Commentary to the Prince Edward Island
Department of Health and Wellness
Regarding Live Well (PEI) Wellness Action Plan
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Taxpayers Protection Alliance
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To whom it may concern:

The Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) welcomes the opportunity to provide commentary regarding the proposed generational tobacco ban in Prince Edward Island. TPA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to educating the public through the research, analysis and dissemination of information on the government's effects on the economy.

While protecting the next generation from the harms associated with tobacco is laudable, generational bans disregard the significant declines in youth and adult smoking in Prince Edward Island. Moreover, such policies are in reaction to the growing market of tobacco harm reduction products and are counter to the province's (and Canada's) forward approach to addressing the ongoing opioid crisis. Rather than implementing prohibitions, policymakers should work towards educating youth and adults of the harms associated with combusted tobacco products.

Key Points:

- Youth use of combustible cigarettes in Prince Edward Island is at a record low, with only two percent of students in Grades 7-12 reporting past-month use in 2021-22, a 62.3 percent decline from 2018-19.
- Although the use of e-cigarettes initially rose, recent years have experienced a decline. In 2021-22, 40.5 percent of youth had ever tried e-cigarettes, and 26.6 percent reported past-month use. These figures represent decreases of 13.7 percent and 11 percent, respectively, from 2018-19.
- Among all Canadian youth, only one percent reported past-month use of combustible cigarettes in 2021-22, a 28.6 percent decrease from 2018-19. Similarly, vaping rates have also decreased nationally.
- In 2022, 13.1 percent of Prince Edward Island residents aged 15 years and older were smoking, a 47.2 percent increase from the previous year.
- There is a need for better education on the relative risks of different tobacco products. Misconceptions about the harm of e-cigarettes compared to combustible cigarettes could lead to higher rates of traditional cigarette use.
- Generational bans on tobacco products do not address the underlying issues and may drive users to unregulated markets. Instead, policies should focus on harm reduction and informed choices.

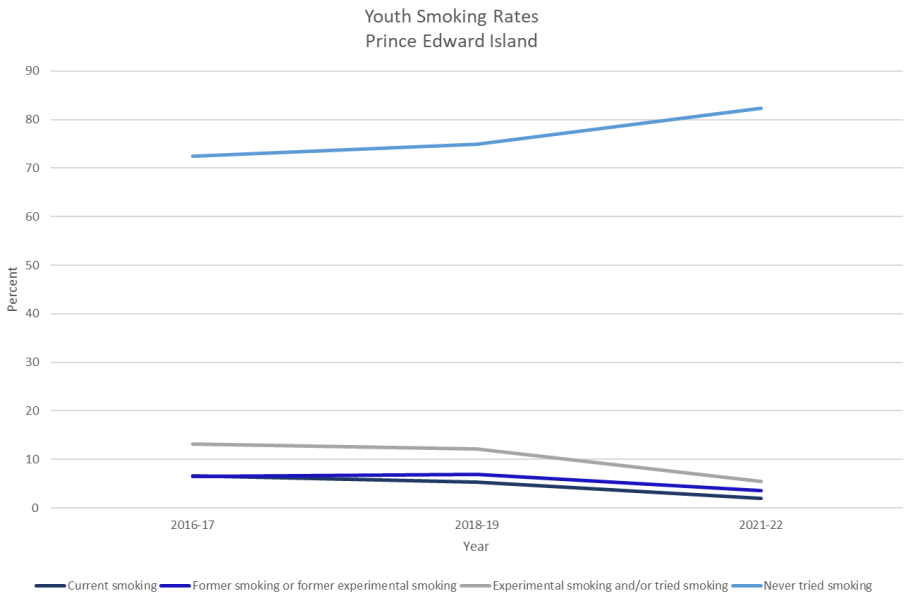
- Prince Edward Island's approach to tobacco contrasts with its harm reduction strategy for opioids, highlighting a need for consistent policies that reduce harm without pushing users towards unregulated and potentially more dangerous markets.

Youth Tobacco and Vapor Product Use

Youth use of combustible cigarettes is at record lows in Prince Edward Island. In 2021-22 (among youth in the province in Grades 7 through 12), only two percent reported past-month use of combustible cigarettes.[1] This is a 62.3 percent decline from 2018-19 when 5.3 percent of Prince Edward Island youth were currently smoking. Former and experimental smoking rates are significantly down, while never smoking is up.

Between 2018-19 and 2021-2022, among Prince Edward Island youth:

- The percentage who were formerly smoking decreased by 49.3 percent from 6.9 percent to two percent.
- The percentage who reported ever trying and/or experimental smoking decreased by 55 percent from 12.2 percent to 5.5 percent.
- The percentage who reported never trying combustible cigarettes increased by 10 percent from 74.9 percent to 82.4 percent.



Similarly, among all Canadian youth, combustible cigarette use is at historic lows, while vaping has decreased in recent years.[2]

Among Canadian youth, in 2021-22:

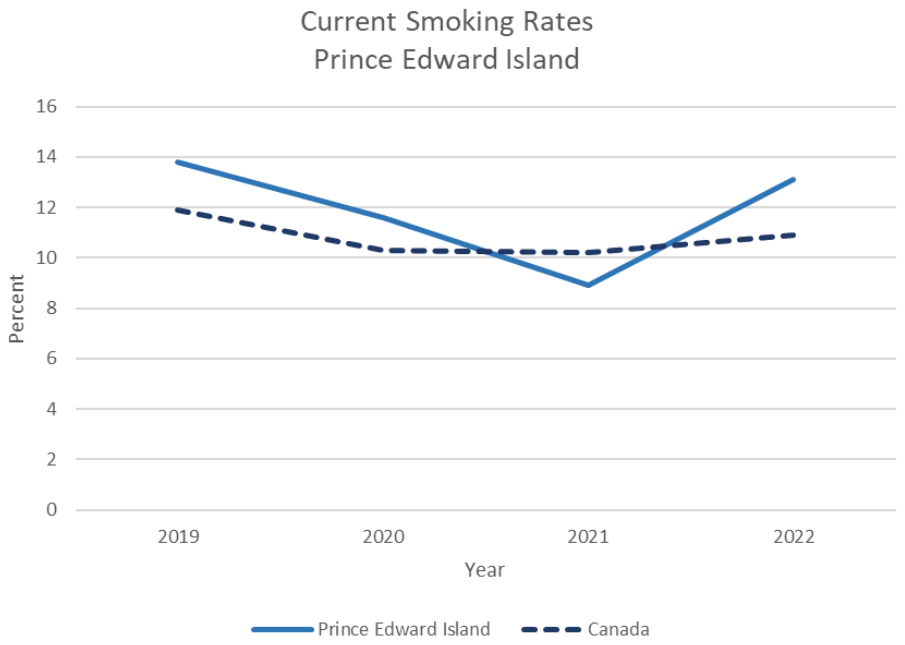
- Only one percent reported past-month use of combustible cigarettes, which was a 28.6 percent decrease from 2018-19.
- 3.1 percent were formerly smoking, which was a 35.4 percent decrease from 2018-19.
- 10.2 percent reported ever trying and/or experimental smoking, which was a 9.7 percent decrease from 2018-19.
- 84.7 percent reported never trying cigarettes, a 4.4 percent increase from 2018-19.

