



Office of Tobacco Control
**National Tobacco Retail Audit
– 2008 Monitoring Report**

Compliance with Sales to Minors Legislation
Tobacco Advertising at Point-of-Sale

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National Tobacco Retail Audit

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Introduction

This 2008 monitoring report examines the extent to which compliance levels with sales to minors legislation have changed over a 12 month period. Changes in the levels of point-of-sale tobacco advertising are also measured in advance of the removal of such promotion from 1 July 2009.

The younger a person starts to smoke, the more likely they are to develop long-term nicotine addiction. Also, the earlier a child becomes a regular smoker and continues to smoke as an adult, the greater the risk of developing lung cancer or heart disease. Given that almost 80% of Irish smokers started smoking before they were 18 years old, and that three out of every four have tried to quit but failed, the implications for the long-term health of many smokers in this country are clear and stark.

Many young people start smoking in the mistaken belief that they will be able to give up easily. At a very young age they find it difficult to assess or accurately appreciate the risks of consuming tobacco products and becoming addicted to nicotine. Due to the highly addictive nature of this drug, many smokers never manage to stop smoking despite numerous quit attempts.

As dependence most often begins during adolescence, with the most serious consequences usually occurring in later life, it therefore becomes important to prevent addiction in the first place. To achieve this, it is internationally accepted that a comprehensive and coherent youth tobacco control strategy is required. While increasing the price of tobacco products is seen as a critical component of such a strategy, greater societal intervention is also required. In particular, the introduction and enforcement of relevant legislation can limit the supply and promotion of tobacco products to adolescents who are deemed too young to fully comprehend the risks of consuming such products.

In 2001, it became an offence to sell tobacco products in Ireland to those under 18 years. For such a policy to be effective it is critical that the vast majority of retailers comply with the legislation and that where non compliance occurs, enforcement measures are employed. International best practice recommends minimum compliance levels in the region of 90%. It is at these levels of compliance that the numbers of young people starting to smoke can be successfully reduced. This is because refusal rates of 90% ensure minors encounter real difficulty in accessing tobacco products.

In March 2008, the Office of Tobacco Control (OTC) published the report *Tobacco Control and the Irish Retail Environment*. That report included the findings of a national retail audit conducted by TNS mrbi in August and September 2007 that evaluated:

- 1. Performance in respect of sales to minors legislation (Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002) among retailers and licensed premises;**
- 2. Presence and extent of tobacco advertising at point-of-sale (POS).**

This monitoring report compares the baseline findings from 2007 with the findings of a second national retail audit carried out one year later. Again conducted by TNS mrbi, the audit assesses the extent to which compliance levels with sales to minors legislation have changed over 12 months. Changes in the levels of point-of-sale tobacco advertising are also measured in advance of the removal of such promotion from July 2009.

Background

Legislation has controlled the sale of tobacco on age grounds since 1908. In 2001, the legal age for the sale of tobacco was raised from 16 years to 18 years. This restriction remains under Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002, which was commenced in April 2007. Legislation was also introduced over a number of decades to remove the promotion and advertising of tobacco products through mainstream media while the sponsorship of cultural and sporting events by the tobacco industry was also ended.

In addition, the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, have strengthened existing tobacco control laws by introducing the highly successful smoke-free workplace legislation (commenced 29 March 2004) and by providing for a comprehensive ban on all tobacco advertising in retail environments. This ban on tobacco advertising at the retail point-of-sale, encompassing the removal of tobacco product display, will take effect from 1 July 2009.

Also in 2009, all retailers intending to sell tobacco products beyond September will be required to register with the Office of Tobacco Control. The registration period will be between July and September.

Executive Summary

This report presents the results from an independent audit of 1,403 Irish retail and licensed premises conducted by TNS mrbi during summer 2008. The results of the audit are also compared to baseline findings from summer 2007. The audit examines performance with respect to tobacco sales to minors legislation as set out in the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002.

Section 45 of the 2002 Act states that it is an offence to sell a tobacco product to a person that has not attained the age of 18 years. The findings of Part One of this survey provide a national overview of compliance among tobacco retailers with respect to sales to minors legislation for a second consecutive year.

This ongoing appraisal of retailer performance results in the establishment of annual benchmarks against which future progress can be measured and compared. Such data will contribute significantly to the implementation of a comprehensive youth protection programme.

Part Two of the survey provides a summary of the level of tobacco advertising engaged in by the tobacco industry in the retail environment in Ireland.

Key Findings – Part One

Retailer behaviour in relation to sales to minors legislation:

- Nationally, the percentage of retailers who refused to sell cigarettes to underage youth was 60%. This compares to a 52% refusal rate in 2007;
- 83% of 14 year olds, 69% of 15 year olds, 62% of 16 year olds and 47% of 17 year olds were refused cigarettes;
- Refusal rates varied across store type, ranging from 55% among independent grocers to 70% among multiples. When compared to 2007 findings, all store types reported higher compliance levels (although not all increases were statistically significant);
- Regionally, refusal rates were highest in the HSE West at 70%;
- In licensed premises, 37% of underage youth were prevented from purchasing cigarettes – a lower rate than in retail outlets. In 2007, the refusal rate among licensed premises was 36%;
- As in 2007, the 2008 findings highlight the fact that token operated cigarette vending machines appear to add an extra level of vigilance. The refusal rate was 79% among premises with these types of machines (however the sample size is small) against 24% of premises with coin operated machines.
- 31% of minors who attempted to purchase cigarettes in licensed premises were asked for ID compared to 54% in retail outlets;
- The correlation between the willingness of retailers to ask for ID and their refusal to sell is direct and clear. 96% of minors who were asked for ID in retail outlets were refused the sale.

Key Findings – Part Two

Presence of tobacco advertising at point-of-sale:

- 89% of stores visited in 2008, compared to 92% in 2007, had some form of tobacco advertising on display. Almost nine out of ten stores visited had a tobacco branded gantry¹;
- 57% of stores with gantries extended beyond tobacco products had confectionery displayed below tobacco advertising. 40% of all stores surveyed had confectionery displayed beside the tobacco display;
- 68% of stores displayed cigarettes in a dispenser. This compares to 59% in 2007. 31% of stores displayed cigarettes on an open shelf, compared to 40% 12 months earlier.

¹ For the purposes of this study, a branded gantry refers to product branding displayed above retail shelving.

Research Objectives

The report, *Towards a Tobacco Free Society* (2000), outlines a national action plan to tackle tobacco use in Ireland. Protecting children, by preventing youth uptake of smoking is a key pillar of the report, which has been adopted as Government policy. Building and maintaining compliance with tobacco legislation is equally important, requiring dedicated resources and commitment from all stakeholders.

The Office of Tobacco Control's key objective in commissioning this research is to maintain and enhance the health of young people in Ireland. The data collected is strictly for information purposes and has not been commissioned for enforcement purposes. Ongoing monitoring of performance on an annual basis will inform education and awareness programmes designed to increase sales to minors compliance among retailers and licensed premises. In addition, it will contribute to effective enforcement programmes.

