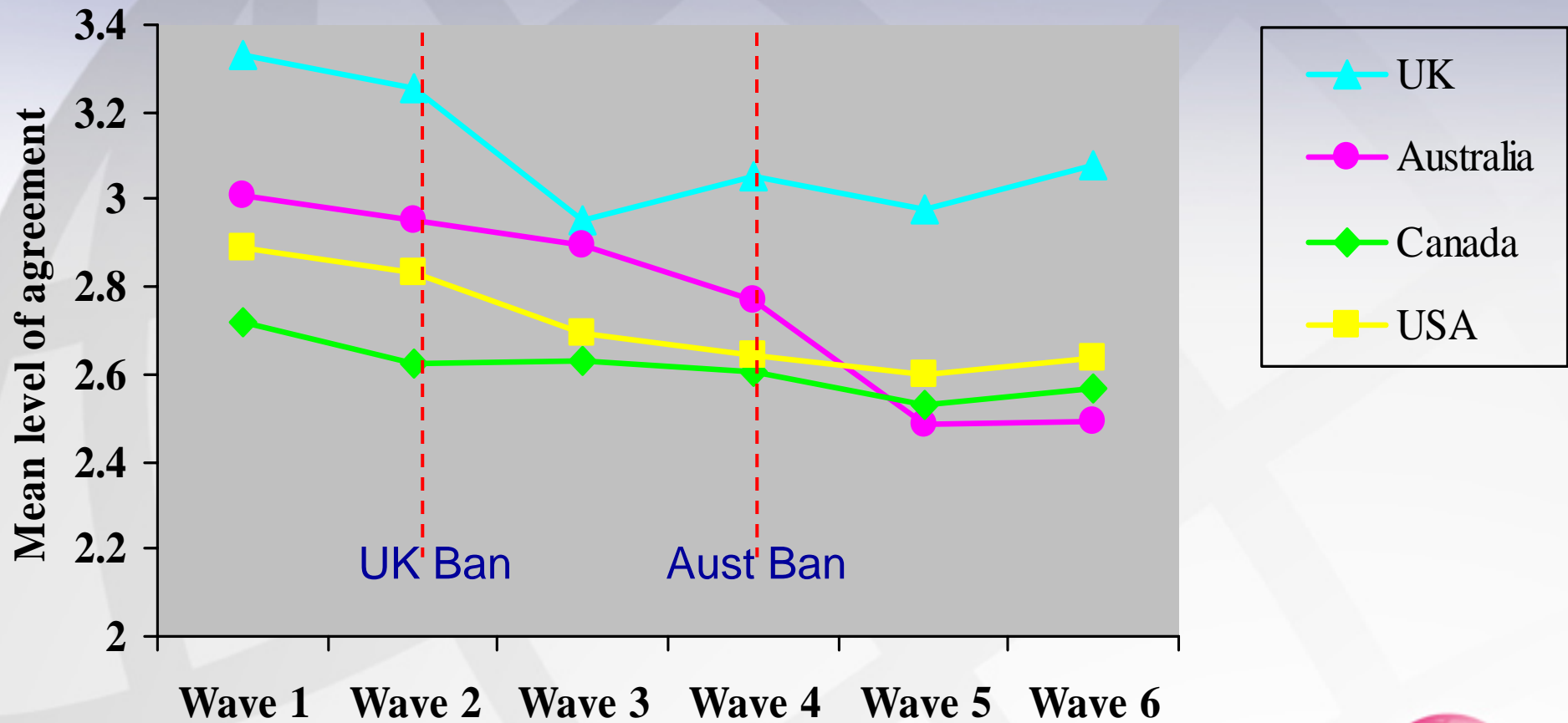
# Cohort Survey & Policy change