In 2021-22 (among all Canadian youth), 26.6 percent reported have ever-tried an e-cigarette, while 15.3 percent reported past-month e-cigarette use. Between 2018-19 and 2021, ever-use of vapor products among Canadian youth decreased by 11 percent, while past-month use decreased by 16.8 percent.

Adult Combustible Cigarette Use Rising

In 2022, more than 18,600 (13.1 percent) Prince Edward Island residents aged 15 years or older were currently smoking. This represents a 47.2 percent increase from 2021 and an additional 6,393 persons smoking. Comparatively, in 2022 (among all Canadians aged 15 years or older), 10.9 percent were currently smoking.

Concurrently, between 2021 and 2022, vaping rates among the provincial population decreased by 4.6 percent from 6.5 percent in 2021 to 6.2 percent in 2022.



Among all Canadians aged 15 and older who were vaping in 2022, 18.8 percent reported using e-cigarettes for smoking cessation purposes, and an additional 11 percent reported using them to avoid returning to smoking.

While addressing youth use of any age-restricted product is laudable, a generational ban does not address the growing population of adults who smoke – largely attributed to misinformation on tobacco harm reduction products including e-cigarettes, heated tobacco, and oral nicotine products.

Rather than pushing forward draconian bans that don't address this problem, policymakers should look at ways to better inform both youth and adults of tobacco harm reduction alternatives.

Generational bans on tobacco products do not address tobacco harms

With adult smoking prevalence rising, the main problem for Prince Edward Island's health authorities is the much larger population of adults who have a long history of smoking. By contrast, the supply of new and underaged smokers has declined consistently to a dwindling cohort. The generational ban takes aim at the harms of smoking long-term but misses the target. It does nothing to address significant health risks amongst adult smokers which will inevitably arise if they cannot, or will not, quit or switch to safer products.

The trend in declining youth use will continue with or without a generational ban as vaping and other far safer nicotine alternatives replace traditional combustible tobacco. This is already evident in the data and requires little to no investment by the Prince Edward Island government. It would be a far better use of resources for health groups to encourage all smokers to switch to less harmful products. Government efforts would then be better applied to help entrenched smokers born before the generational ban cut-off date.

It is already illegal for underage people to buy cigarettes, yet there are still many who smoke. Adolescents able to circumvent laws to prevent underage use and will continue to do so as a large and lucrative black market inevitably replaces legal sales. It is important to understand that this measure does not ban any child from buying cigarettes, instead it denies the choice to buy cigarettes once a person becomes an adult.

Prince Edward Island would achieve better results for public health by expanding education programs so that citizens fully understand the vast difference in relative risk between combustible tobacco and safer nicotine alternatives. With this approach, nicotine initiation will mostly be by way of products which do not present the lethal risk of traditional cigarettes and will result in combustible tobacco use becoming old-fashioned and rare. In this way, benefits to public health will eclipse the hypothetical benefits of an untested and hopeful Smokefree Generation policy.

Harm Reduction and Tobacco

There is confusion because Prince Edward Island would take up a drastic, prohibitionist policy towards tobacco, while the province (and all of Canada) promotes harm reduction to tackle the ongoing opioid epidemic.

According to the Prince Edward Island government website, harm reduction is defined as "any evidenced-informed intervention that helps reduce the risks of harms associated with a behavior without requiring abstinence from that behavior."[3]

The province has been actively promoting harm reduction, with the province's chief public health officer noting in June of 2024 that Prince Edward Island was "seeing more overdoses, but [the province hasn't] seen the same number of overdoses resulting in deaths."[4] The health officer remarked that the lack of deaths is indicative of an overdose reversal drug being more readily available as "making a difference."

Pushing an entire generation to the black market for tobacco products is counter to what the province and Canada's policies towards addressing the illicit drug crisis. The policy would also force an entire generation to an unregulated marketplace, which could become as tainted as the illicit drug supply.

Tobacco Harm Reduction

Cigarette smoking is responsible for an estimated 8 million annual global deaths.[5] In Canada, an estimated 45,000 adults die each year due to smoking.[6] Since the 1950s, leading public health agencies across the world have understood the ill effects of combustible cigarettes. While many public health campaigns have taken the approach to just eliminate smoking, scientists across the globe have been, and continue to, research and promote tobacco harm reduction products, which allow users to consume nicotine without the harms associated with smoking.

Research overwhelmingly shows the smoke created by the burning of tobacco, rather than the nicotine, produces the harmful chemicals found in combustible cigarettes.[7] There are an estimated 600 ingredients in each tobacco cigarette, and "when burned, [they] create more than 7,000 chemicals."[8] As a result of these chemicals, cigarette smoking is directly linked to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, numerous types of cancer, and increases in other health risks among the smoking population.[9]

There is no significant scientific evidence connecting major health problems with just the use of nicotine. According to Raymond Niaura, Ph.D., professor of social and behavioral sciences at New York University's College of Global Public Health, existing evidence "indicates that nicotine itself, while not completely benign, carries substantially lower risks than smoking."[10] Health Canada has noted that "nicotine itself is not known to cause cancer."[11]

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The FDA has stated that nicotine "is not the primary cause of cancer and other chronic smoking-related diseases."[12] The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention point out that "nicotine medicines" do not cause cancer, lung disease, and that they are "much less likely to cause heart disease than continued smoking."[13]

The U.K. Royal College of Physicians, notes "nicotine, while addictive, is not the primary cause of smoking-related diseases."[14]

In a comprehensive study of nicotine health effects, Niaura noted "that even very high doses of medicinal nicotine had little effect on cardiovascular function." Emphasizing "a continuum of harm among combustible and noncombustible, nicotine containing products," Niaura urged the use of alternative nicotine products, with "the goal of moving users away from the most addictive, appealing and toxic combustibles to less harmful alternatives — ideally FDA approved [modified-risk tobacco products.]"[15]

E-Cigarettes and Vapor Products

E-cigarettes were first introduced in Canada in 2004.[16] These devices provide users with an experience that simulates smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes. Cig-alikes are typically composed of three parts: a cartridge that contains an e-liquid, with or without nicotine; an atomizer to heat the e-liquid to vapor; and a battery.

In later years, manufacturers added second-generation tank systems to e-cigarette products, followed by larger third-generation personal vaporizers, which vape users commonly call "mods."[17] These devices can either be closed or open systems.