The study had two specific measurement objectives:

- To examine the performance of retailers and licensed premises with respect to sales to minors legislation (Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002);
- To collect information on the presence and extent of tobacco advertising at point-of-sale.

In addition, the study aimed to examine key determinants influencing the ability of young people to access tobacco including age and gender of the minor and of the staff member.

The following were measured as part of this study:

1. Sales to minors performance among tobacco retailers (as provided for by Section 45 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002) including:

- Percentage of retailers refusing to sell tobacco to minors;
- Percentage of retailers asking minors for proof of age identification;
- Percentage of licensed premises refusing to sell tobacco to minors;
- Percentage of licensed premises asking minors for age identification.

2. Retail Point-Of-Sale (POS) Merchandise:

- Information regarding the distribution and type of retail POS materials promoting tobacco (in all premises types).

These key measurements, as outlined above, were also compared and contrasted to the baseline findings from the 2007 retail audit.

The methodology employed is presented in Appendix 1.

Retail Audit Part One:
Compliance with Sales
to Minors Legislation

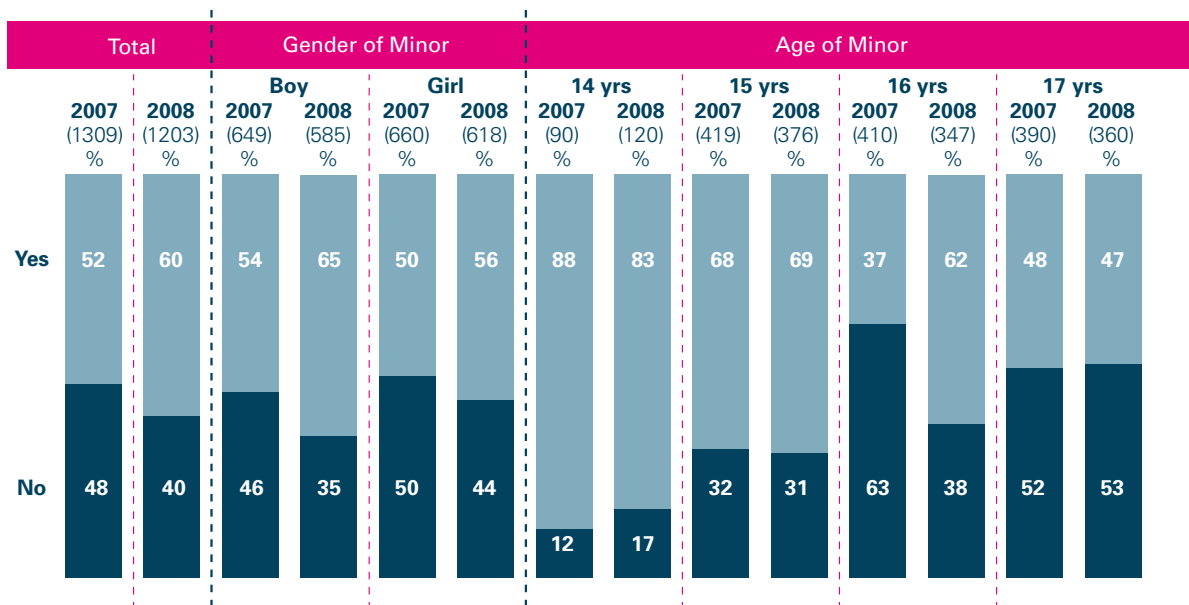
Findings

Outcome of Purchase Attempt: Retail Premises

Nationally, the percentage of retailers who refused to sell cigarettes to minors was 60%. This compares to a compliance level of 52% in 2007. Boys were more likely to be refused than girls (65% v 56%). As in 2007, retailers' willingness to sell to minors was greatest among 16 and 17 year olds. While the vast majority of 14 year olds were refused (83%), almost two in ten could have purchased cigarettes. Likewise, and in a similar finding to 2007, approximately one in three 15 year olds could have completed a purchase.

Did Staff Member Refuse to Sell Cigarettes to the Minor? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

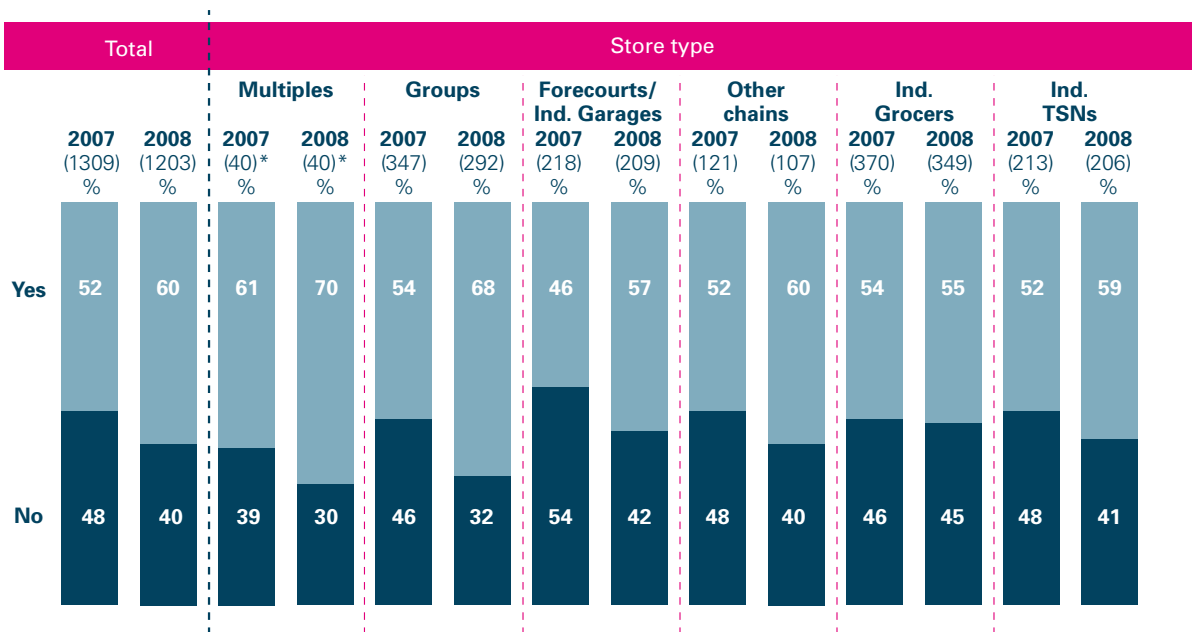
Base: All Stores: 1,203



Refusal rates ranged across store type from 55% among independent grocers to 70% among multiples. Refusal rates were similar among forecourts/garages, independent Tobacco, Sweets and Newsagents (TSNs) and other chains (57% to 60%). Groups were found to have a refusal rate of 68%. Overall, when compared to 2007 findings, all store types reported higher compliance levels (although not all these increases were statistically significant).

