



Australian Government
Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare



Senator Hollie Hughes
Chair
Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Hughes

Submission to the Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction.

The AIHW is a nationally recognised independent information management agency. We produce authoritative information and statistics to inform and support better policy and service delivery decisions, leading to better health and wellbeing for all Australians. The AIHW provides accessible information and statistics on a wide range of topics about Australians' health and wellbeing. We aim to inform good decisions—and improve the health and welfare of all Australians—through strong evidence that is timely, reliable, relevant and trusted.

The *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019* contains the latest data relating to Australians' use of e-cigarettes as well as policy support for measures related to e-cigarette use. A summary of the survey results relevant to specific terms of reference is provided in **Attachment 1** and relevant tables are provided at **Attachment 2**.

We trust that you find this information useful. Should the committee have any queries about the information we have provided, or wish to seek additional information from the AIHW, we are available to discuss at your convenience. Please contact Dr Gabrielle Phillips, Head of the Housing and Specialised Services Group

Yours sincerely

Barry Sandison
Chief Executive Officer

2 November 2020



Attachment 1

Relevant data and information from the National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS)

This large population survey, conducted about every 3 years since 1985, asks people about their knowledge of and attitudes towards drugs, and their history of alcohol and other drug consumption. It provides information on the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs in the general population. The sample is based on people living in private households— institutionalised people and others not living in private dwellings are not included in the survey.

The most recent survey was conducted in 2019 which was the 13th survey conducted under the auspices of the National Drug Strategy (NDS). It collected information from nearly 23,000 individuals across Australia.

The [National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019 report](#) contains the latest data on the use of e-cigarettes in Australia, including patterns of use and policy support for measures related to e-cigarette use. A list of relevant tables from this report as well as a customised data analysis are provided in **Attachment 2**.

The AIHW submission relates to the following three terms of reference:

- (c) the established evidence on the effectiveness of e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation treatment
- (d) the established evidence on the uptake of e-cigarettes amongst non-smokers and the potential gateway effect onto traditional tobacco products
- (f) access to e-cigarette products under Australia's current regulatory frameworks.

In response to terms of reference (c) and (d), the data presented below are based on respondents' self-perceived smoking status at e-cigarette initiation and their current smoking status at the time of completing the survey to illustrate how smoking status may have changed for people who used e-cigarettes. It also examines the reasons why people used e-cigarettes, including specific analysis for those who said they used e-cigarettes to help them quit smoking. The data do not provide a direct link between e-cigarette use and subsequent smoking behaviour or evidence on the effectiveness of e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation treatment. However, the data provide contextual information that may support the inquiry.

In response to term of reference (f), data are presented on where people who used e-cigarettes sourced or purchased their e-cigarettes and how this varies by use of e-cigarettes.

Capturing e-cigarette use

The 2013 survey was the first time respondents were asked about their use of e-cigarettes. It is important to note that the NDSHS does not distinguish between nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarette products—it is not known whether nicotine was contained in the products used by respondents. In 2016, a number of changes were made to the questionnaire to better capture the use of e-cigarettes, including:

- questions about frequency and duration of use, age first used, reasons for using and where e-cigarettes were obtained
- modifying the question about lifetime use and current use of e-cigarettes.

Therefore, 2013 data are not fully comparable with later years and have not been included in this submission.

In 2019, further changes were made to the [questionnaire](#) including:

- adding a new explanatory statement about tobacco products to the beginning of 'Section D Tobacco' to clarify that electronic cigarettes are to be excluded when answering questions about smoking tobacco. The following explanatory box was added and placed before question D1:

For Questions D1 to D22, smoking cigarettes or other forms of tobacco includes manufactured (packet) cigarettes, roll-your own cigarettes, cigars and tobacco in pipes and water pipes, that can be lit, and the smoke inhaled. Please exclude electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and other personal vaporising devices (where users inhale vapour rather than smoke).

- a new question (D27) about the respondents smoking status when they first used an e-cigarette was added to assist in understanding whether respondents who were ex-smokers and also used e-cigarettes, began using e-cigarettes before or after they quit smoking traditional cigarettes (see [questionnaire](#) for question wording).

Definitions for key terms

current e-cigarette user: use e-cigarettes either daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly.

daily smoker: smoke tobacco at least once a day (includes manufactured (packet) cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars or pipes). Excludes chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes (and similar) and smoking of non-tobacco products.

ex-smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life, and reported no longer smoking.

lifetime e-cigarette user: have tried e-cigarettes at least once in their lifetime.

never smoker: never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

smoker: smoked at least 100 cigarettes or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life. An e-cigarette user may not necessarily be regarded as a smoker.