Closed systems, often referred to as "pod systems," contain a disposable cartridge that is discarded after consumption. Open systems contain a tank that users can refill with e-liquid. Both closed and open systems utilize the same three primary parts included in cigalikes—a liquid, an atomizer with a heating element, and a battery— as well as other electronic parts. Unlike cig-alikes, "mods" allow users to manage flavorings and the amount of vapor produced by controlling the temperature that heats the e-liquid.

Health Effects of Electronic Cigarettes and Vapor Products

Despite recent media reports, e-cigarettes are significantly less harmful than combustible cigarettes. Public health statements on the harms of e-cigarettes include:

> **Public Health England:** In 2015, Public Health England (a leading health agency in the United Kingdom and similar to the FDA) found "that using [e-cigarettes are] around 95% safer than smoking," and that their use "could help reducing smoking related disease, death and health inequalities."[18] In 2018, the agency reiterated their findings, finding vaping to be "at least 95% less harmful than smoking."[19]

In February 2021, PHE provided the latest update to their ongoing report on the effects of vapor products in adults in the UK. The authors found that in the UK, e-cigarettes were the "most popular aid used by people to quit smoking [and] … vaping is positively associated with quitting smoking successfully."[20]

Moreover, a major 2022 evidence review by the UK's Government's Office for Health Improvement and Disparities concluded that Public Health England's 95% less harmful estimate is still "broadly accurate."[21]

The Royal College of Physicians: In 2016, the Royal College of Physicians found the use of e-cigarettes and vaping devices "unlikely to exceed 5% of the risk of harm from smoking tobacco."[22] The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) is another United Kingdom-based public health organization, and the same public group the United States relied on for its 1964 Surgeon General's report on smoking and health.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine: In January 2018, the academy noted "using current generation e-cigarettes is less harmful than smoking."[23]

A 2017 study in *BMJ*'s peer-reviewed journal *Tobacco Control* examined health outcomes using "a strategy of switching cigarette smokers to e-cigarette use … in the USA to accelerate tobacco control progress."[24] The authors concluded that replacing e-cigarettes "for tobacco cigarettes would result in an estimated 6.6 million fewer deaths and more than 86 million fewer life-years lost."

Further, e-cigarettes are effective in reducing smoking. A 2019 study in The New England Journal of Medicine found e-cigarettes are twice as effective as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) in helping smokers quit.[25] The authors noted of the 100 participants reporting abstinence during a 52-week follow up, 80 percent reported using e-cigarettes, while only 9 percent said they were using NRT products, such as nicotine-containing lozenges or gum.

An October 2020 review in the *Cochrane Library Database of Systematic Reviews* analyzed 50 completed studies which had been published up until January 2020 and represented more than 12,400 participants.[26]

The authors found that there was "moderate-certainty evidence, limited by imprecision, that quit rates were higher in people randomized to nicotine [e-cigarettes] than in those randomized to nicotine replacement therapy." The authors found that e-cigarette use translated "to an additional four successful quitters per 100." The authors also found higher quit rates in participants that had used e-cigarettes containing nicotine, compared to the participants that had not used nicotine. Notably, the authors found that for "every 100 people using nicotine e-cigarettes to stop smoking, 10 might successfully stop, compared with only six of 100 people using nicotine replacement therapy or nicotine-free e-cigarettes."[27]

A January 2024 update to the *Cochrane* 2020 review, analyzed 88 studies of more than 27,000 adults who smoked, and compared e-cigarettes with nicotine replacement therapy, nicotine medications, and heated tobacco products.[28] The researchers found that adults "are more likely to stop smoking for at least six months using nicotine e-cigarettes than using nicotine replacement therapy."[29]

Conclusion

While the intention to protect future generations from tobacco harm is commendable, generational bans overlook the significant reductions in youth and adult smoking in Prince Edward Island. Such prohibitive policies react to the rising market of tobacco harm reduction products and contradict the province's progressive approach to the opioid crisis. Instead of prohibiting use, policymakers should focus on educating both youth and adults about the dangers of combusted tobacco products. Generational bans fail to acknowledge the decline in traditional cigarette use among youth and the role of e-cigarettes as a less harmful alternative, potentially leading to misinformation and an increase in combustible cigarette use. They also fail to address the much larger public health harms of combustible tobacco use amongst adult smokers, who are the most at-risk in the population. To effectively reduce smoking rates, it is crucial to promote informed choices and harm reduction strategies rather than imposing restrictive bans that might drive users to unregulated markets.

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Tobacco & Vaping 101

Canadian Provinces

Prince Edward Island 2024

Canadian lawmakers often face misinformation regarding adult smoking and vaping habits. This misinformation can lead to misguided legislation and regulation. The analysis provided contains current data on the use of cigarettes and e-cigarette products among adults and youth in Prince Edward Island, along with information on cigarette sales and provincial tobacco tax revenues.

Key Points:

- In 2022, 18,665 individuals (13.1 percent) aged 15 or older in Prince Edward Island were currently smoking, a 52.1 percent increase from 2021. Smoking rates in the province are 20.2 percent lower than Canada's national average.
- In 2022, 26.9 percent of persons in Prince Edward Island were formerly smoking and 59.9 percent reported having never smoked.
- Smoking rates were highest among adults aged 25 to 44 years old, which was 24.2 percent higher than the overall provincial smoking rate, but 42 percent higher than the national average in the same age group.
- In 2022, 8,834 individuals (6.2 percent) in Prince Edward Island were using e-cigarettes, a 4.6 percent decrease from 2021. The provincial vaping rate is 6.2 percent higher than the national average of 5.8 percent.
- In 2021-22, 2 percent of Prince Edward Island youth in Grades 7 through 12 were smoking cigarettes, a 62.3 percent decline from 2018-19.
- In 2021-22, 26.6 percent of youth were vaping, a 0.4 percent decline from 2018-19.
- In 2021-22, among youth using e-cigarettes, the least cited reason for using e-cigarettes was flavors, as reported by only 4.6 percent of youth. Comparatively, 20.3 percent reported being addicted to them and 16.8 percent reported using them to "relax or relieve stress."
- In 2021, more than 168 million cigarette units were sold in Prince Edward Island, a 27.8 percent increase from 2020, representing an additional 36.6 million cigarettes sold.
- Despite declining smoking rates between 2020 and 2021, Prince Edward Island collected more an estimated $31.9 million in provincial taxes from tobacco and vapor products in 2020-21, an 11.9 percent increase from the previous year.

Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Prince Edward Island 2024

Adult Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use

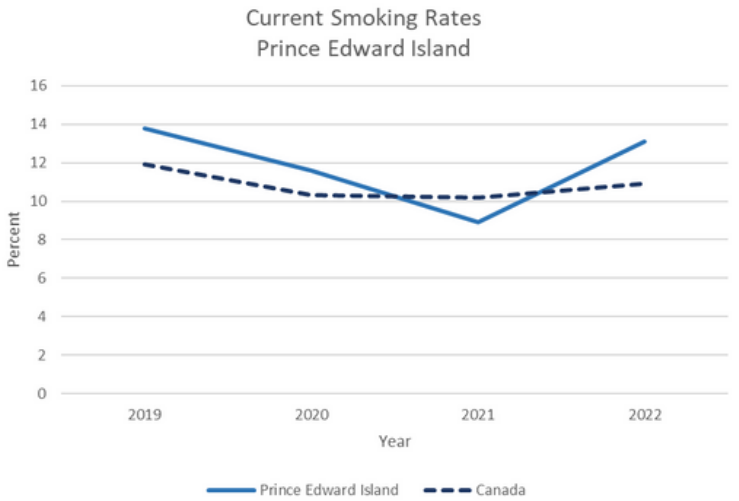
In 2022 (in Prince Edward Island), 18,665 (13.1 percent) of persons aged 15 years or older were currently smoking cigarettes. This is a 52.1 percent increase from 2021, when 8.9 percent of persons were smoking, representing 6,393 additional people smoking.

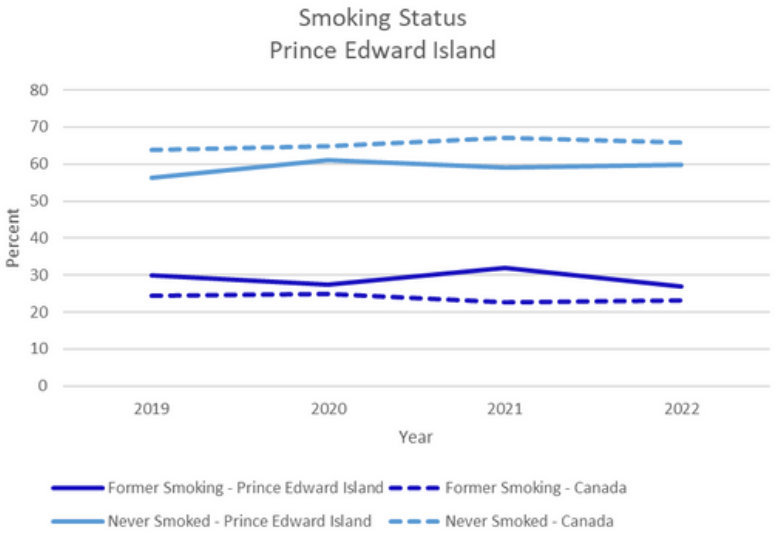
Comparatively, in 2022, 10.9 percent of Canadian adults were currently smoking. Smoking rates among residents 15 and older in Prince Edward Island are 20.2 percent lower than the national average.

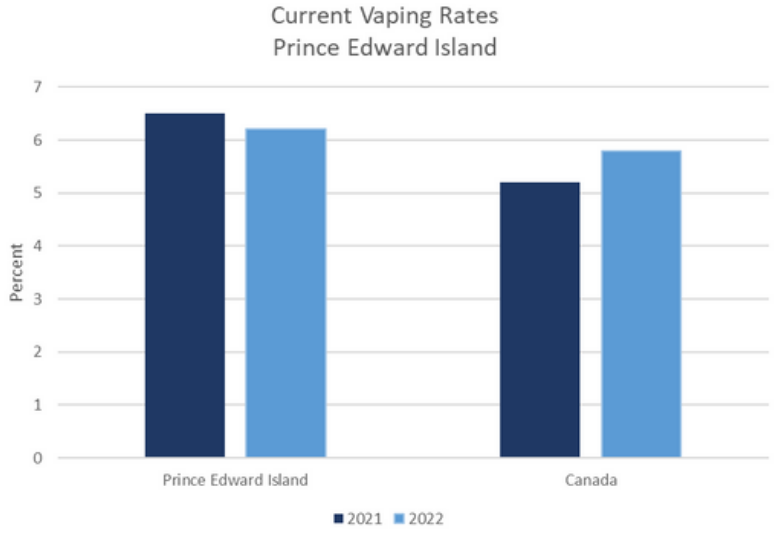
In 2022, 26.9 percent of persons in Prince Edward Island were formerly smoking, a 15.9 percent decrease from 2021. Additionally, 59.9 percent reported never smoking, a 1.4 percent increase from 2021. Former smoking rates in Prince Edward Island are 14.8 percent higher than the national rate of 23.2 percent, while the rate of never smoking is 9.4 percent lower than the Canadian average of 65.8 percent.

Among smoking persons in Prince Edward Island, rates were highest among those aged 25 to 44 years old, and was 24.2 percent higher than the overall provincial smoking rate. Additionally, this age group's smoking rate is 42 percent higher than the Canadian average of 10.9 percent for adults aged between 25 and 45 years old.

In 2022, 8,834 (6.2 percent) persons in Prince Edward Island were using e-cigarettes. This is a 4.6 percent decrease from 2021, when 6.5 percent were vaping, and represents 129 fewer vapers. Comparatively, in 2022, 5.8 percent of Canadian adults were vaping. Vaping rates among persons in Prince Edward Island are 6.2 percent greater than the national average.







Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Prince Edward Island 2024

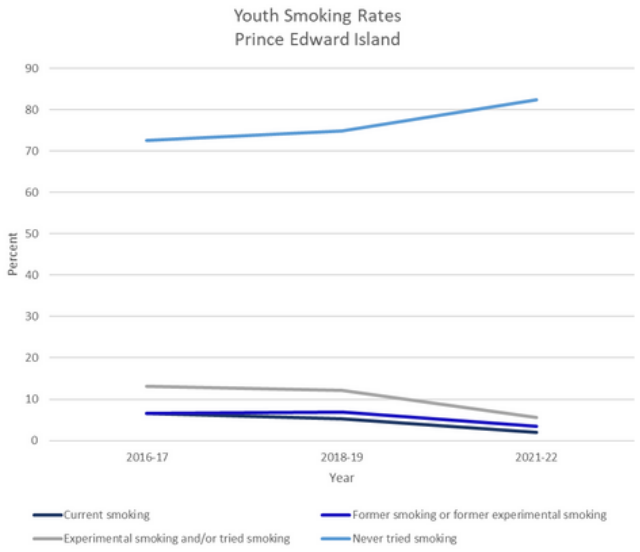
Youth Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use

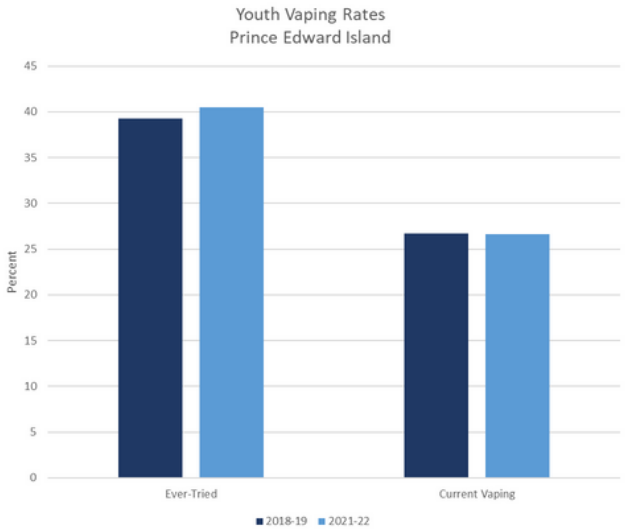
In 2021-22, among Prince Edward Island youth in Grades 7 through 12, 2 percent of youth were currently smoking cigarettes, a 62.3 percent decline from 2018-19 when 5.3 percent were smoking. In 2021-22, 3.1 percent of students in Grades 10 through 12 reported current cigarette use, which was a 64.4 percent decrease from 2018-19.