Did Staff Member Refuse to Sell Cigarettes to the Minor? BY STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,203

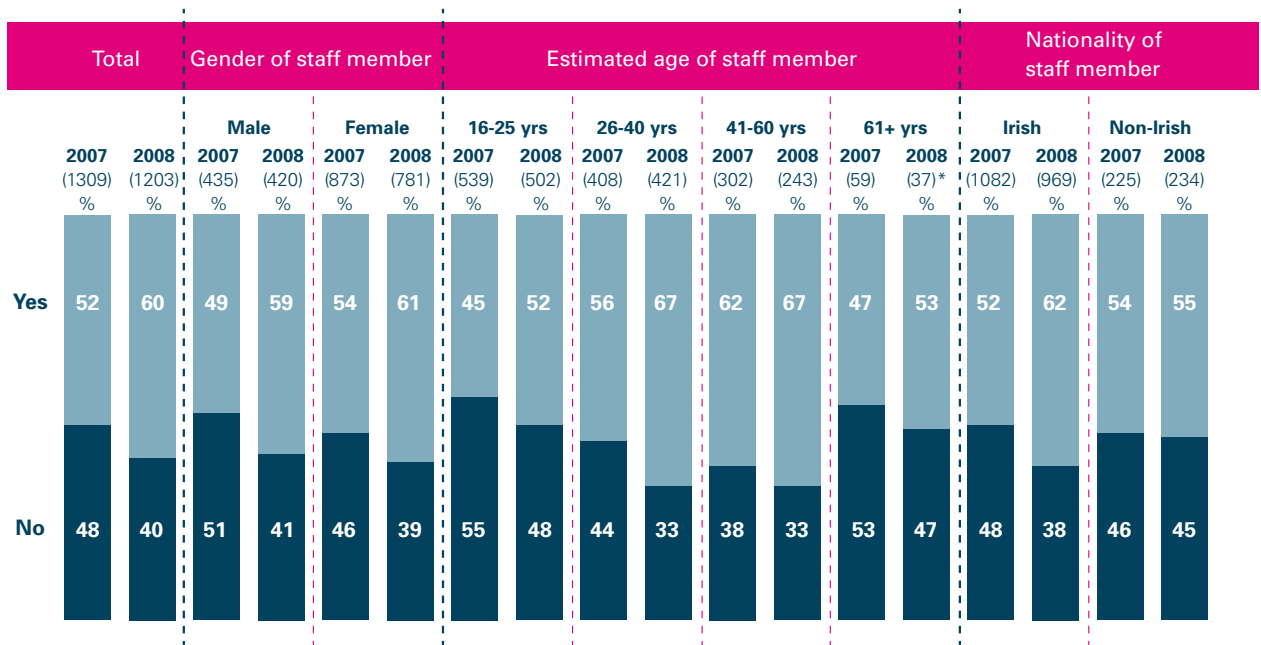


* Caution: Small base size

Similar to the findings of the 2007 report, age again appeared to be a more discriminating characteristic than gender or nationality of staff member in refusing to sell cigarettes to minors. Staff aged between 26 and 60 were more likely to refuse a sale than those under-25 and those over 60. 12 months on, although not all changes are statistically significant, compliance rates have increased across all age categories.

Did Staff Member Refuse to Sell Cigarettes to the Minor? BY GENDER, AGE AND NATIONALITY OF STAFF MEMBER

Base: All Stores: 1,203



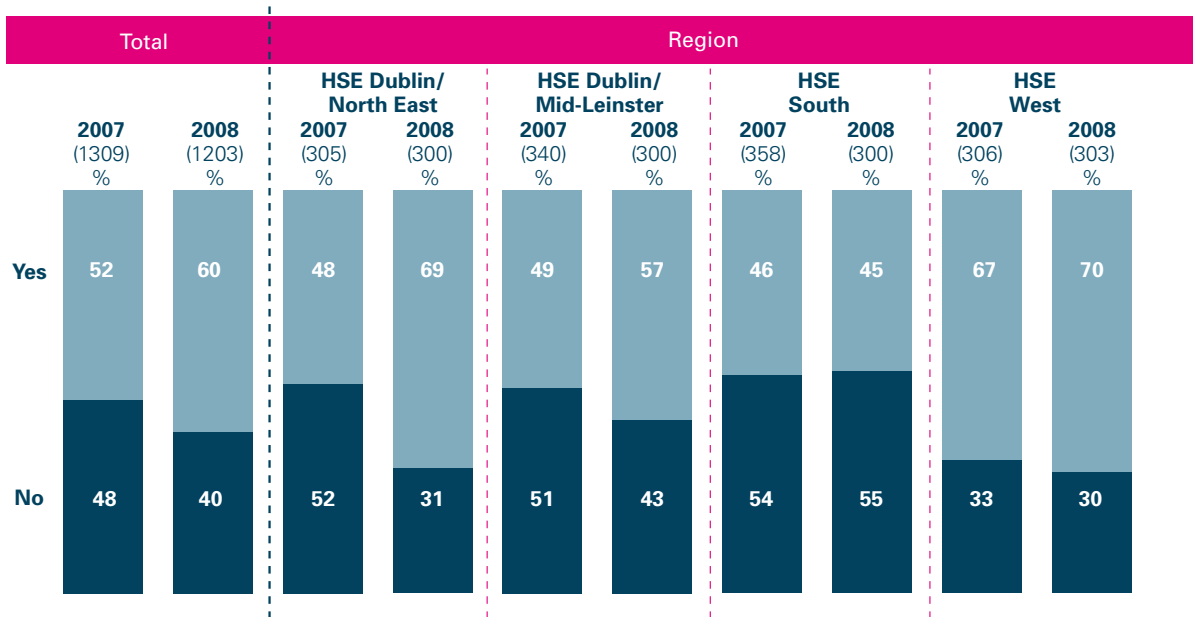
* Caution: Small base size

Staff aged between 26 and 60 were more likely to refuse a sale than those under-25 and those over 60.

On a regional basis, compliance levels were again highest in HSE West (70%). HSE Dublin / North East witnessed the largest increase in compliance levels improving by 21 percentage points during the past 12 months.

