Reviewer's report

Title: Influence of Household Demographic and Socio-Economic Factors on Household Expenditure on Tobacco in Six New Independent States

Version: 1 Date: 6 March 2007

Reviewer: Antti Uutela

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting and important topic which deserves attention. The abstract is well-written, but the text body is - in my opinion - not of the same standard leading to my following remarks.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

I am not sure if I understand the authors correctly (I'd suggest that the authors make use of the language editing again) but from what gather I conclude that the authors have not defined the design and methods of their study clearly enough. Page 5, second paragraph, opens with a sentence stating a unique database was created on careful assessment of LSMS questionnaires and the raw data for all six countries. As an outsider it remains unexplainable to me what careful assessment means. The same remark applies for the opening of the second paragraph on page 6, too.

I find argumentation for the chosen OECD equivalence scale problematic while the authors make mention of its problematic sides only and do not give any other good reasons for the choice than the unavailability of better equivalence scales. Are the OECD equivalence scales values good enough to warrant the subsequent analyses or not.

In a number of situations the authors indicate that some needed information for a country is not available. Out of practical reasons I understand the unwillingness of the authors to include only those countries and variables in the analyses where the information is available, but this option is not favored by scientists usually because it makes the results difficult to interpret as a whole. Also I would like to recommend that the authors interpret statistically significant findings only. This is not the case now.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.