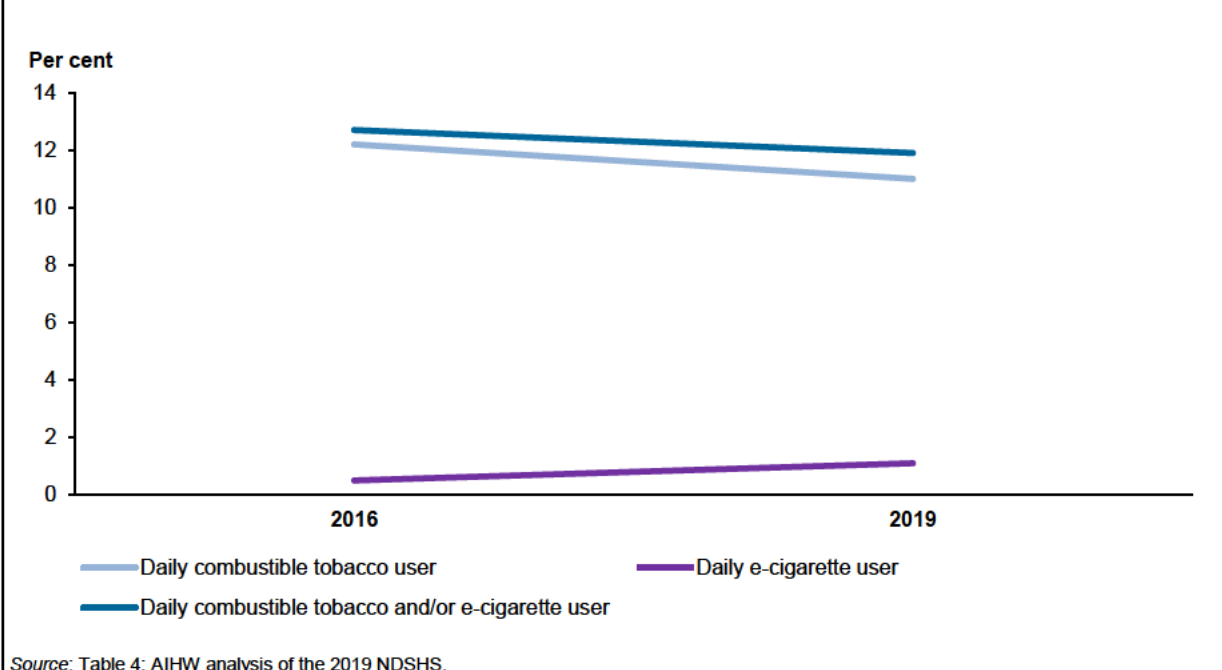
Smoking and e-cigarette use in Australia

The proportion of Australians aged 14 and over who smoked daily declined over the latest 3-year period, from 12.2% (2.4 million people) in 2016 to 11.0% (2.3 million people) in 2019, and has halved since 1991 (from 24%) (tables 1 and 2). Reductions in smoking rates since 2001 have been overwhelmingly driven by people not taking up smoking—in 2001, 82% of teenagers aged 14–17 had never smoked, this increased to 97% by 2019 (Table 3).

The trend for e-cigarette use is the opposite of that for smoking combustible cigarettes. Between 2016 and 2019, lifetime and current use of e-cigarettes increased among both smokers and non-smokers. The proportion of people who had ever used e-cigarettes rose from 8.8% (1.7 million people) to 11.3% (2.4 million people) and the proportion who currently used e-cigarettes rose from 1.2% (200,000 people) to 2.5% (500,000 people) (Table 2).

When the daily combustible tobacco users and daily e-cigarette users are considered as a combined category, the proportion of Australians smoking daily declined, but the decline was not statistically significant between 2016 (12.7%) and 2019 (11.9%) (Figure 1, Table 4). Electronic cigarettes and smoking of non-tobacco products are not included in the definition of daily smokers and are usually excluded in the calculation of daily smokers.

