

GLOBAL ADULT TOBACCO SURVEY

GATS

MALAYSIA 2023

KEY FINDINGS



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Survey overview

The **Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS)** is a global standard to systematically monitor adult tobacco use and track key tobacco control indicators.

GATS Malaysia was conducted twice: once in 2011 and again in 2023.

Both surveys were conducted by the **Institute for Public Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia** in collaboration with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA**.

Aims of the study



Determine the prevalence of **tobacco use**



Determine the prevalence of **e-cigarette use**












Determine the prevalence of exposure to **second-hand smoke**



Measure the prevalence of **cessation, risk perceptions, knowledge and attitudes, exposure to media, and price issues** around tobacco products

The GATS 2023 questionnaire included the following scopes

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| Tobacco smoking | Electronic cigarettes | Heated tobacco products |
|  |  |  |
| Smokeless tobacco | Cessation of tobacco smoking | Second-hand smoke |
|  |  |  |
| Economics of manufactured cigarettes | Media | Knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions |

Sample & Population



Target population:

- People aged 15 years and above who considered Malaysia to be their usual place of residence
- 289 Enumeration Blocks (areas) were selected from all over the country



Sampling method:

- Multi-stage stratified cluster sampling method
- The stratification was by geographic locality (urban and rural)

Population characteristics

Gender



Male

51.3%



Female

48.7%

Locality



Urban

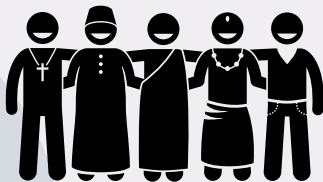
77.7%



Rural

22.3%

Ethnicity



Malay 56.7%

Chinese 21.0%

Indian 8.1%

Others 14.1%

4,269

individuals interviewed

81.5%

overall response rate

Lighting up young...

Across the board, tobacco smoking appears to be on the decline, except in women.

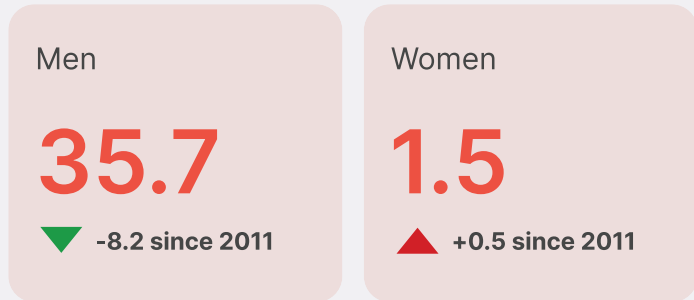
The national prevalence of current tobacco smoking in 2023 is **19.0%**, down from 23.1% in 2011.



However, this still falls short of the **targeted 15% or lower** national prevalence of current smokers by the year **2025**.