Among all students, the rate of ever-trying cigarettes and/or experimental use decreased by 6.9 percent between 2018-19 and 2021-22, while the percentage of students who had never tried smoking increased by 10 percent during the same period.

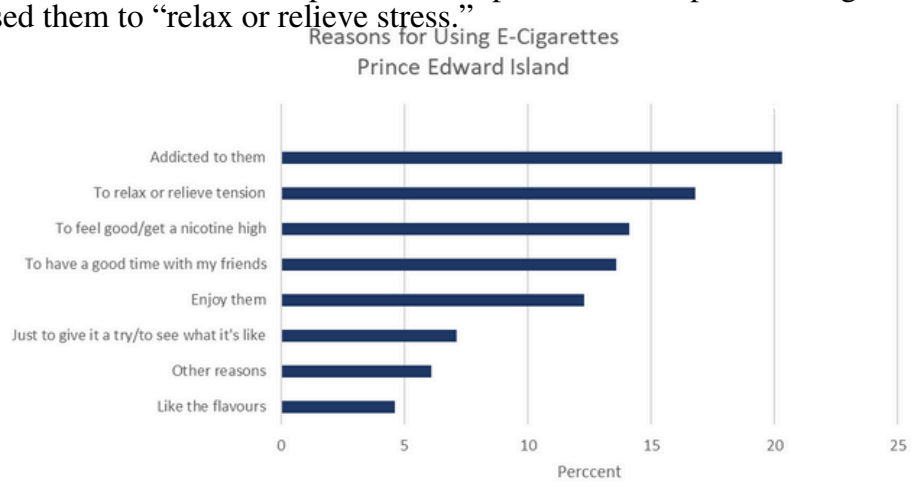
In 2021-22, 26.6 percent of Prince Edward Island youth were currently vaping e-cigarettes, a 0.4 percent decline from 2018-19 when 26.7 percent were vaping. Among students in Grades 7 through 9, current vaping rates increased by 11.7 percent, while rates increased by 0.5 percent among students in Grades 10 through 12.

Ever-use of e-cigarettes slightly increased. In 2021-22, 40.5 percent of youth reported having ever tried an e-cigarette. This is a 3.1 percent increase from 2018-19 when 39.3 percent had tried e-cigarettes. Among students in Grades 7 through 9, the percentage reporting ever trying e-cigarettes increased by 10.4 percent, while rates increased by 4.4 percent among students in Grades 10 through 12.





It should be noted that flavours were the least cited reason why youth in Prince Edward Island use e-cigarettes. In 2021-22, among all youth who were currently using e-cigarettes, only 4.6 percent cited using them because they "like the flavours," compared to 20.3 percent who reported being addicted to them and 16.8 percent who used them to "relax or relieve stress."



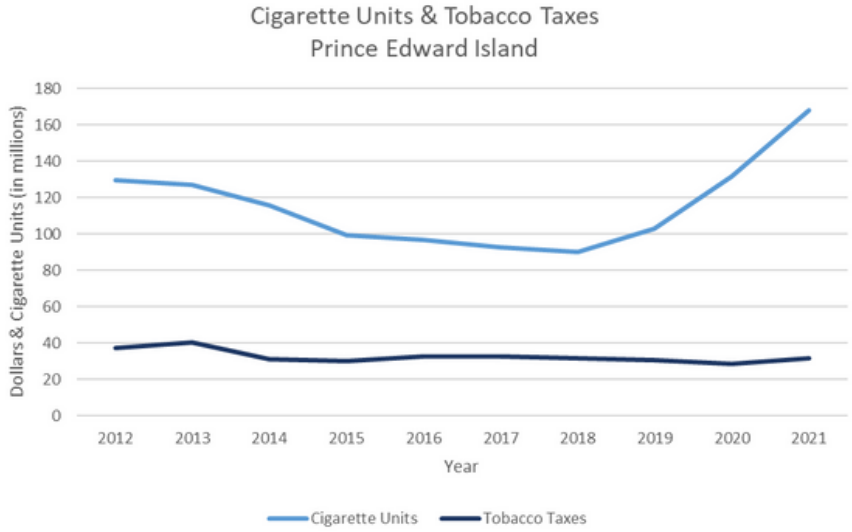
Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Prince Edward Island 2024

Cigarette Sales and Tobacco Taxes

In 2021, more than 168 million cigarette units were sold in Prince Edward Island, marking a 27.8 percent increase from 2020, when more than 131 million units were sold. This represents an additional 36.6 million cigarettes sold.

Interestingly, smoking rates decreased despite an increase in cigarettes. In 2021, 8.9 percent of Prince Edward Island persons aged 15 years or older were smoking, a 23.3 percent decrease from 2020, when 11.6 percent were smoking.

Despite declines in smoking, the province continues to collection tens of millions of dollars each year from the sale of cigarette and other tobacco products, including less harmful products such as e-cigarettes. In 2020-21, Prince Edward Island collected an estimated $31.9 million in provincial taxes related to the sale of tobacco and vapor products, an 11.9 percent increase from 2019-2020, and an additional $3.4 million from the year prior.



Conclusion

Policymakers should consider these trends to effectively reduce smoking-related harms. Understanding the demographics and behaviors of those most affected by tobacco products can aid in developing better strategies for public health improvement.

References

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5. Data on tobacco taxes comes from Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada "Tax Revenues from Tobacco Sales." Accessed May 2024. https://www.smoke-free.ca/pdf_1/totaltax.pdf.

TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

Tobacco & Vaping 101

Canadian Provinces

Canada 2024

Canadian lawmakers often face misinformation regarding adult smoking and vaping habits. This misinformation can lead to misguided legislation and regulation. The analysis provided contains current data on the use of cigarettes and e-cigarette products among adults and youth in Canada, along with information on cigarette sales and provincial tobacco tax revenues.