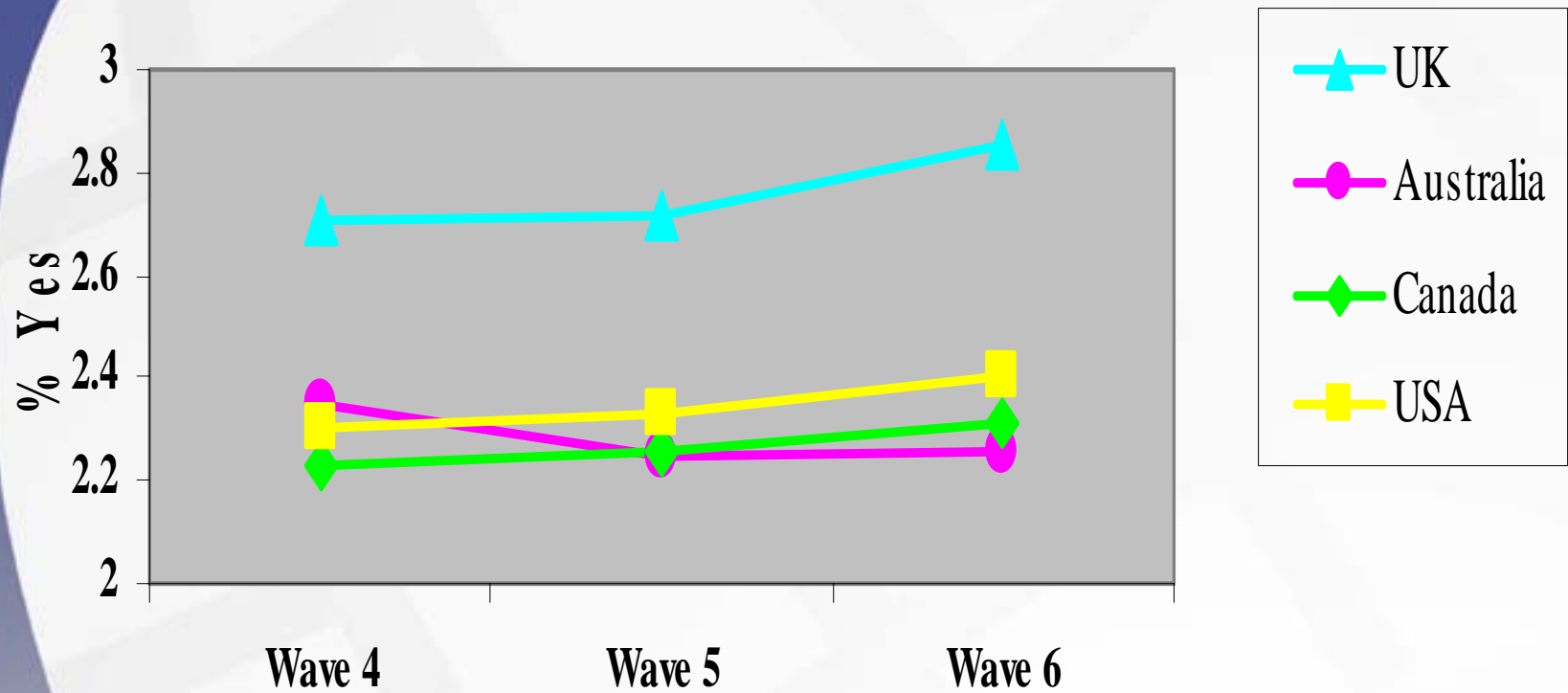
## Belief that Light cigarettes have less tar