More than 1 in 3 men currently smoke

Prevalence (%) of current tobacco smoking by gender



Similar to 2011, current smoking is highest among rural dwellers

Prevalence (%) of current tobacco smoking in urban and rural areas

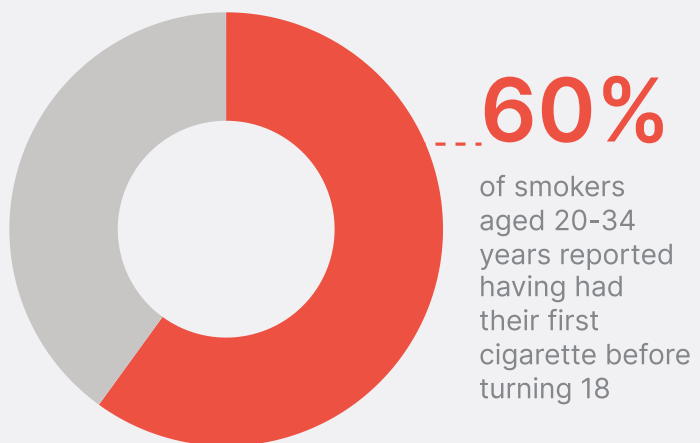


Many smokers are young and start young, despite legislation

Prevalence (%) of current tobacco smoking by age groups





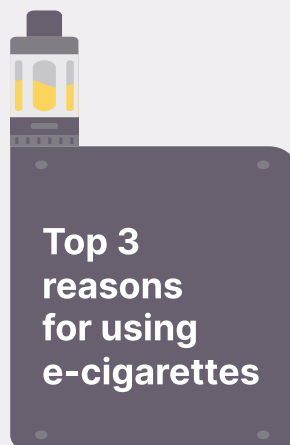
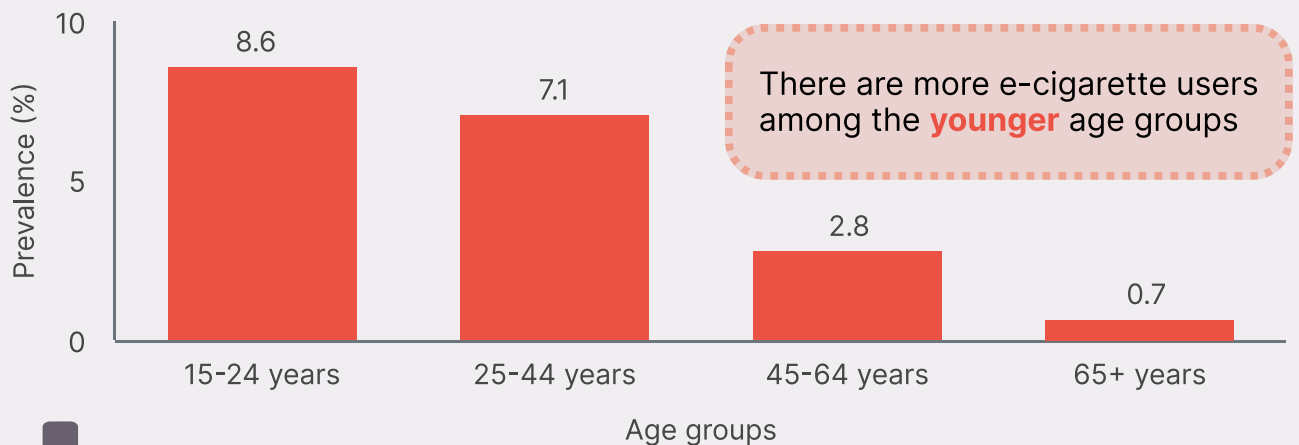
Age of smoking initiation among smokers aged 20-34 years



An alarming surge

E-cigarettes often contain harmful chemicals and nicotine, leading to addiction and potential long-term health issues. The lack of regulation and appeal to youths both exacerbate the growing public health concern surrounding e-cigarettes.

| 2011 | | 2023 |
|-------|--|---------|
| 21.0% | adults ever heard about e-cigarettes | 68.0% ▲ |
| 0.8% |  current e-cigarettes users | 5.8% ▲ |
| 0.8% |  dual users of tobacco & e-cigarettes | 3.9% ▲ |