Figure 1: Daily use of combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes, people aged 14 and over, 2016 and 2019



E-cigarette use by age

While the use of e-cigarettes rose across most age groups between 2016 and 2019, the rise among young adults was particularly notable:

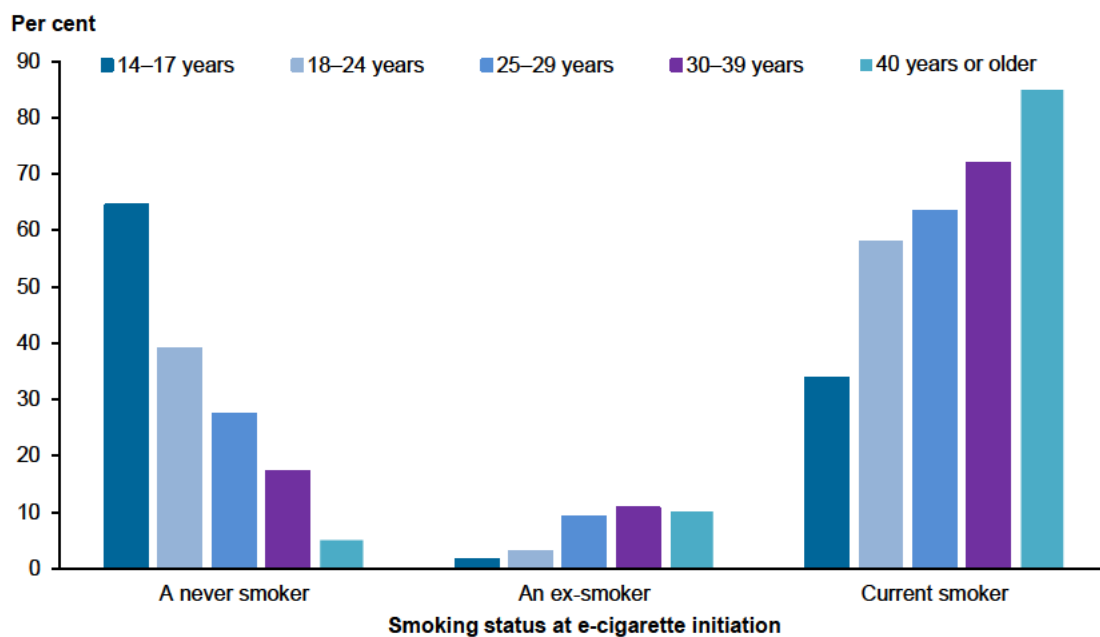
- the proportion of those aged 18–24 who reported having tried e-cigarettes increased from 19.2% to 26%. This increase was observed for both current smokers (from 49% to 64%) and non-smokers (from 13.6% to 19.6%) (Table 5).
- the proportion who reported current use of e-cigarettes increased from 2.8% to 5.3%. The increase for current smokers (from 6.8% to 18.7%) was significant while there was a non-significant increase (from 2% to 2.9%) for non-smokers (Table 6). However, the estimate for non-smokers in 2016 has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Smoking status at initiation of e-cigarette use

More than two-thirds (69%) of e-cigarette users were smokers when they first tried an e-cigarette, nearly 1 in 4 (23%) considered themselves to be a 'never smoker' and 7.9% reported being an ex-smoker at the time (Table 7).

Younger people were far more likely to report being a 'never smoker' when they first tried an e-cigarette— 65% of 14–17 year olds and 39% of 18–24 year olds compared with less than 10% for people in the age categories 40 and over (Figure 2, Table 8).

Figure 2: Smoking status at initiation^(a) of e-cigarette use, by age, 2019



(a) Response to the question 'At the time you first used an electronic cigarette, would you say that you were...'

Notes:

1. The 14–17 year old ex-smokers estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.
2. The 18–24 year old ex-smokers estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Source: Table 8; AIHW analysis of the 2019 NDSHS.

Current smoking status for people who were 'never smokers' or 'ex-smokers' at initiation of e-cigarette use

'Never smokers'

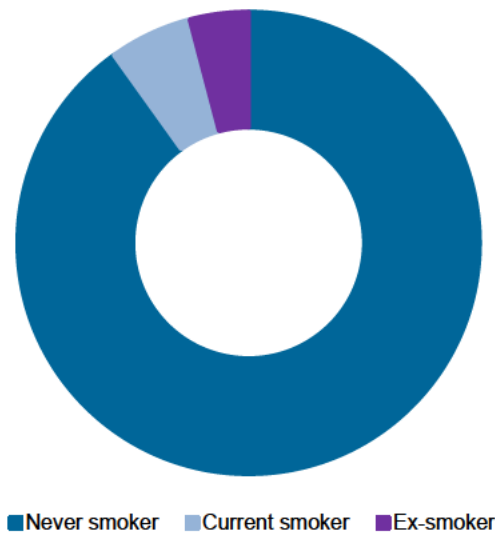
The majority (87%) of people who reported they were a 'never smoker' at initiation of e-cigarette use reported that they only tried them once or twice (Table 9).