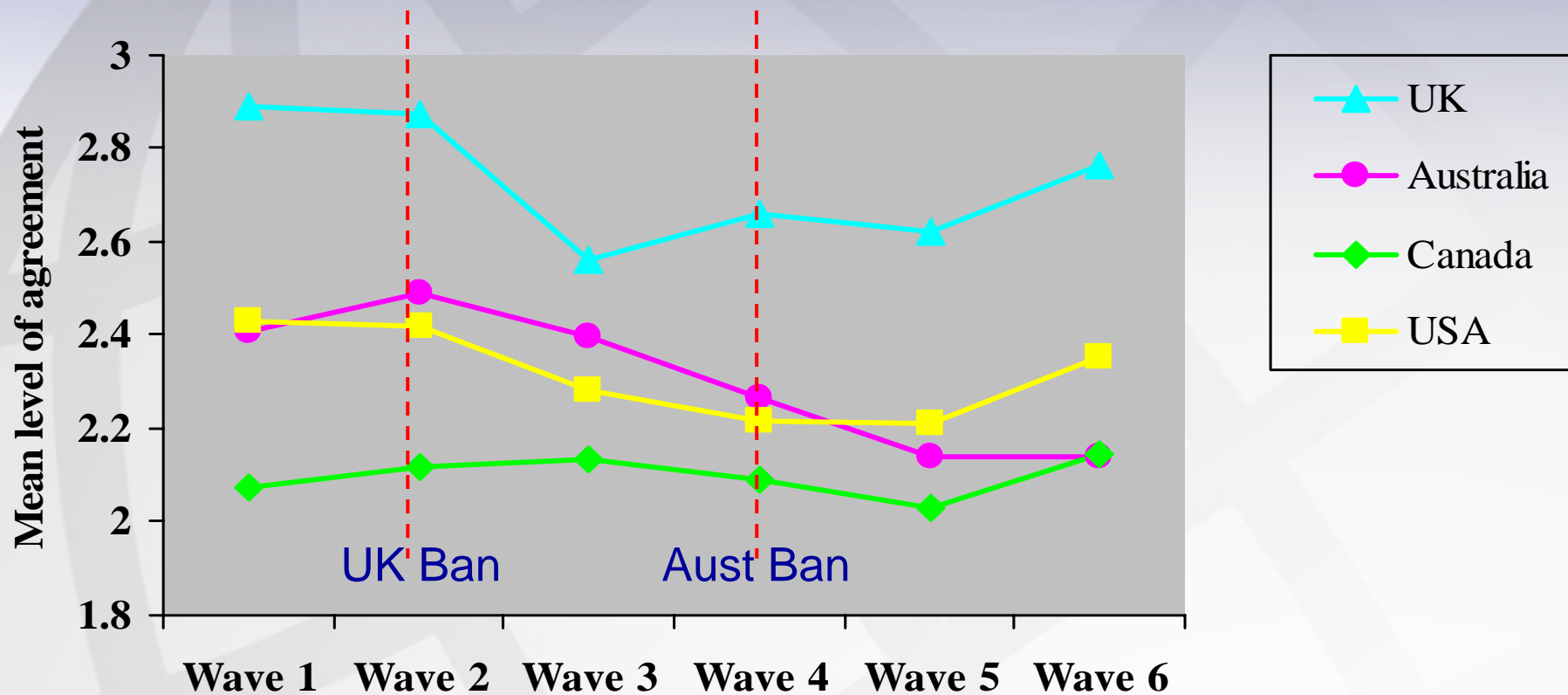
## Belief that Light cigarettes have less tar



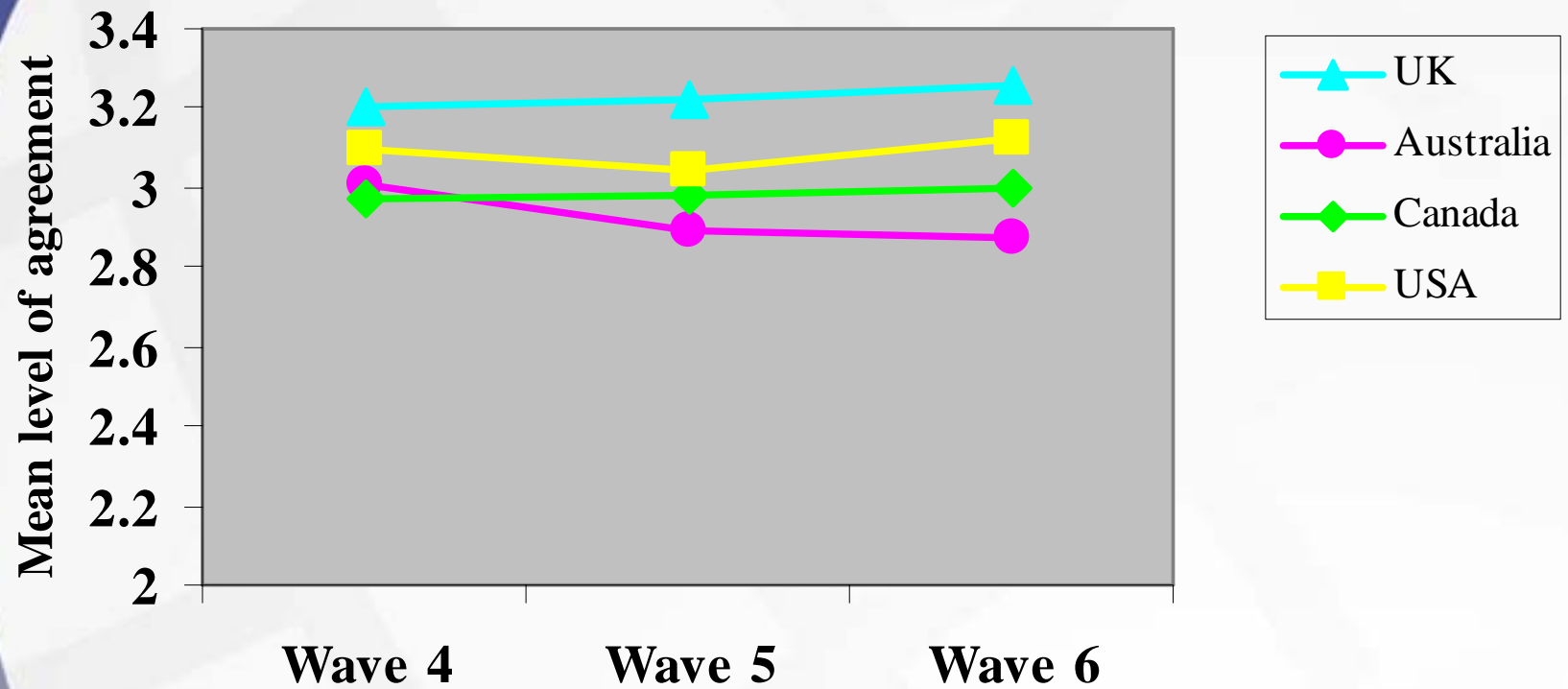
### Belief that light taste means low tar