1

Available in likeable flavours

2

Perceived as less harmful than smoking

3

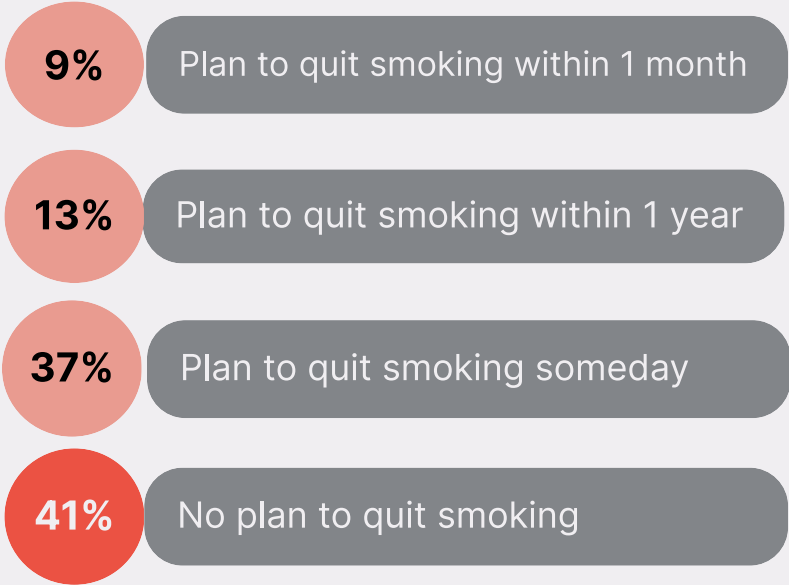
More enjoyable

Breaking the habit



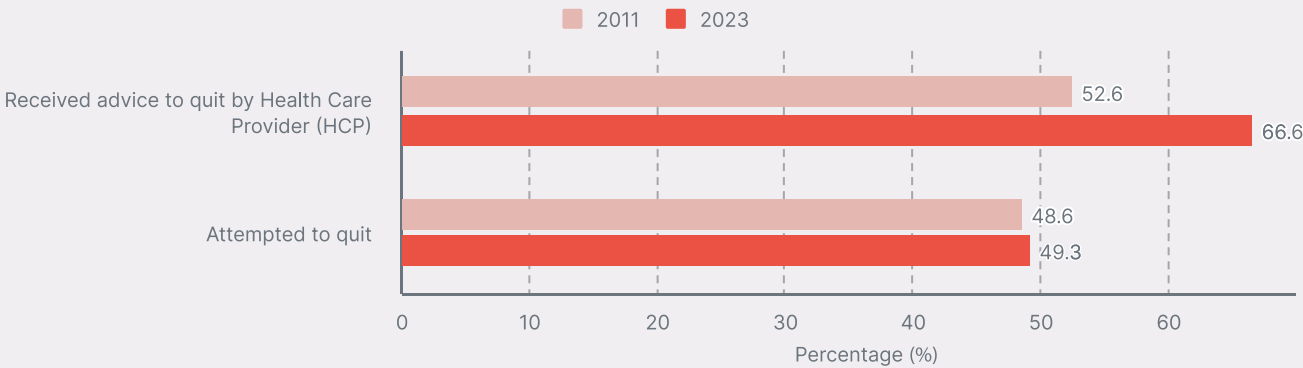
2 in 5

smokers said they were **not interested** in quitting smoking

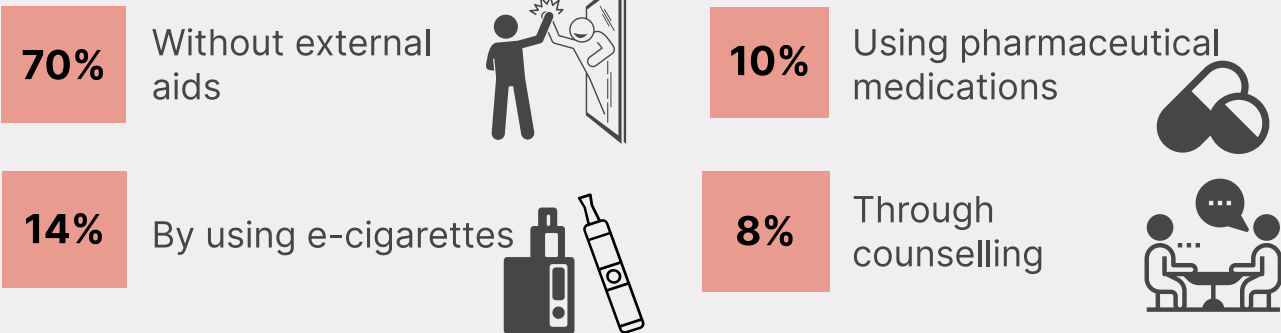


Attempts to quit smoking **remained stagnant** despite an increase in advice to quit smoking

Comparison between quit-smoking advice received and quit attempts made



How did smokers (who reported trying to quit smoking) attempt to quit?



