

# Reasons for using e-cigarettes and support for e-cigarette regulations, findings from the 2020 ITC Malaysia Survey: Methods of the 2020 (Wave 1) International Tobacco Control (ITC) Malaysia Project

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## Abstract

Introduction: Malaysia has the largest e-cigarette (EC) market in Southeast Asia, and it has been estimated that 17% of adult daily cigarette smokers also used ECs on a daily basis in 2020. However, few studies have examined the reasons people use ECs in Malaysia. This cross-sectional study of adult cigarette smokers from Malaysia assessed reasons for EC use and their support for key proposed EC regulations.

Material and Methods: Data are from the 2020 International Tobacco Control (ITC) Malaysia Wave 1 Survey of adult (aged  $\geq 18$  years) smokers who reported that they used ECs at least monthly ( $N=459$  out of 1047 smokers). Weighted analyses were conducted on EC users' reasons for using ECs and their support for various EC regulations.

Results: Smokers who used ECs at least monthly were more likely to be male, aged 25–39 years, of Malay ethnicity, married, more highly educated, and living in Peninsular Malaysia. Smokers who used ECs daily reported using ECs to reduce the number of cigarettes smoked (91.3%), pleasant taste (90.1%), to quit smoking (87.9%), and enjoyment (87.5%). Smokers who used ECs less than daily reported using ECs for their pleasant taste (weekly 89.4%, monthly 87.5%), curiosity (weekly 79.5%, monthly 88.8%), being offered EC by someone (weekly 76.3%, monthly 81.6%), and to reduce the number of cigarettes smoked (weekly 76.2%, monthly 77.6%). Smokers who also used ECs were most likely to support EC regulations requiring a minimum purchasing age (88.3%) and limiting nicotine concentration (79.6%), and least likely to support regulations banning EC fruit and candy flavors (27.1%). Conclusions: The most prevalent reasons for using ECs in Malaysia are comparable to those of other ITC countries, including Canada, US, England, and Australia. An understanding of use patterns of ECs, especially their interaction with cigarettes, are important in developing evidence-based regulations in Malaysia.

## Recommended Citation

Mohd Hairi, F., Goh, T.K., Driezen, P., Amer Nordin, A.S., Ahmad Tajuddin, N.A., Hasan, S.I.B., Danaee, M., Kamaludin, I.S., Kaai, S.C., Yan, M., Grey, M., Quah, A.C.K., Thompson, M.E., Fong, G.T. (2022). Reasons for using e-cigarettes and support for e-cigarette regulations, findings from the 2020 ITC Malaysia Survey: Methods of the 2020 (Wave 1) International Tobacco Control (ITC) Malaysia Project. *Tobacco Induced Diseases*, 20(March), 33.

**Link To PDF:** <http://www.tobaccoinduceddiseases.org/Reasons-for-using-e-cigarettes-and-support-for-e-cigarette-regulations-Findings,146364,0,2.html>