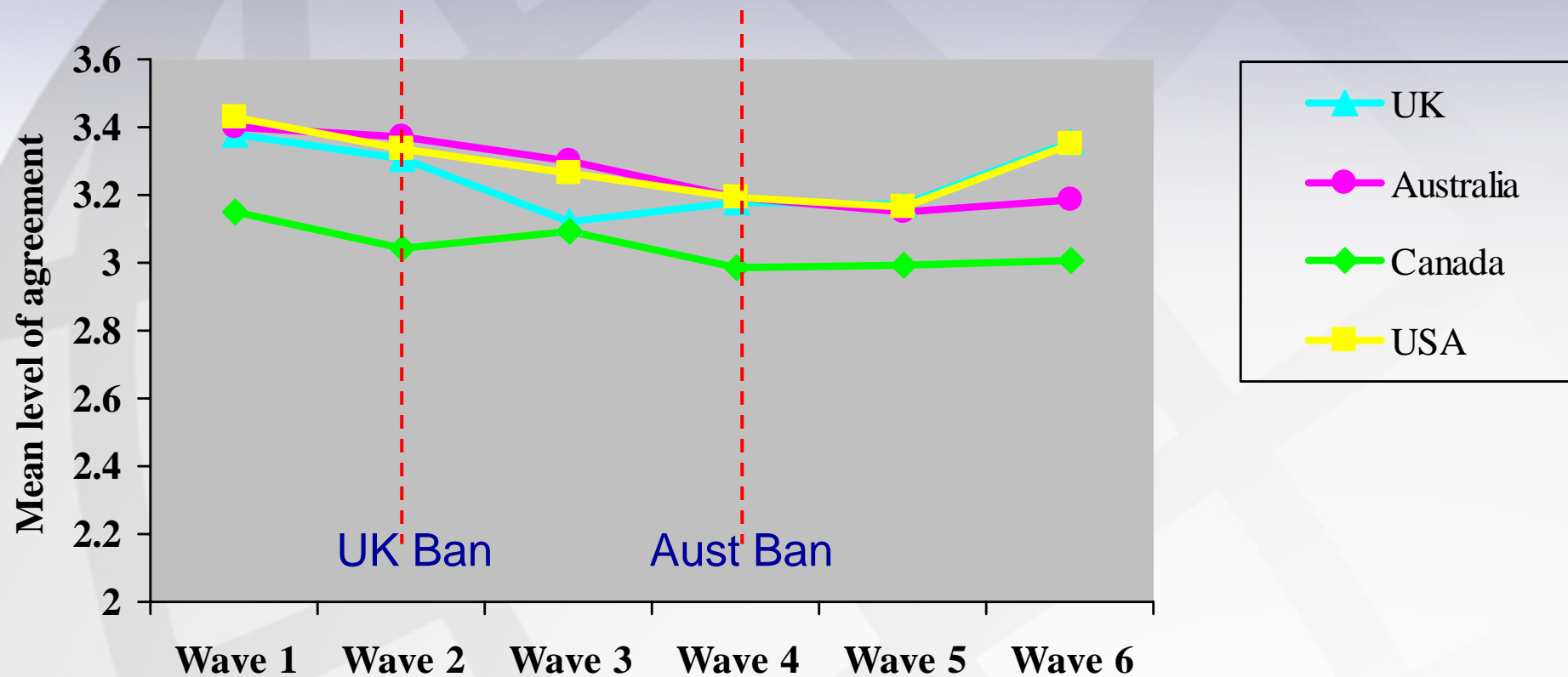
## Belief that Light cigarettes are less harmful