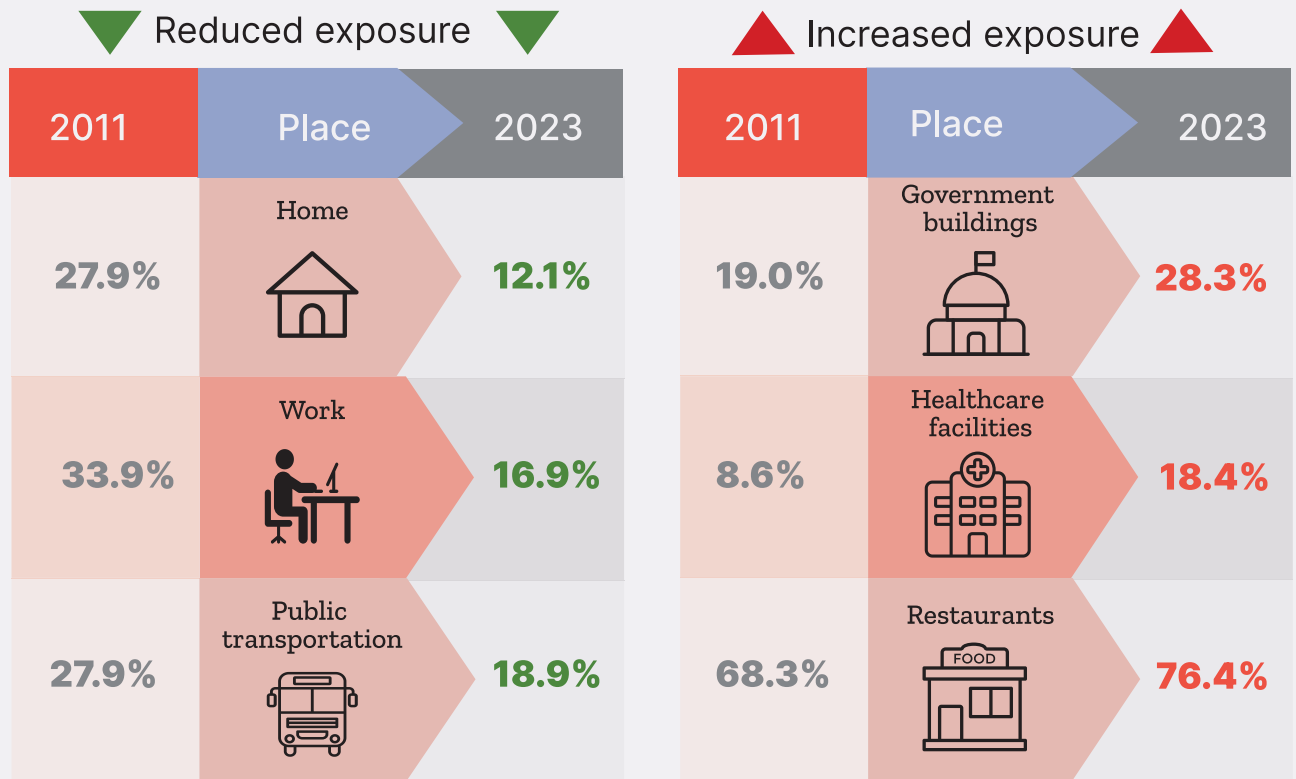
06

SECOND-HAND SMOKE

Clearing the air

Exposure to second-hand smoke remains widespread

Places at which non-smokers reported being exposed to second-hand smoke



Educational institutions are also affected to a considerable degree

Prevalence of exposure to second-hand smoke within a school or university compound



Clear signals

The prevalence (%) of current smokers noticing health warnings on cigarette packages appears to be **on the decline**



Noticed health warnings on cigarette packages

70.9 ▼ -21.9 since 2011

Thought about quitting because of warning label

33.2 ▼ -12.6 since 2011

While most adults noticed anti-cigarette smoking information, **less than half** noticed anti-electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) use information