Did Staff Member Refuse to Sell Cigarettes to the Minor? BY REGION

Base: All Stores: 1,203

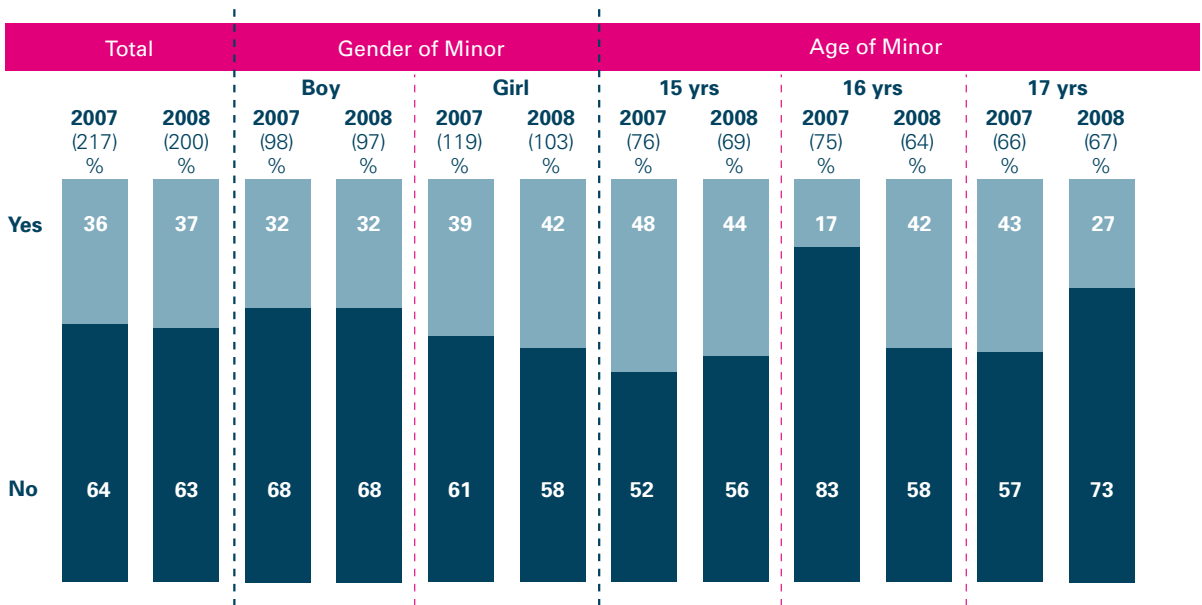


Outcome of Purchase Attempt: Licensed Premises

In licensed premises, the audit tested whether minors were prevented from purchasing cigarettes from a vending machine by a staff member. Results for 2008 show that refusal rates increased by one percentage point to 37%. 17 year olds were the least likely to be prevented a sale at 27%, whereas 42% of 16 year olds and 44% of 15 year olds were prevented a sale. As in 2007, girls were more likely to fail in their purchase attempt than boys (42% versus 32%).

Was Sale of Cigarettes to Minor Prevented by Staff Member? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

Base: All Licensed Premised: 200

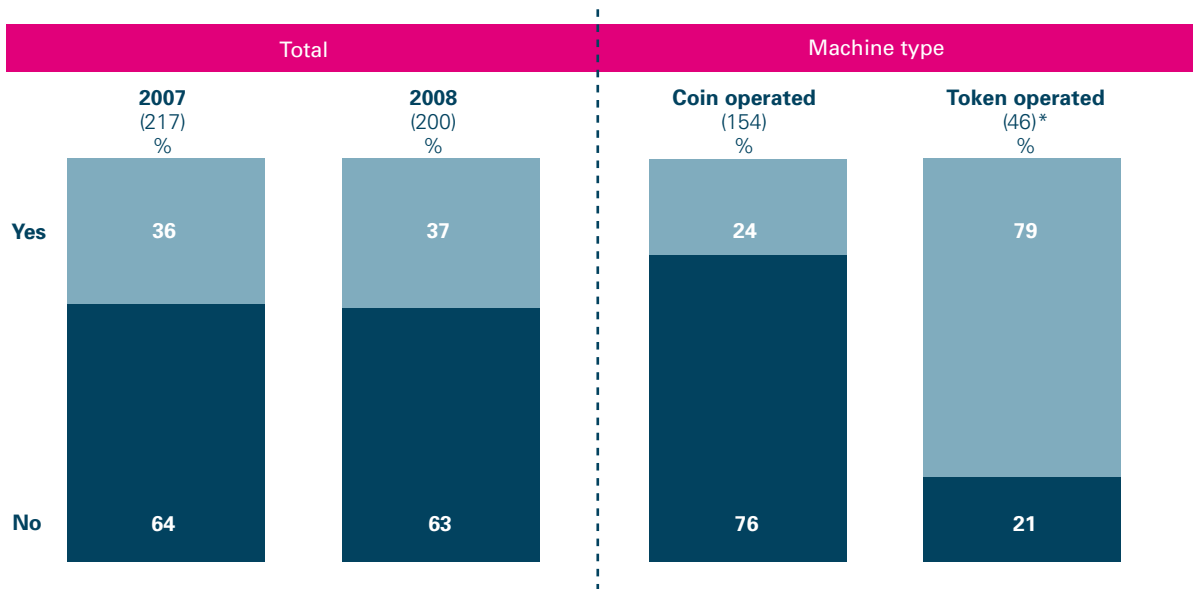


As in 2007, girls were more likely than boys (42% versus 32%) to be prevented a sale from a vending machine.

With regard to the type of vending machine operated by licensed premises, minors are far less likely to be sold cigarettes from token operated machines than coin operated machines. The sale of cigarettes was prevented in approximately three out of every four of the premises with token operated machines - 79%* against 24% of premises with coin operated machines. Clearly, the use of tokens results in increased vigilance among staff members.

Was Sale of Cigarettes to Minor Prevented by Staff Member? BY COIN AND TOKEN OPERATED MACHINES

Base: All Licensed Premised: 200

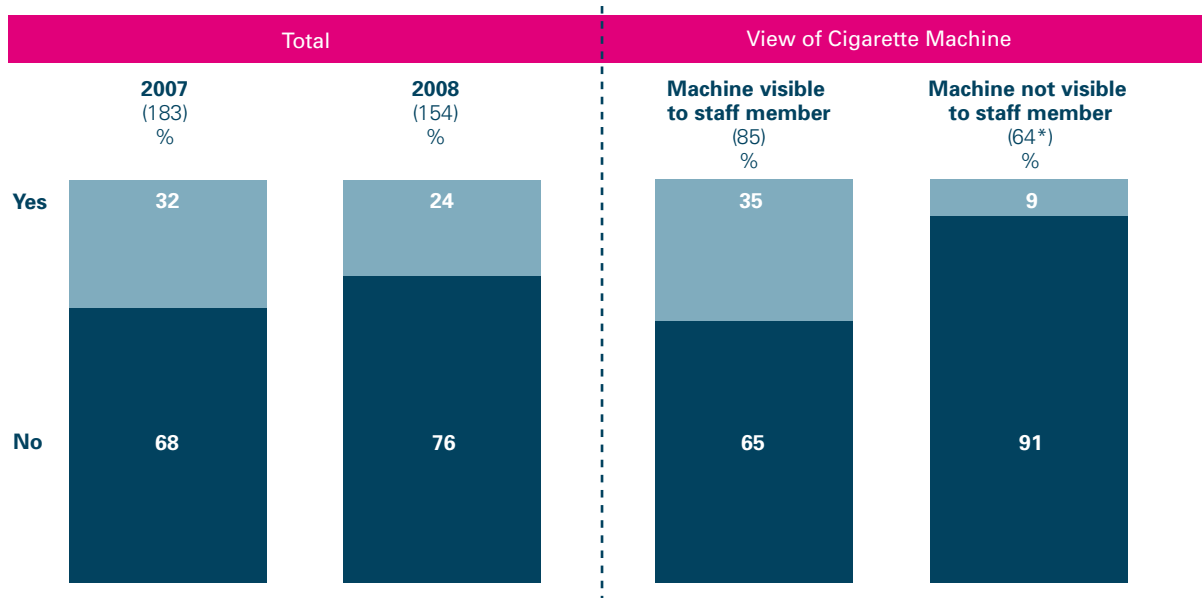


* Caution: Small base size

Looking at coin operated machines only, one out of every four minors was prevented a sale by a staff member. This 24% compliance level has fallen from 32% in 2007. The visibility of the vending machine to the staff member reduces the likelihood of a minor being able to purchase cigarettes. Where the vending machine was visible to the staff member, 35% prevented the sale of cigarettes to the minor. This prevention rate fell to 9% where the machine was not visible to the staff member*.