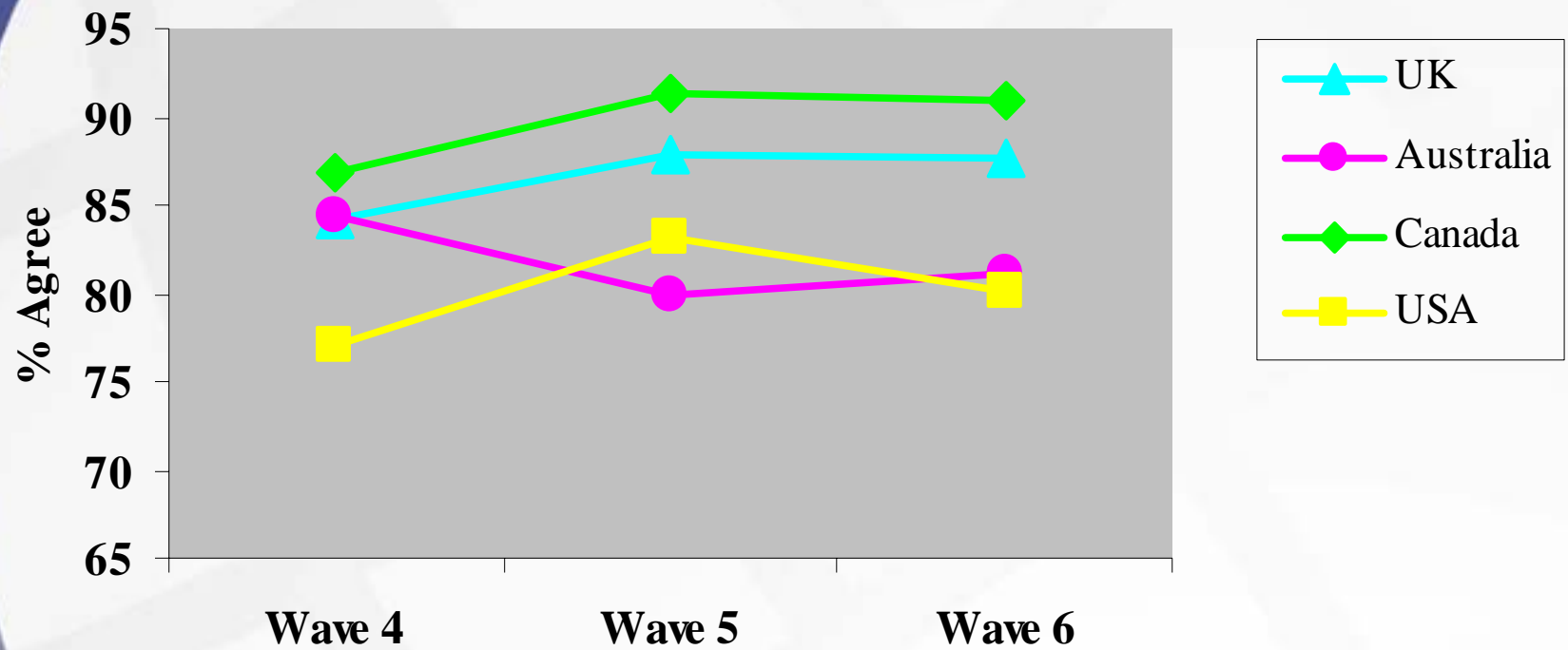
### Belief that harsh smoke is more dangerous



## Belief that Light cigarettes are smoother on throat



## Tar numbers on packs are related to tar taken in



# Possible mechanisms for poor results in UK

- ? Mixed messages
  - Emission information left on packs.
  - Introduction of 10-1-10 policy (reduce max tar limit from 12mg to 10mg).