Of those who considered themselves to be a 'never smoker' at the time they first tried an e-cigarette (Figure 3, Table 10):

- 90% were classified as a 'never smoker' at the time of completing the survey
- 5.8% were a current smoker
- 4.1% were ex-smokers.

However, the estimates for 'never smokers' whose current smoking status was current or ex-smoker have relative standard errors of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution. The small sample sizes for these groups do not allow further exploration of this at-risk group.

Figure 3: Current smoking status among people aged 14 and over who considered themselves to be a never smoker when they first tried an e-cigarette, 2019



Source: Table 10; AIHW analysis of the 2019 NDSHS.

‘Ex-smokers’

More than 1 in 5 (22%) people who reported being an ‘ex-smoker’ at the time of first trying an e-cigarette were current smokers of traditional cigarettes at the time of completing the survey (Table 10). The majority (60%) of people who were ‘ex-smokers’ at initiation of e-cigarette use reported that they only tried them once or twice but 16.4% reported currently using e-cigarettes daily (Table 9). Again, the small sample for this group does not allow for further exploration.

Use of e-cigarettes to quit smoking or stop going back to regular cigarettes

People used e-cigarettes for a variety of reasons and the most common reason reported in the 2019 survey was ‘out of curiosity’ (54%). Among people who were current smokers, the most common reason for using e-cigarettes was to help them quit smoking (46%), followed by curiosity (42%) (Table 11). The next section explores the behaviours of those people who purposely used e-cigarettes as a potential cessation device—either to help them quit smoking (32% of all e-cigarettes users) or to stop them from going back to smoking regular cigarettes (17.8% of e-cigarettes users).

People who used e-cigarettes to quit or stop going back to regular cigarettes

Of people who used e-cigarettes to quit or stop going back to regular cigarettes (36% of all e-cigarette users):

- 31% said they only tried e-cigarettes once or twice (Table 12). As such, use of e-cigarettes was unlikely to have had any impact on them quitting smoking
- 34% used to use e-cigarettes but no longer do and 18.6% are current e-cigarette users
- 56% were classified as daily smokers at the time of completing the survey and 30% were ex-smokers (Table 13).

Source of supply

As the NDSHS does not distinguish between nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarette products, it is not known what products were used by the respondents.

Where people obtained their e-cigarettes varied considerably depending on their frequency of use (Table 14). While overall the most common source cited was friends or family members (42%), this tends to be the primary source for people who only used e-cigarettes once or twice (63% of these people). Daily e-cigarette users were much more likely to obtain their e-cigarettes over the internet, either from an Australia retailer (30%) or overseas retailer (32%). People who said they used to use them but no longer do, were the most likely to purchase them at a tobacco retail outlet (30%). Almost none of the respondents (0.4%) obtained a script and purchased e-cigarettes from a pharmacy (Table 14); however this estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Policy support for measures related to e-cigarette use

There is a high level of support among the Australian general population for measures aimed at reducing tobacco-related harm. For e-cigarettes specifically, in 2019 there was increased support for:

- restrictions on where and when electronic cigarettes can be advertised (65% compared with 67% in 2016)
- restricting the use of e-cigarettes in public places (69% compared with 65% in 2016)
- prohibiting the sale of e-cigarettes to people under 18 years of age (79% compared with 77% in 2016) (Table 15).

However, those who currently used e-cigarettes or used to use them but no longer do, were less likely to support measures related to restrictions related to advertising and the use of e-cigarettes in public places than those who never used e-cigarettes (Table 16).

While support for 'banning all additives (e.g. flavouring) in cigarettes and other tobacco products, to make them less attractive to young people' decreased between 2016 and 2019 (from 76% to 74%), the majority of people aged 14 and over still supported this measure (Table 15).

Attachment 2

Detailed data tables

Table 1: Tobacco smoking status, people aged 14 and over, 1991 to 2019 (per cent)

Smoking status	1991	1993	1995	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Daily smoker	24.3	25.0	23.8	21.8	19.4	17.5	16.6	15.1	12.8	12.2	11.0#
Current occasional - weekly	2.8	2.3	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4
Current occasional - less than weekly	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.3	2.0	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.6
Ex-smoker ^(a)	21.4	21.7	20.2	25.9	26.2	26.4	25.1	24.0	24.0	22.8	22.8
Never smoked ^(b)	49.0	49.1	52.6	49.2	50.6	52.9	55.4	57.9	60.1	62.3	63.1

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life, and reported no longer smoking.