Did Staff Member Prevent Sale of Cigarettes to Minor? BY VIEW OF CIGARETTE MACHINE

Base: All Licensed Premises with coin operated machine: 154



* Caution: Small base size

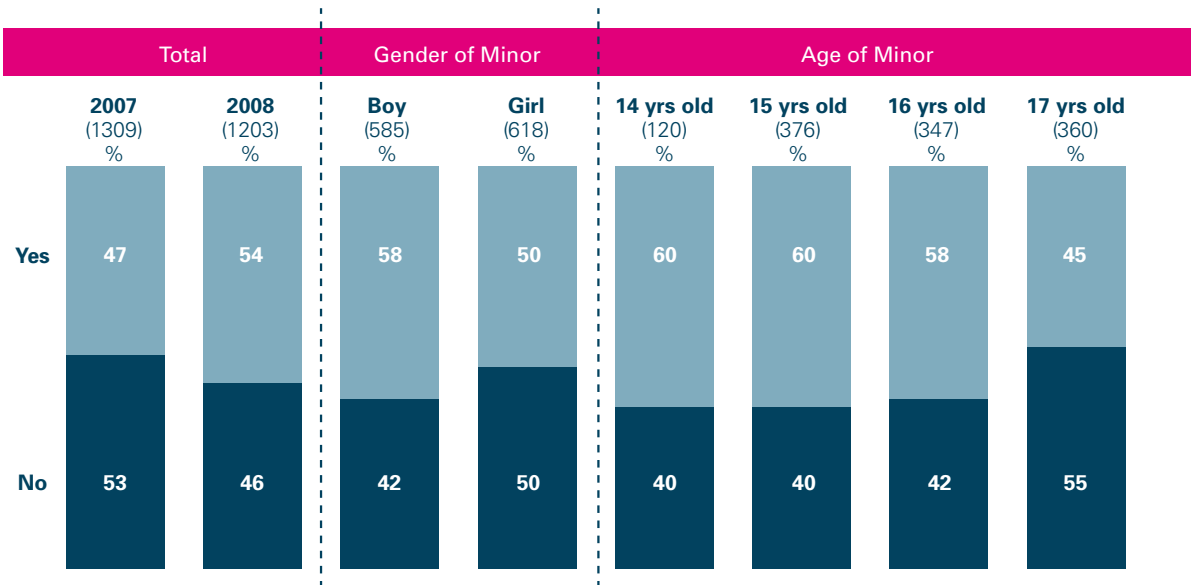
The visibility of the vending machine to the staff member reduces the likelihood of a minor being able to purchase cigarettes.

ID Check: Retail and Licensed Premises

Just over half of minors (54%) were asked for ID when they attempted to purchase cigarettes in retail stores (47% in 2007). Boys were somewhat more likely to be asked for ID compared to girls (58% boys versus 50% girls). As regards age, and in a similar finding to 2007, the younger the minor, the more likely they were to be asked for ID. Some 60% of 14 and 15 year olds were asked for ID, compared to 58% for 16 year olds and 45% for 17 year olds.

Was Minor Asked for ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes? BY GENDER AND AGE OF MINOR

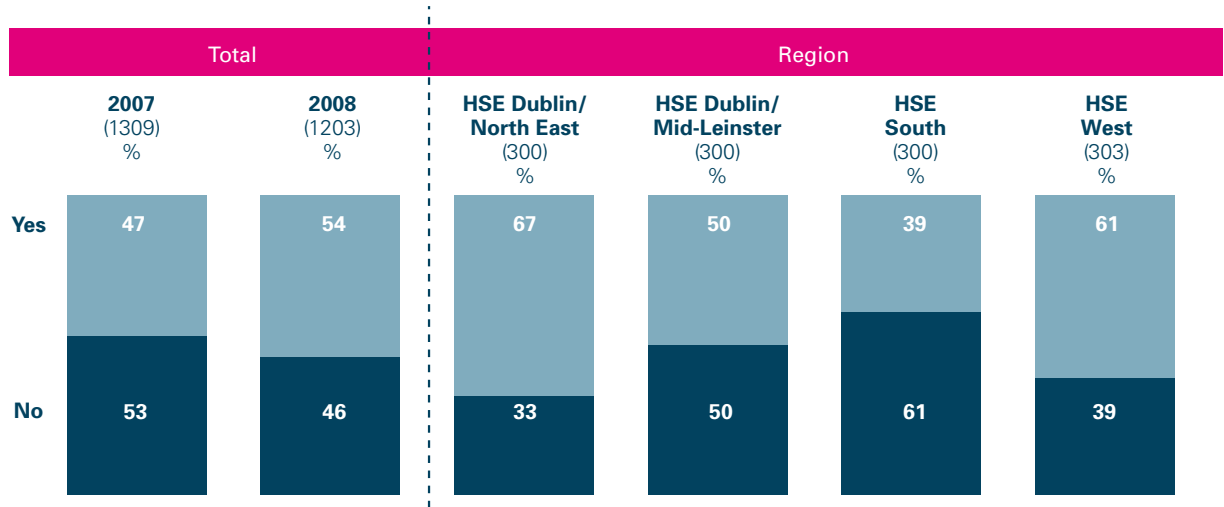
Base: All Stores: 1,203



At a regional level, 67% of minors in HSE Dublin / North East were asked for ID. The lowest incidence of ID requests (39%) was in HSE South.