# Conclusions

- **Australian ban more successful than UK**
- **Continued focus on ISO levels may be the problem in UK**
  - and ? Rest of EU
- **At best reduction in mis-beliefs**
- **More needs to be done**
  - Public education
  - Plain packaging
  - Ban other ways of identifying these
  - Ban filter venting etc

# ITCPES Four-Country Survey

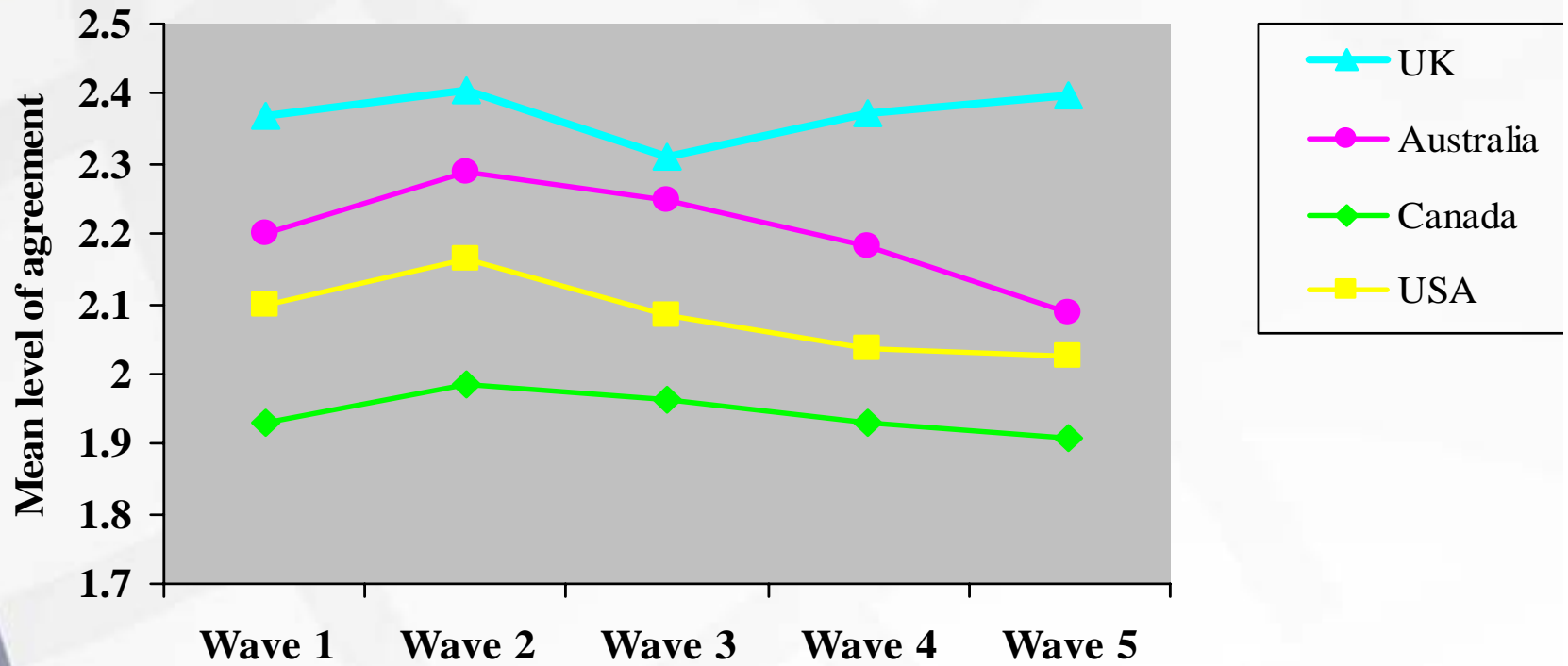
<http://www.itcproject.org>



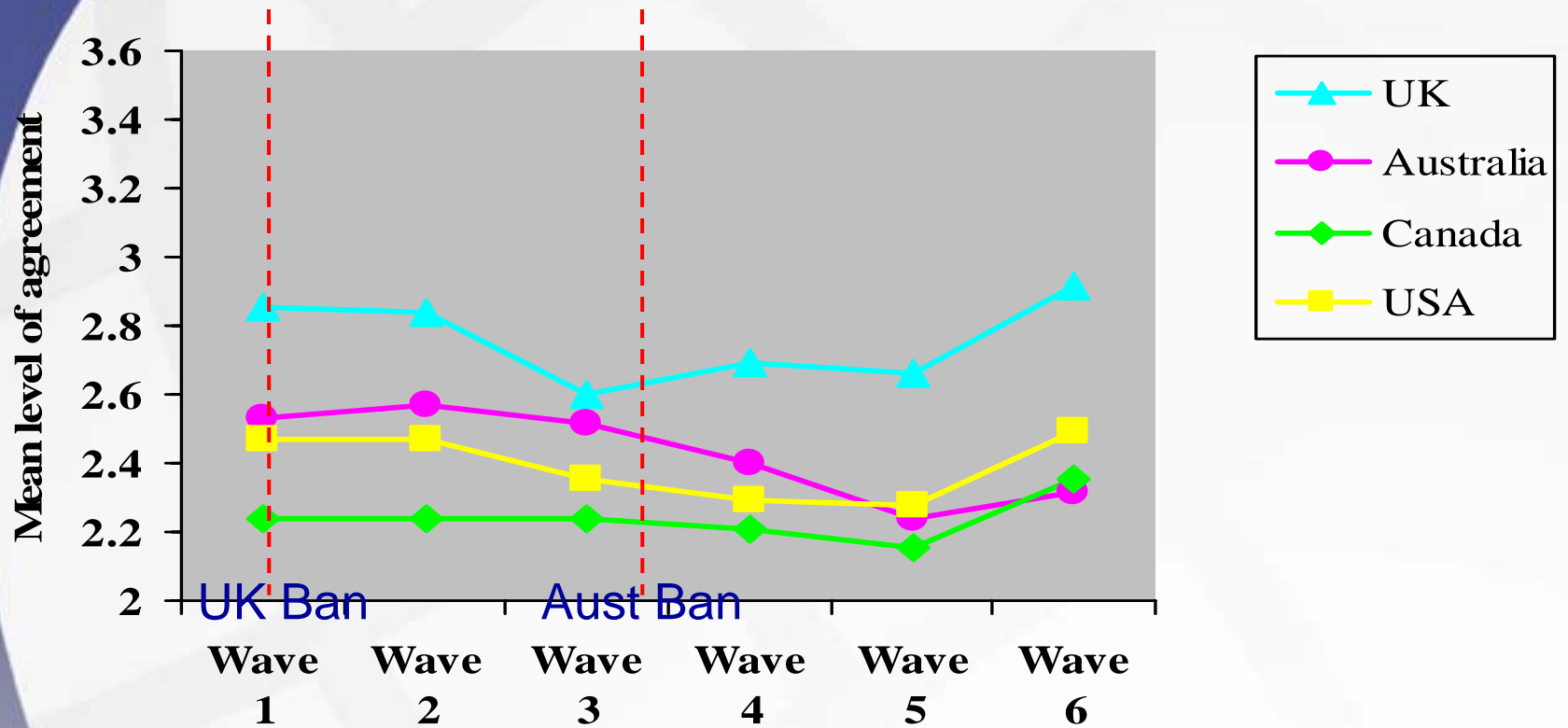
## Funding for Four-Country Survey



### Belief that Light cigarettes make it easier to quit



## Lights Benefit Scale\*



\*Composite of the beliefs that a) lights make it easier to quit, b) lights are less harmful, and c) lights have less tar (wave 6: b & c only).

Correlation between the belief that lights are less harmful and the belief that lights contain less tar, within each country.

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<b>UK</b>	<b>.514**</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>.573**</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>.481**</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>.561**</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>.553**</b>

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Linear regression was used to predict the beliefs that lights are less harmful (higher scores = agree) and to explore whether the belief that lights contain less tar accounted for the country effect.

Wave 6 data: n = 8070.

	<b>Model 1</b> <b>R<sup>2</sup> = .050</b>			<b>Model 2</b> <b>R<sup>2</sup> = .321</b>		
	<b>Beta</b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>
<b>Canada vs. UK</b>	<b>-.236</b>	<b>-17.39</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>	<b>-.134</b>	<b>-11.52</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>
<b>USA vs. UK</b>	<b>-.157</b>	<b>-11.53</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>	<b>-.069</b>	<b>-5.98</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>
<b>Australia vs. UK</b>	<b>-.245</b>	<b>-17.95</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>	<b>-.126</b>	<b>-10.69</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>
<b>Belief lights have less tar</b>				<b>.530</b>	<b>55.65</b>	<b>&lt; .001</b>