(b) Never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

Notes

1. In 1991, daily smoking included people who reported smoking daily, or most days.
2. In 1993, smoking status was only asked to people aged 20 years or over.
3. Smoking status in 2010 has been revised. Trend data may not match previously published results.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.1.

Table 2: Proportion and number of smokers (combustible tobacco users) and e-cigarettes users, 2016 and 2019

Smoker status	Proportion		Persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019
Current smokers (combustible tobacco)	14.9	14.0#	3,000,000	2,900,000
Daily smoker (combustible tobacco)	12.2	11.0#	2,400,000	2,300,000
Lifetime e-cigarettes user	8.8	11.3#	1,700,000	2,400,000
Current e-cigarette users	1.2	2.5#	200,000	500,000
Daily e-cigarette user	0.5	1.1#	100,000	200,000

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 3: Smoking status by age, 2001 to 2019 (per cent)

Smoking status	2001	2004	2007	2010	2013	2016	2019
Daily smoking							
14–17	11.2	7.5	4.6	3.7	5.1	*2.2	*1.9
18–24	24.0	20.2	16.5	15.7	13.4	11.6	9.2
25–29	27.0	25.8	25.8	19.3	16.1	15.5	11.3#
30–39	25.5	22.9	20.8	18.5	13.7	14.0	11.6#
40–49	22.1	21.5	21.2	19.5	16.2	16.9	15.8
50–59	18.1	16.3	17.5	17.4	15.0	14.3	15.9
60–69	11.3	11.4	12.2	12.7	11.6	10.4	10.8
70+	5.7	5.9	6.3	5.6	5.8	6.0	4.6#
14+	19.4	17.5	16.6	15.1	12.8	12.2	11.0#
Never smoked^(a)							
14–17	81.7	88.1	93.0	92.2	92.6	96.4	96.6
18–24	57.7	65.1	70.3	72.4	76.8	79.0	79.6
25–29	49.5	51.1	51.8	60.1	63.3	70.0	73.1
30–39	46.1	47.7	51.0	53.2	58.3	59.5	64.9#
40–49	43.3	44.6	47.1	49.5	53.2	54.0	55.2
50–59	44.3	47.0	48.3	49.2	48.6	51.6	51.4
60–69	49.9	50.1	49.8	49.7	51.9	55.2	52.8
70+	53.5	51.7	55.4	60.7	60.1	59.8	58.1
14+	50.6	52.9	55.4	57.9	60.1	62.3	63.1

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.7.

Table 4: Daily use of combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes, by sex, people aged 14 and over, 2016 and 2019 (per cent)

Exposure	Males		Females		Persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
Daily combustible tobacco user	13.8	12.2#	10.7	9.9	12.2	11.0#
Daily e-cigarette user	0.8	1.5#	0.3	0.7#	0.5	1.1#
Daily combustible tobacco and/or e-cigarette user	14.4	13.4	11.0	10.5	12.7	11.9

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 5: Lifetime use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), by age and smoker status, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)

Age group (years)	Smokers ^(a)		Non-smokers ^(b)		Persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
14–17 ^(c)	50.8	63.6	8.0	7.8	9.2	9.6
18–24	49.1	63.9#	13.6	19.6#	19.2	26.1#
25–29	37.6	53.5#	9.0	14.2#	14.8	20.4#
30–39	39.0	39.2	6.3	9.0#	12.2	13.9
40–49	26.2	35.6#	3.3	4.2	7.8	10.3#
50–59	20.9	30.6#	2.1	3.3#	5.2	8.3#
60–69	18.7	25.8#	1.0	1.4	3.0	4.3#
70+	11.6	10.7	*0.3	*0.3	1.0	0.9
14+	31.0	38.7#	4.9	6.9#	8.8	11.3#

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Includes people who reported smoking combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) daily, weekly or less than weekly.

(b) Includes those who have never smoked more than 100 combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own), and those who have smoked this amount of combustible tobacco and report no longer smoking.

(c) Due to the small sample size, estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Source: AIHW 2020, Table 2.19.