Key Points:

- In 2022, more than 3.5 million individuals (10.9 percent) aged 15 or older in Canada were currently smoking, a 6.9 percent increase from 2021.
- In 2022, 23.2 percent of persons in Canada were formerly smoking and 65.8 percent reported having never smoked.
- Smoking rates were highest among adults aged 45 years old older, which made up more than 59 percent of persons who were smoking in 2022
- In 2022, more than 1.9 million (5.8 percent) in Canada were using e-cigarettes, an 11.5 percent increase from 2021.
- In 2022, the most common flavor among Canadians currently using e-cigarettes was fruit flavors, with 53.4 percent of current vapers reporting using them.
- In 2022, among current Canadian e-cigarettes, the most cited reason for vaping was “to reduce stress” (21.7 percent), followed by 18.8 percent who were vaping for smoking cessation.
- In 2021-22, 4.1 percent of Canadian youth in Grades 7 through 12 were smoking cigarettes, a 24.1 percent decline from 2018-19.
- In 2021-22, 16.8 percent of youth were vaping, a 16.8 percent decline from 2018-19. Vaping rates decreased by 9 percent for youth in Grades 7 through 9, and decreased by 19.7 percent for youth in Grades 10 through 12.
- In 2021-22, among youth using e-cigarettes, the most cited reason for using e-cigarettes was to “relax or relieve tension” as reported by 20.5 percent of youth. Only 7.4 percent reported using e-cigarettes because of flavours.
- In 2021, more than 20.9 billion cigarette units were sold in Canada, a 9.5 percent decline from 2020, representing more than 2.2 billion fewer cigarettes sold.
- Despite declining smoking rates, Canada collected more than $3 billion in taxes from tobacco and vapor products in 2020-21, a 1.8 percent increase from the previous year.

Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Canada 2024

Adult Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use

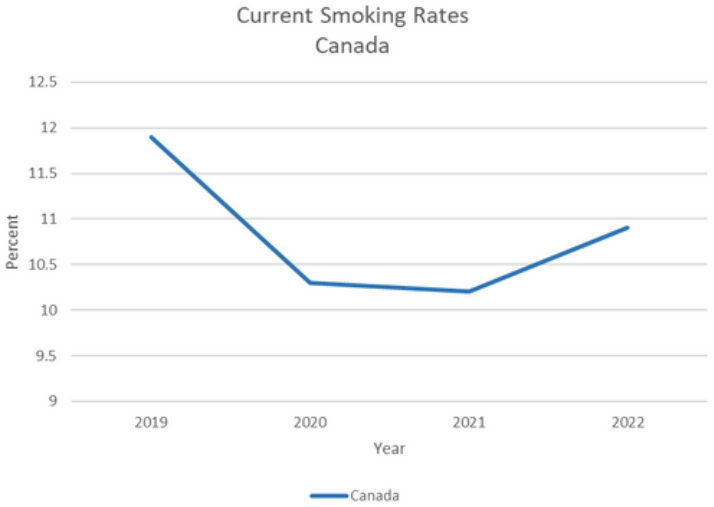
In 2022 (in Canada), more than 3.5 million (10.9 percent) of persons aged 15 years or older were currently smoking cigarettes. This is a 6.9 percent increase from 2021, when 10.2 percent of persons were smoking, representing 297,274 additional people smoking.

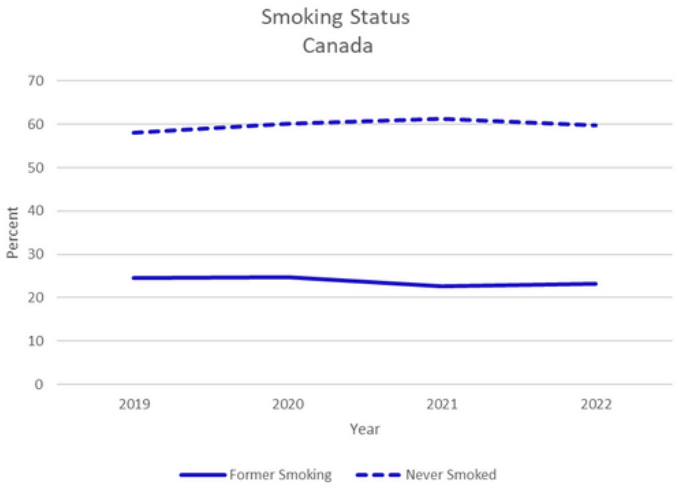
In 2022, 23.2 percent of persons in Canada were formerly smoking, a 2.2 percent increase from 2021. Additionally, 65.8 percent reported never smoking, a 1.9 percent decrease from 2021.

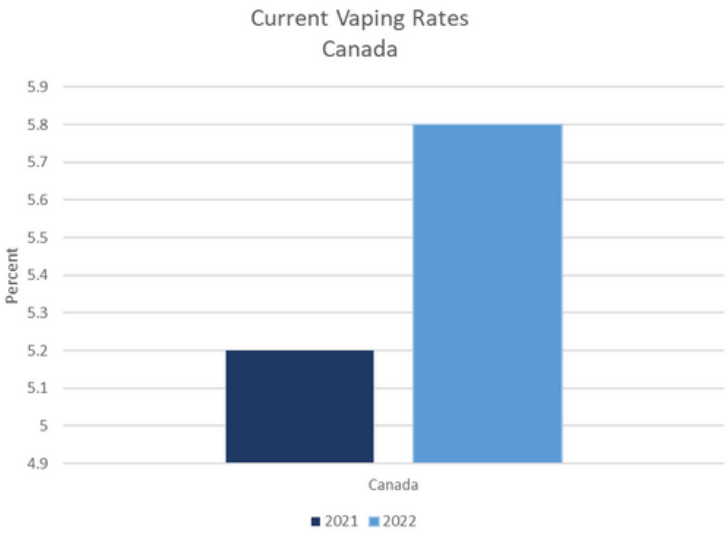
Among persons currently using cigarettes in 2022, smoking rates were highest among adults aged 45 years or older, with 12.3 percent reporting current cigarette use. Further, these adults made up more than 59 percent of persons who were smoking in 2022. Current cigarette use was lowest among persons aged 15 to 19 years old, with only 4.2 percent reporting current use. These teens made up only 2.5 percent of persons smoking in 2022.

In 2022, more than 1.9 million (5.8 percent) persons in Canada were using e-cigarettes. This is an 11.5 percent increase from 2021 when 5.2 percent were vaping, and represents 231,332 additional vapers.

In 2022, vaping rates were highest among Canadians aged 20 to 24 years old, with 19.7 percent reporting current use. Yet, adults aged 25 to 44 years old made-up 40.4 percent of Canadian vapers in 2022. Additionally, while two percent of adults 45 years or older were currently vaping, these individuals made up 18.4 percent of all vaping Canadians, compared to 15 to 19 years olds, who made up 15.4 percent.