Was Minor Asked for ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes? BY REGION

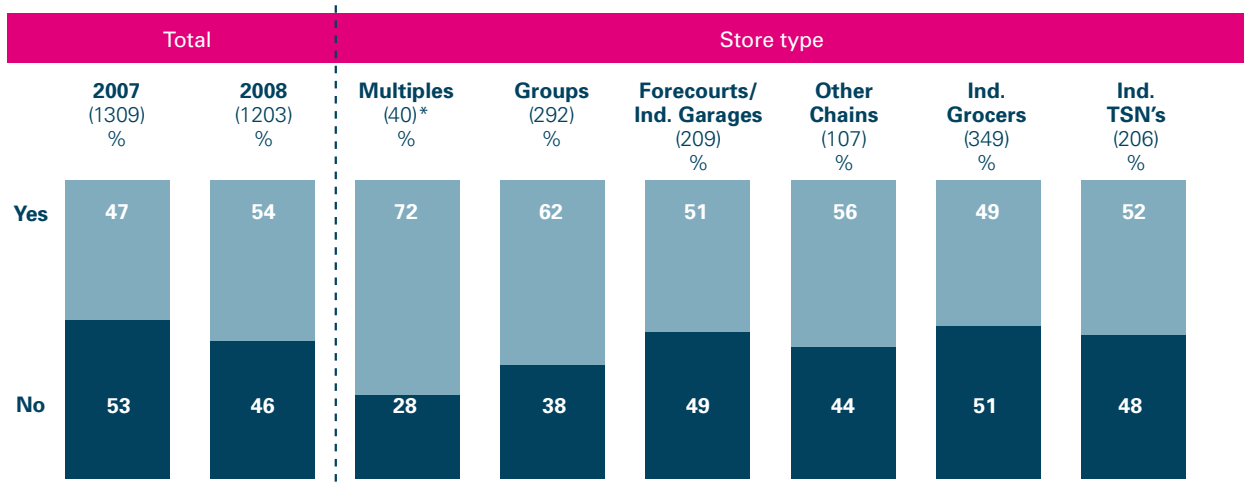
Base: All Stores: 1,203



Across store types, minors were least likely to be asked for ID in independent grocers (49%). Forecourts / independent garages, independent TSNs and other chains reported similar levels of ID requests. Minors were most likely to be asked for ID in groups (62%) and multiples (72%*). All store types were more likely to ask for ID in 2008 compared to 2007 (not all increases were statistically significant).

Was Minor Asked for ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes? BY STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,203



* Caution: Small base size

In 96% of cases where the minor was asked for ID, the sale was refused. In contrast, where no request for ID was made, only 18% were refused sale. These findings mirror the 2007 results – 91% were refused when ID was requested, only 17% were refused when no ID was sought.

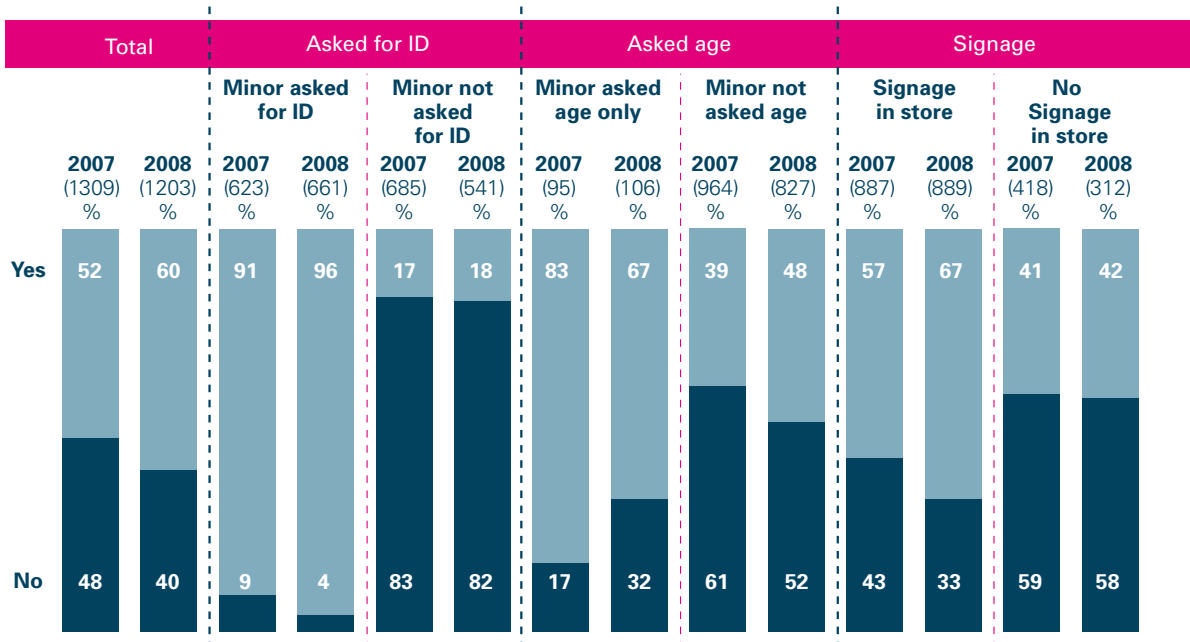
Similarly, where the minor was asked their age only, they were more likely to be refused sale. In 67% of cases where the minor was asked their age only, they were refused the sale. This is despite the approach undertaken for the purposes of the audit for the minor to say that they were 18 if asked their age (see methodology in Appendix 1). This finding is again similar to 2007.

Therefore, as also reported 12 months earlier, the correlation between the willingness of retailers to ask for ID or age and their refusal to sell is direct and clear. 96% of minors who were asked for ID were refused cigarettes. 67% of those who were asked age only were refused.

It also appears retailers who display signage stating that it is illegal to sell tobacco products to under 18s, and/or signage stating that ID may be required to purchase tobacco products, are more likely to refuse to sell to a minor than those who do not. Of those stores that had signage on display, 67% refused to sell cigarettes to the minor. In contrast, where shops did not have signage on display, 42% refused to sell to the minor.

Did Staff Member Refuse to Sell Cigarettes to the Minor?

Base: All Stores: 1,203

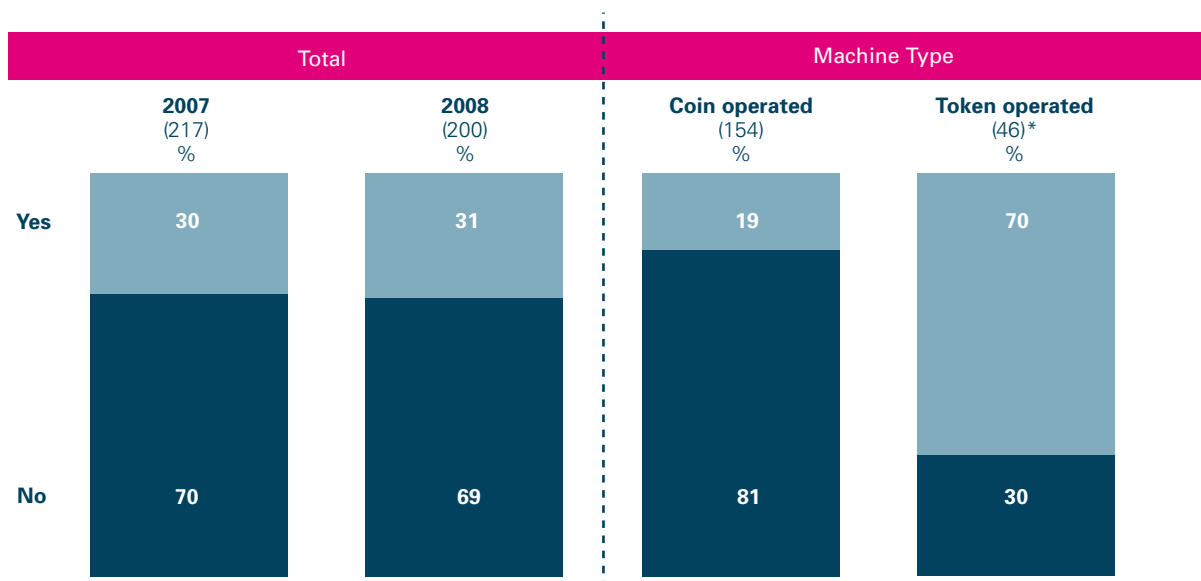


In licensed premises, minors were less likely to be asked for ID than in retail environments. Less than one in three minors (31%) who attempted to purchase cigarettes in licensed premises were asked for ID. This overall finding shows no real improvement when compared to 2007. However, there is a distinct correlation between the type of vending machine and the likelihood to be asked for ID and this appears now to be even more pronounced than last year. In the case of token operated cigarette vending machines, 70% of minors were asked for ID (up from 48% in 2007)*. In the case of coin operated machines, only 19% of minors were asked for ID (down from 27% in 2007).