Table 6: Current use^(a) of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), by age and smoker status, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)

Age group (years)	Smokers ^(b)		Non-smokers ^(c)		Persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
14–17 ^(d)	**4.3	**17.5	*0.8	*1.3	*0.9	*1.8
18–24	6.8	18.7#	*2.0	2.9	2.8	5.3#
25–29	*3.6	13.7#	*0.5	3.2#	*1.2	4.8#
30–39	5.9	8.6	0.5	1.7#	1.5	2.8#
40–49	4.3	9.4#	0.8	1.0	1.5	2.6#
50–59	3.3	6.4#	*0.3	1.0#	0.8	2.0#
60–69	*2.9	7.0#	*0.4	*0.4	0.7	1.2
70+	**0.8	*2.5	**<0.1	*0.1	*0.1	*0.2
14+	4.4	9.7#	0.6	1.4#	1.2	2.5#

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

** Estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Includes people who reported smoking electronic cigarettes daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly.

(b) Includes people who reported smoking combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) daily, weekly or less than weekly.

(c) Includes those who have never smoked more than 100 combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own), and those who have smoked this amount of combustible tobacco and report no longer smoking.

(d) Due to the small sample size, estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.24.

Table 7: Smoking status at initiation^(a) of e-cigarette use, by sex, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)

Smoking status	Males	Females	Persons
A never smoker	23.5	23.0	23.2
An ex-smoker	7.7	8.1	7.9
A social smoker	16.9	12.6	15.4
An occasional smoker	11.8	9.4	10.8
A regular smoker	40.0	47.0	42.7
<i>Current smoker (social, occasional and regular smoker)</i>	68.7	69.0	68.9

(a) Response to the question 'At the time you first used an electronic cigarette, would you say that you were...'

Note: Base is people who had used electronic cigarettes in their lifetime.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 8: Smoking status at initiation^(a) of e-cigarette use, by age, 2019 (per cent)

Age groups	A never smoker	An ex-smoker	Current smoker ^(b)
14–17	64.5	**1.7	33.8
18–24	39.0	*3.1	57.8
25–29	27.4	9.2	63.4
30–39	17.3	10.7	71.9
40–49	7.2	12.5	80.3
50–59	*3.4	*8.7	87.9
60–69	**3.1	*5.3	91.6
70+	n.p.	*16.2	82.9
14+	23.2	7.9	68.9
40+	5.0	10.1	84.9

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

** Estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.

n.p. not published because of small numbers, confidentiality or other concerns about the quality of the data.

(a) Response to the question 'At the time you first used an electronic cigarette, would you say that you were...'

(b) Includes 'a social smoker', 'an occasional smoker' and 'a regular smoker'.

Note: Base is people who had used electronic cigarettes in their lifetime.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 9: Smoking status at initiation^(a) of e-cigarette use, by frequency of e-cigarette use, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)

Frequency of e-cigarette use	A never smoker	An ex-smoker	Current smoker ^(b)
Daily	**1.0	16.4	11.4
At least weekly (but not daily)	**0.7	**2.1	7.1
At least monthly (but not weekly)	*1.4	**1.2	4.2
Less than monthly	*3.8	*2.5	4.9
I used to use them, but no longer use	6.0	17.8	22.4
I only tried them once or twice	87.2	60.1	49.9

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

** Estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.

(a) Response to the question 'At the time you first used an electronic cigarette, would you say that you were...'

(b) Includes 'a social smoker', 'an occasional smoker' and 'a regular smoker'.

Note: Base is people who had used electronic cigarettes in their lifetime.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.28.

Table 10: Current smoking status by smoking status at e-cigarette initiation^(a), people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)

	Never smoker ^(b)	An ex-smoker ^(c)	Current smoker ^(d)
Current smoker	*5.8	21.9	64.7
Ex-smoker	*4.1	68.5	24.7
Never smoked more than 100 cigarettes	90.1	*9.6	10.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

(a) Response to the question 'At the time you first used an electronic cigarette, would you say that you were...?'

(b) Never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

(c) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life but no longer smoke.

(d) Includes 'a social smoker', 'an occasional smoker' and 'a regular smoker'.