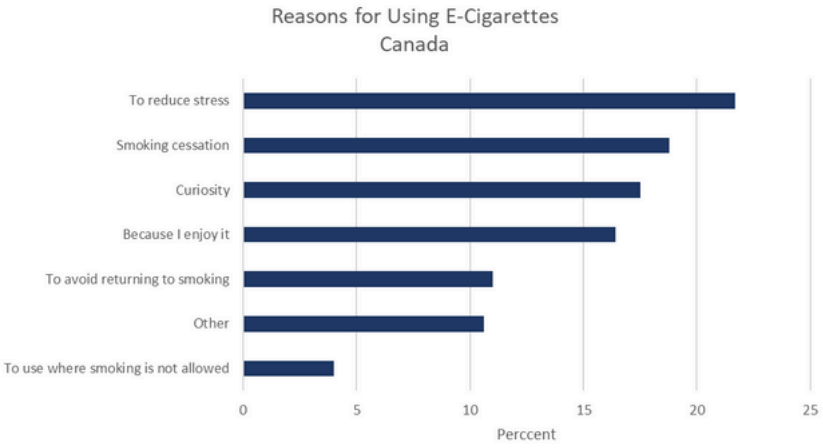
Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Canada 2024

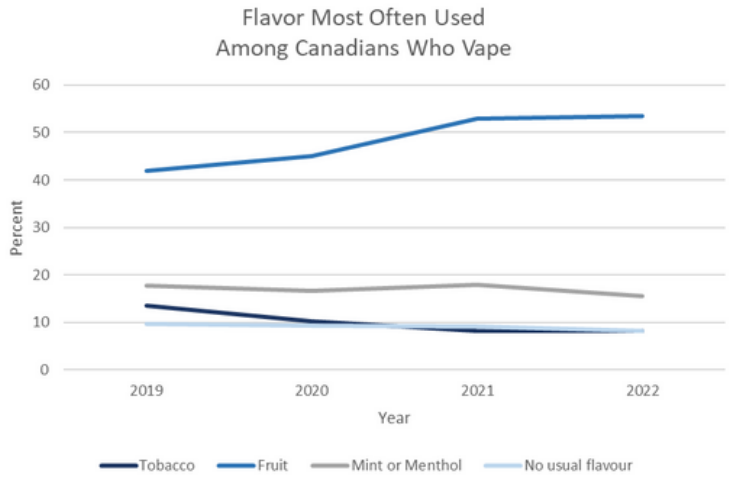
Adult Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use Continued

Among current e-cigarette users in 2022, 33.5 percent were currently smoking, while 26.9 percent were formerly smoking and 39.5 percent had never smoked. Among daily e-cigarette users, 32.6 percent were currently smoking cigarettes, 40.2 percent were formerly smoking and 27.3 percent had never smoked.

In 2022, among current Canadian e-cigarettes, the most cited reason for vaping was "to reduce stress" (21.7 percent), followed by 18.8 percent who were vaping for smoking cessation. Further, an additional 11 percent were currently vaping to "avoid returning to smoking."

In 2022, the most common flavor among Canadians currently using e-cigarettes was fruit flavors, with 53.4 percent of current vapers reporting using them. In fact, among all age groups, fruit flavor was the most reported flavor used in 2022. Between 2019 and 2022, the percentage of Canadian vapers reporting using fruit flavor increased by 27 percent, while the percentage of Canadian vapers using tobacco flavor decreased by 39.3 percent. Among adults aged 45 years or older, the percent reporting vaping tobacco flavors decreased by 39.7 percent between 2019 and 2022.





Since 2019, the perceived risk perceptions associated with e-cigarettes has varied widely among both current cigarette and e-cigarette users. In 2022, among both groups, 3.9 percent believed e-cigarettes to be much less harmful than combustible cigarettes, while nine percent believed they were much more harmful. Among current e-cigarette users, 24.1 percent believed e-cigarettes to be much less harmful than combustible cigarettes, while 5.5 percent believed they were much more harmful. The percentage of e-cigarette users who thought e-cigarettes were much less harmful decreased by 12 percent between 2021 and 2022, while the percentage of e-cigarette users who believed e-cigarettes were much more harmful increased by 129 percent during the same period.

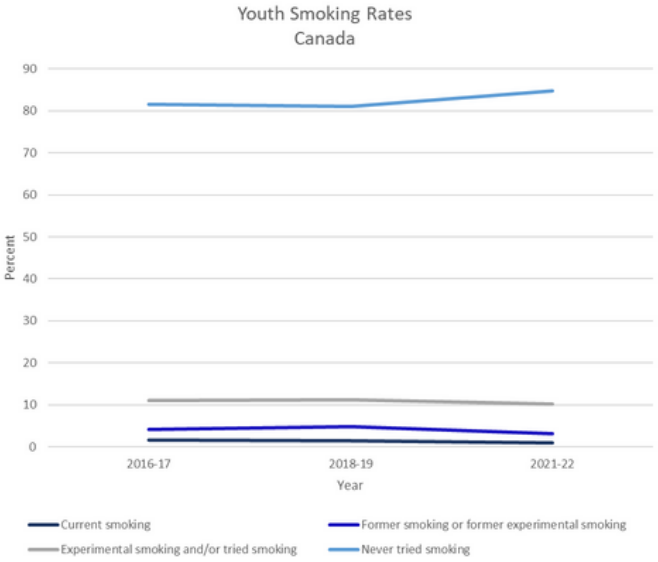
Among current cigarette users, in 2022, 8.3 percent believed e-cigarettes were much less harmful than cigarettes, while 9.4 percent believed they were much more harmful. Between 2021 and 2022, the percentage of current cigarette users who believed e-cigarettes were much less harmful increased by 18.6 percent, while the percentage who believed they were much more harmful increased by 15.5 percent.

Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Canada 2024

Youth Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use

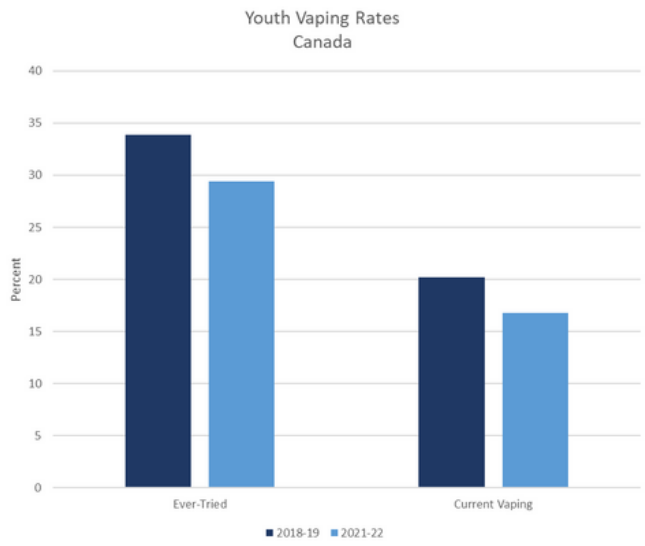
In 2021-22, among Canada youth in Grades 7 through 12, 4.1 percent of youth were currently smoking cigarettes, a 24.1 percent decline from 2018-19 when 5.4 percent were smoking. In 2021-22, 2.3 percent of students in Grades 7 through 9, and six percent of students in Grades 10 through 12, reported current cigarette use.