Was The Minor Asked For ID When Attempting To Purchase Cigarettes?

COIN VERSUS TOKEN OPERATED VENDING MACHINE

Base: All Licensed Premises: 200



* Caution: Small base size

There is a distinct correlation between the type of vending machine and the likelihood to be asked for ID.

Retail Audit Part Two:
Retail Advertising at
Point-of-Sale (POS)

Findings

Retail Point-of-Sale

Provisions concerning removal of POS, as contained in the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, are to be commenced on 1 July 2009. These include:

- A ban on all in-store / point-of-sale advertising of tobacco products;
- A ban on the display of tobacco products in retail premises;
- The introduction of a closed container / dispenser for tobacco products.

The information summarised in this section is based on the presence of advertising bearing printed trademarks, logos or brand names of tobacco products in retail stores only. The extent of advertising present was measured in July and August 2008. As of 1 July 2009, all such advertising and product display must be removed.

Almost 9 out of 10 stores visited had some form of tobacco advertising on display. This is a slight reduction on 2007 figures (from 92% down to 89%). Some 88% of stores had a gantry which displayed tobacco branded signage². This high level of branding was visible across all store types.

Cigarette or Tobacco Advertising Observed

In Store BY TYPE OF ADVERTISING AND STORE TYPE

Base: All Stores: 1,203

	Total		Store type					
	2007	2008	Multiples	Groups	Forecourts/ Ind. Garages	Other chains	Ind. Grocer	Ind. TSNs
	(1309)	(1203)	(40)*	(292)	(209)	(107)	(349)	(206)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cigarette branded gantry	87	88	86	96	92	94	80	86
Poster ads	17	15	6	20	18	20	14	10
Counter materials	22	12	10	11	12	8	14	11
Other	17	6	4	8	7	11	4	5
None	8	11	14	4	7	6	19	13
Observed any Advertising	92	89	86	96	93	94	81	87

* Caution: Small base size

² For the purposes of this study, a branded gantry refers to product branding displayed above retail shelving.

Other significant findings regarding tobacco advertising and display include:

- Some 62% (59% in 2007) of stores had tobacco advertising placed above the tobacco display only. The remainder had tobacco advertising extended above non-tobacco products;
- Where there was tobacco advertising extended above non-tobacco products, confectionery was present in over half (57%) of the cases. This has increased from 49% in 2007. Across store types, independent grocers and TSNs were more likely to have confectionery displayed below tobacco advertising (70% and 71% respectively). Multiples were least likely (26%*);
- Confectionery was also displayed beside tobacco products in 40% of all stores. This was down from 45% in 2007. Once again, multiples were far less likely to have confectionery stored beside tobacco products (15%*). The display of tobacco products next to confectionery in other store types ranged from 35% of forecourts / independent garages to 48% of TSNs;
- As regards cigarette displays, 68% of stores displayed cigarettes in a dispenser and 31% on open shelving. In 2007, a dispenser was present in 59% of stores. In relation to store type, almost 9 out of 10 groups displayed tobacco in a dispenser. This compares to independent grocers where almost half displayed tobacco on open shelves;
- As in 2007, the two most heavily advertised brands in stores were John Player and Benson & Hedges accounting for 29% and 27% respectively of all advertising. These are the two biggest selling brands in Ireland and, as demonstrated in the 2006 OTC report *Children, Youth and Tobacco*, are the most frequently purchased brands among young people.

* Caution: Small base size

Conclusions

On-going, independent monitoring and evaluation of programmes is necessary to assess effectiveness of existing measures, identify new measures for consideration, and to ensure best use of available resources.

Since August 2001, it has been illegal to sell tobacco products to children aged under 18 years. This 2008 research report summarises results from the latest independent survey of retailer compliance with respect to sales to minors legislation. The study also measures, in advance of its removal from the retail environment in July 2009, the extent of tobacco advertising at point-of-sale.

The 2008 report is the second National Tobacco Retail Audit in respect of tobacco control measures. As such, it is the first monitoring report and much of the information contained herein is compared to data from 2007 (baseline findings).

Part One: Compliance with Sales to Minors Legislation

The findings of this research show that at a national level, six out of every ten underage shoppers (60%) attempting to purchase cigarettes in a retail outlet were refused sale. This compares to 52% in 2007. In licensed premises, over one in three (37%) were refused sale (36% in 2007).

While the increase in refusal rates, particularly among retailers, is welcome, such compliance rates in retail stores and licensed premises are still well below an acceptable level. There is strong evidence internationally linking children's uptake of smoking with perceived ease of access to cigarettes. International best practice also recommends compliance levels in the region of 90%. It is at these levels of compliance that the numbers of young people starting to smoke can be successfully reduced. This is because refusal rates of 90% ensure minors encounter real difficulty in accessing tobacco products.

Therefore sustained efforts need to be focussed on this issue.

The OTC has developed a number of initiatives aimed at raising compliance with the law. These include:

- The completion in 2008 of a comprehensive test purchase training programme for EHOs in all HSE areas. The programme was designed and delivered in conjunction with La Touche Training;
- Provision of signage and information resources to retailers;
- The production and circulation of a training DVD with information on the law for people who work in the retail trade;
- National and regional radio campaigns informing retailers, publicans and the public of the law. In addition, relevant information continues to be published in retail and publican trade magazines;
- The provision of a lo-call compliance line (1890 333 100) for the public to register complaints about retailers/licensed premises selling to under 18s.

As the authorised officers under the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, EHOs are critical to the enforcement of sales to minors legislation. The HSE has committed to focussing its efforts on sales to minors with more intensive test purchasing programmes across all regions. Active enforcement by EHOs plays a hugely important role in building compliance levels towards acceptable levels. During 2007, the sales to minors inspection programme resulted in 20 successful prosecutions in the District Courts. 17 of these cases related to retail premises, three concerned licensed premises.

Overall, the findings from the 2008 Monitoring Report again clearly show that retailers who request ID are significantly more likely to comply with the law. It is therefore imperative that retailers act responsibly and ask all young people for proof of age ID.