Note: Base is people who had used electronic cigarettes in their lifetime.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 11: Reasons for using electronic cigarettes, by e-cigarette user status and combustible smoking status, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)

Reason	Current e-cigarette user ^(a)		Ex e-cigarette user ^(b)		Current smokers ^(c)		Ex-smokers ^(d)		Never smoked ^(e)		Persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
To help me quit smoking	46.7	51.2	28.0	27.1	38.9	46.4#	44.4	39.9	*4.3	*3.4	30.5	32.5
To try to cut down on the number of cigarettes I smoke/smoked	36.0	38.1	16.0	18.0	28.8	37.8#	14.3	15.7	*2.2	*2.6	18.7	22.4#
To try to stop me going back to smoking regular cigarettes	31.2	33.3	11.9	13.3	18.5	25.3#	19.4	23.3	*3.0	**1.0	14.5	17.8#
I think they are less harmful than regular cigarettes	42.4	44.6	15.6	16.5	23.0	29.0#	20.5	22.2	11.0	12.8	19.2	22.8#
They are cheaper than regular cigarettes	29.6	38.7#	7.6	11.7#	15.3	27.5#	8.9	18.3#	*2.4	*1.0	10.5	17.7#
I think they taste better than regular cigarettes	28.8	35.9	7.1	10.4#	10.0	17.4#	10.2	18.0#	9.6	12.4	10.0	16.1#
You can smoke in places where regular cigarettes are banned	12.7	12.5	6.5	5.6	10.1	9.9	6.0	6.7	*3.1	*2.8	7.4	7.1
They seem more acceptable than regular cigarettes	14.1	18.0	4.7	7.8#	7.8	13.6#	*4.5	8.1#	*3.6	5.8	6.0	10.1#
Out of curiosity	30.5	26.9	59.2	62.1	46.8	41.8	46.5	47.8	78.2	80.0	55.4	54.2
Other	*7.2	5.3	7.1	6.8	5.1	4.3	8.4	*4.7	10.3	11.6	7.2	6.5

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

** Estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Includes people who reported smoking electronic cigarettes daily, weekly, monthly or less than monthly.

(b) Includes people who reported that they used to smoke electronic cigarettes but no longer do and those that they only tried them once or twice.

(c) Includes people who reported smoking combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) daily, weekly or less than weekly.

(d) Smoked at least 100 combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life, and reported no longer smoking.

(e) Never smoked 100 combustible cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of combustible tobacco products.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.32.

Table 12: Current use of e-cigarettes among people who used e-cigarettes to help them quit smoking or stop going back to regular cigarettes, 2019

Frequency of e-cigarette use	2016	2019
Daily	11.1	18.6#
At least weekly (but not daily)	5.7	9.7#
At least monthly (but not weekly)	*2.1	3.5
Less than monthly	*2.2	*3.3
I used to use them, but no longer use	34.6	33.9
I only tried them once or twice	44.2	31.0#

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

Note: Base is people who had used e-cigarettes in their lifetime and said their main reasons for using them was to help them quit smoking or to stop them going back to smoking regular cigarettes.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 13: Current smoking status of people who used e-cigarettes to help them quit smoking or stop them going back to regular cigarettes, 2019 (per cent)

Current smoking status	2016	2019
Daily smoker	59.4	55.8
Occasional smoker ^(a)	8.1	11.3
Ex-smoker ^(b)	27.8	30.0
Never smoked ^(c)	*4.7	2.9

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

(a) Includes people who reported smoking weekly or less than weekly.

(b) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco in their life, and reported no longer smoking.

(c) Never smoked 100 cigarettes (manufactured and/or roll-your-own) or the equivalent amount of tobacco.

Note: Base is people who had used e-cigarettes in their lifetime and said their main reasons for using them was to help them quit smoking or to stop them going back to smoking regular cigarettes.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 14: Where do people usually obtain their electronic cigarettes, by e-cigarette user status, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)

Source	Daily e-cigarette user		Weekly e-cigarette user		Monthly e-cigarette user or less often		I use to use them but no longer do		I only tried them once or twice		All lifetime e-cigarette users	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
From the Internet - Australian retailer	35.4	30.4	*16.7	28.5	*19.1	12.7	17.8	15.7	5.6	7.1	10.7	12.5
From the Internet - Overseas retailers	25.0	31.9	28.2	*12.5#	*7.2	16.3#	22.1	18.8	6.5	4.4	11.1	11.1
From the Internet - Unsure of the origin of the retailer	*4.5	*3.8	**4.3	**4.3	*4.4	**2.3	*2.2	6.6#	*1.2	2.1	1.8	3.3#
Friend or family member	**1.5	**1.0	*11.8	*12.4	22.2	29.4	14.0	13.1	56.8	62.8#	42.4	42.4
Tobacco retail outlet	*18.7	16.9	*24.9	22.9	33.1	22.6	24.2	30.1	16.5	15.3	19.2	19.2
Pharmacy/chemist	n.p.	—	—	—	**1.1	n.p.	*2.0	n.p.	**0.2	*0.6	*0.6	*0.4
Other retail outlet	*14.1	16.0	*14.2	*19.3	*12.9	*16.2	17.8	15.5	13.3	7.7#	14.2	11.2#

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution.