Among all students, the rate of ever-trying cigarettes decreased by 19 percent between 2018-19 and 2021-22, while the percentage of students who had never tried smoking increased by 2.8 percent during the same period.

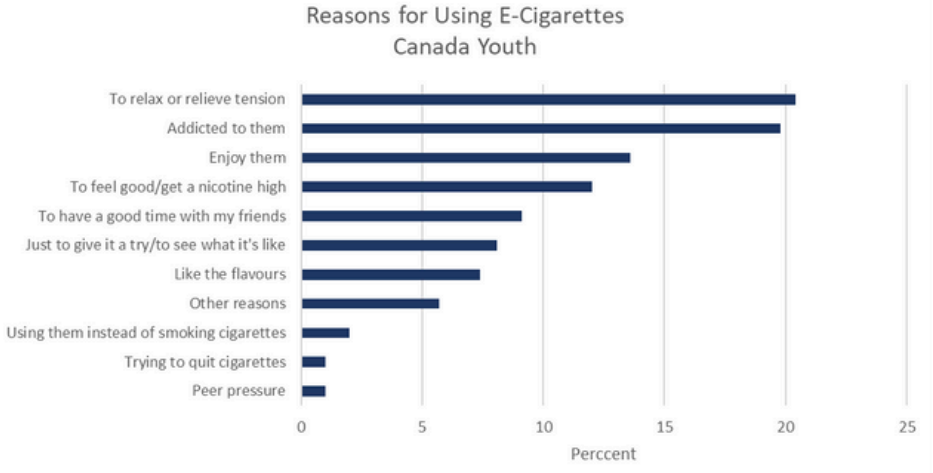


In 2021-22, 16.8 percent of Canada youth were currently vaping e-cigarettes, a 16.8 percent decline from 2018-19 when 19.9 percent were vaping. Among students in Grades 7 through 9, current vaping rates decreased by nine percent, while rates decreased by 19.7 percent among students in Grades 10 through 12.

Ever-use of e-cigarettes also declined in 2021-22, with 29.4 percent of youth reported having ever tried an e-cigarette. This is a 13.3 percent decline from 2018-19 when 33.9 percent had tried e-cigarettes. Among students in Grades 7 through 9, the percentage reporting ever trying e-cigarettes decreased by 12.9 percent, while rates decreased by 12.8 percent among students in Grades 10 through 12.



It should be noted that flavours are not the main reason why youth in Canada use e-cigarettes. In 2021-22, among all youth who were currently using e-cigarettes, more than one-fourth (20.5 percent) cited using e-cigarettes to "relax or relieve tension" compared to only 7.4 percent who reported using them because they "like the flavours."

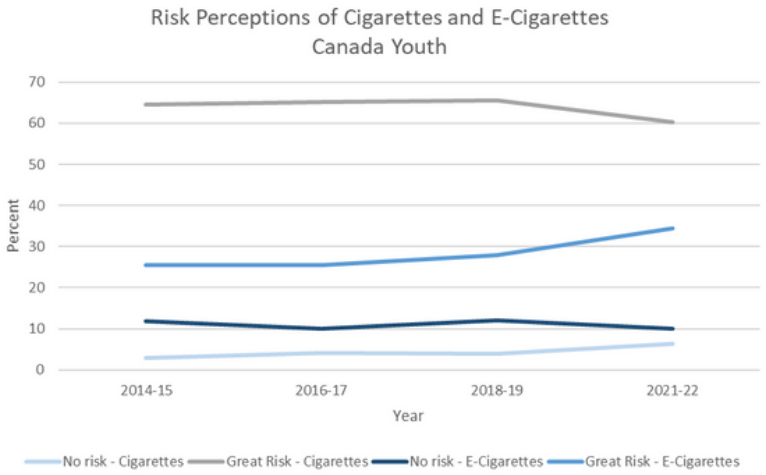


Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Canada 2024

Youth Combustible Cigarette and E-Cigarette Use Continued

Regarding risk perceptions of both combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes, in 2021-22, 6.3 percent of Canadian youth believed that smoking cigarettes regularly was associated with no risk, which was a 57.5 percent increase from 2018-19, and a whopping 2.8 percent increase from 2014-15 when 2.8 percent of youth believed cigarettes had no risk. The percentage of youth who believed regular cigarette use carried great risk decreased by 8.1 percent from 65.6 percent of youth in 2018-19 to 5.4 percent in 2021-22.

In 2021-22, 10 percent of Canadian youth believed e-cigarettes carried no risk, which was a 17.4 percent decrease from 2018-19. During the same time period, the percentage of youth who thought regular e-cigarette use was associated with great risk increased by 22.9 percent, from 28 percent in 2018-19 to 34.4 percent in 2021-22.

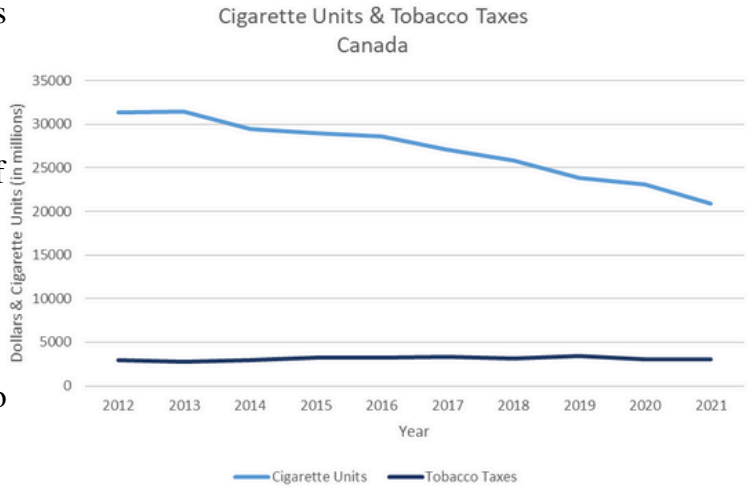


Cigarette Sales and Tobacco Taxes

In 2021, more than 2.3 billion cigarette units were sold in Alberta, marking a 15.7 percent decline from 2020, when more than 2.8 billion units were sold. This represents more than 442 million fewer cigarettes sold.

The reduction in cigarettes sales corresponds with a slight decline in smoking rates. In 2021, 8.2 percent of Alberta persons aged 15 years or older were smoking, a 7.9 percent decrease from 2020, when 8.9 percent were smoking. This translates to approximately 22,972 fewer adults smoking in the province in 2021 compared to 2020.

Despite declines in smoking, the province continues to collection hundreds of millions of dollars each year from the sale of cigarette and other tobacco products, including less harmful products such as e-cigarettes. In 2020-21, Alberta collected $755 million in provincial taxes related to the sale of tobacco and vapor products, a 14.3 percent decrease from 2019-2020, and $126 million less from the year prior.



Tobacco & Vaping 101:
Canada 2024

Conclusion

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