In licensed premises, a sale to an underage youth is more likely to be refused where a token is required to purchase cigarettes and where the vending machine is visible to staff. With commencement of the relevant section of the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, these preventive measures will become law. From July 2009, all self-service vending machines must be token activated and be located within the view of a responsible member of staff. While this should lead to a substantial improvement in compliance levels among licensed premises, staff will still need to be highly vigilant in relation to proof of age requests.

Best practice shows that very high compliance rates are necessary to impact sales to minors, and ultimately, youth smoking levels. It is therefore important that we strive for compliance levels in the region of 90% nationally. Canada, a world leader in tobacco control has successfully reduced youth smoking rates (15 to 17 years old) to 10%¹. The 2006 *Children, Youth and Tobacco* report published by the OTC reported a prevalence rate among those under 18 in Ireland of 16%. The reduction in Canada has been achieved through a sustained comprehensive tobacco control programme that incorporates a strong target driven national agenda. With regard to compliance rates with sales to minors legislation, 86%² of retailers refused to sell cigarettes to underage Canadians in 2007. This is the highest recorded compliance level since measuring retailer behaviour began in Canada in 1995.

¹ Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS) 2007, Summary of Annual Results for 2007, Health Canada

² Evaluation of Retailers' Behaviour Towards Certain Youth Access-to-Tobacco Restrictions 2007, Health Canada



Part Two: Retail Advertising at Point-of-Sale

Comprehensive legislation underpins effective tobacco control policy. Advertising bans are universally recognised as one of the most effective measures available to governments in addressing the tobacco epidemic. This is reflected in Article 2 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) which requires countries to undertake a comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. The World Bank in its report *Curbing the Epidemic* (1999) also advocates this approach.

In many countries, including Ireland, there are already bans on tobacco advertising in national press and on TV and radio. Tobacco sponsorship of cultural and sporting events is also no longer permitted. This has resulted in significant investment by the tobacco industry in developing point-of-sale advertising and display as heretofore legislative measures did not impact the retail environment. The amounts invested by the industry globally are testament to the effectiveness of such advertising and product display.

As the retail environment is an integral part of young people's lives, under 18s are exposed routinely to tobacco advertising messages. From a very early age they are faced with significant tobacco branding and rows and rows of product display, known as "power walls."

A number of Canadian provinces, along with Iceland and Thailand have already implemented bans on retail advertising and this measure is currently under consideration in many other countries. In Ireland, the relevant provisions contained in the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004, will be commenced from 1 July 2009. The removal of tobacco advertising from the retail environment will be an important step in helping to reduce the impact of smoking on society and reducing the toll of death and disease caused by tobacco use in Ireland.

Appendix 1

Methodology: National Tobacco Retail Audit

Teams made up of two researchers, one a minor (fourteen, fifteen, sixteen or seventeen years of age) and the other an adult, visited a sample of 1,203 retail establishments and 200 licensed premises across the four Health Service Executive (HSE) areas. Premises were visited over a five week period during late July and August 2008. Team members entered the premises at the same time. They gave no indication of being together. Each carried out specifically assigned tasks:

- The responsibility of the minor was to test the willingness of retailers to sell him/her tobacco by attempting to buy a pack of branded cigarettes. The minor did not carry identification. If asked their age during the attempted transaction, the young person claimed to be 18 years old. Under no circumstances did the minor make a purchase. Instead, the minor was given clear instructions to withdraw from any sale, once it became clear that the attempt to purchase cigarettes would be completed.
- The adult member of the research team was responsible for supervising the minor and for carrying out a visual inspection of the retailer's place of business, for the purpose of observing and recording of information on in-store tobacco advertising and promotion. These adults were also responsible for collecting information on the postage of underage signage stating that it is illegal to sell tobacco products to children aged under 18.

In order to measure the influence of age and gender on retailers' propensity to comply with sales to minors legislation, visits were organised to ensure the following minimum national requirements:

- Store visits were conducted by a mix of both male and female minors in roughly equal proportions;
- Approximately two-thirds of all store visits were completed by a minor sixteen or seventeen years of age, with the rest of the sample being completed by fourteen or fifteen year olds.

Table One National Sample Dispersion by Age and Gender of Teenage Member – Retail Outlets

Male	49%
Female	51%
14 Year Olds	8%
15 Year Olds	26%
16 Year Olds	33%
17 Year Olds	33%

Sample

In designing the sampling methodology, TNS mrbi focused on ensuring key segments were represented in correct proportions within the sample. These key segments included:

- Age of minor;
- Gender of minor;
- Geographic region;
- Store type.

To build a robust sample, the following steps were taken:

- A first level geographic stratification was used to select the sampling points;
- Within each sampling point, quotas were set by store type to ensure store types were widely dispersed geographically, while at the same time ensuring the correct proportional representation of store type within the overall sample. Within each point, premises were selected at random within quota requirements;
- And finally, researchers of differing age and genders were randomly distributed across the selection of sampling points.

To ensure subsequent analysis by HSE region was possible, quotas were set by HSE region to guarantee a minimum number of visits per region. Surveying was spread across time of day and day of week to avoid any time-of-week bias. In total, 1,203 retail premises were visited during the survey.

Table Two Store Profile at National Level (weighted data)

	%
Multiples – Dunnes Stores, Superquinn or Tesco	3
Groups – Centra, Londis, Mace, Spar or SuperValu	24
Forecourts/Garages – independent garages and garages part of a Group	17
Other Chains – Costcutter, Gala, Quickpick, Vivo, XL Stop Shop	9
Independent Grocers – not part of any group	29
Independent TSNs – newsagents, do not sell groceries, not part of a Group	17

Sample Weighting

Table Three provides the sample profile at the national level (weighted data). To further align the sample with the national distribution of outlets and the preferred profile of teenage surveyors, minor weights were applied to the raw level data at the analysis stage.

Table Three Sample Weighting

	Sample (Unweighted)	Sample (Weighted)
Region		
Dublin	330	325
Rest of Leinster	315	313
Munster	333	337
Connacht/Ulster	225	229
Age		
14/15 years	496	409
16/17 years	707	794

Unless otherwise stated, all the percentages quoted in this report are results after weightings have been applied.

Licensed Trade

The methodology in the licensed trade survey was similar to the retail sector but with some minor differences. Fourteen year olds did not participate in this part of the survey. The role of the minor was to attempt to purchase cigarettes from a cigarette vending machine or to purchase a token for the cigarette vending machine from a staff member where token operated machines were in place. The role of the adult member was to record the outcome of the purchase attempt.

A nationally representative sample of licensed premises was selected, with quota controls by HSE region and age of minor employed. Data weighting to realign the sample by region and age of teenage member was also used. Two types of licensed premises were included in the research - hotels (27%) and public houses (73%). Only those licensed premises with cigarette vending machines were included in the research. 200 licensed premises were visited in total.

Table Four National Sample Dispersion by Age and Gender of Teenage Member – Licensed Premises

Male	49%
Female	51%
15 Year Olds	34%
16 Year Olds	33%
17 Year Olds	33%

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