** Estimate has a high level of sampling error (relative standard error of 51% to 90%), meaning that it is unsuitable for most uses.

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

n.p. not published because of small numbers, confidentiality or other concerns about the quality of the data.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

Table 15: Support^(a) for measures to reduce the problems associated with tobacco, people aged 14 and over, 2016 and 2019 (per cent)

Measure	2016	2019
Stricter enforcement of law against supplying minors	86.4	85.3#
Increasing the tax on tobacco products to pay for health education	69.0	65.2#
Increasing the tax on tobacco products to contribute to treatment costs	70.2	67.1#
Increasing the tax on tobacco products to discourage smoking	67.2	63.5#
Making it harder to buy tobacco in shops	63.6	60.7#
Implement licensing scheme for tobacco retailers	66.3	66.5
Stricter penalties for sale or supply to minors	84.4	83.1#
Raising the legal age for sale or supply of tobacco products to those aged 21 years and over	63.9	63.1
Banning all additives (e.g. flavouring) in cigarettes and other tobacco products, to make them less attractive to young people	76.3	74.4#
Restrictions on where and when electronic cigarettes can be advertised	64.9	66.8#
Restricting the use of electronic cigarettes in public places	65.4	68.9#
Prohibiting the sale of electronic cigarettes to people under 18 years of age	76.8	79.0#

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

(a) Support or strongly support.

Source: AIHW 2020; Table 2.52.

Table 16: Support^(a) and opposition for measures to reduce the problems associated with e-cigarette use, people aged 14 and over, by smoking status, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)

	Currently use e-cigarettes		Used to use them, but no longer do		Only tried them once or twice		Never used	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
Support or strongly support:								
Restrictions on where and when electronic cigarettes can be advertised	26.7	22.2	25.8	28.7	37.8	44.9#	68.0	70.7#
Restricting the use of electronic cigarettes in public places	20.5	15.2	22.1	26.5	35.1	40.6#	68.8	73.7#
Prohibiting the sale of electronic cigarettes to people under 18 years of age	53.0	54.4	55.8	53.8	58.2	62.1	78.7	81.8#
Oppose or strongly oppose:								
Restrictions on where and when electronic cigarettes can be advertised	45.7	46.0	29.2	30.7	20.6	16.8	6.0	5.3#
Restricting the use of electronic cigarettes in public places	58.0	60.7	42.4	36.6	30.2	24.4#	7.5	6.1#
Prohibiting the sale of electronic cigarettes to people under 18 years of age	23.2	21.4	13.1	18.6	13.8	10.6	4.1	3.6

Statistically significant change between 2016 and 2019.

Base is people that were informed enough to indicate their level of support (exclude people who said don't know enough to say)

Source: AIHW analysis of 2019 NDSHS (unpublished).

List of national data tables

Other national data tables that may be of interest to the committee and published on the AIHW website are available in the tobacco chapter:

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/national-drug-strategy-household-survey-2019/data>

Table 2.20	Lifetime use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), current smokers by age and sex, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.21	Frequency of electronic cigarette use by gender, people aged 14 and over who have used an electronic cigarette in their lifetime, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.22	Frequency of electronic cigarette use by smoking status, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.23	Use of electronic cigarette use by age, current smokers, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.25	Current use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), smokers, by age and sex, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.26	Smoking status at initiation of e-cigarette use, by sex, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.27	Smoking status at initiation of e-cigarette use, by age, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.29	Smoking status at initiation of e-cigarette use, by current smoking status, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.30	Age of initiation of e-cigarette use, by smoker status at e-cigarette initiation, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (years)
Table 2.31	Reasons for using electronic cigarettes, by age, people who had ever used electronic cigarettes, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.33	Reasons for using e-cigarettes, by smoking status at initiation of e-cigarette use, people aged 14 and over, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.34	Where people usually obtain their electronic cigarettes, by e-cigarette user status, people aged 14 and over, 2016 to 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.35	Where people usually obtain their electronic cigarettes, by age, people who had ever used an e-cigarette, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.53	Support for measures to reduce the problems associated with tobacco, by age, 2019 (per cent)
Table 2.54	Support for measures to reduce the problems associated with tobacco, people aged 14 and over, by smoking status, 2010 to 2019 (per cent)

References

AIHW 2020. [National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019](#). Drug Statistics series no. 32. PHE 270. Canberra: AIHW.