Noticing anti-cigarette smoking information



81.8 %

Noticing anti-e-cigarette use information



44.4 %

Top 3 most common places



59.3%
on the Internet



58.9%
in healthcare facilities



54.0%
on the television or the radio



31.3%
on the Internet



30.5%
in healthcare facilities



22.6%
on posters



1 in 3 adults aged 15 years old and above were aware of the JOM QUIT/ M-quit anti-smoking campaign

Big tobacco tactics

1 in 5 

adults reported having noticed any tobacco advertisement, promotion, or sponsorship

Noticed any in-store advertisement/ promotion

8.8 ▼ -12.9 since 2011

Noticed any tobacco ads, promos, or sponsorship

18.3 ▼ -17.3 since 2011

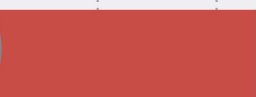
Marketing of e-cigarettes appear to be more prominent

Percentage of current tobacco smokers and electronic cigarette users who reported noticing any advertisement, sponsorship, or promotions



40.5%

electronic cigarette users






23.5%

tobacco smokers

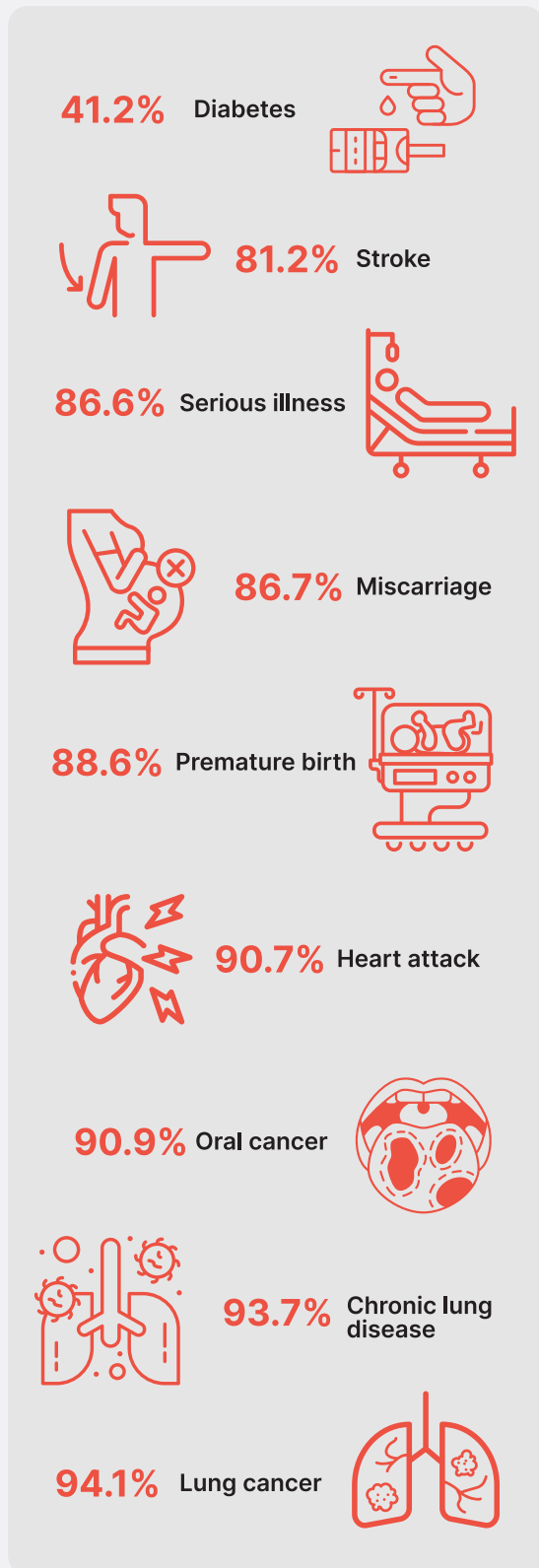
Users encountered tobacco and e-cigarette marketing most **while online**

Percentage of current tobacco smokers and electronic cigarette users who reported noticing cigarette / electronic cigarette marketing at various places

| Among tobacco smokers | Places | Among electronic cigarette users |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 8.1% |  On the internet | 21.4% |
| 7.9% |  In stores where cigarettes / e-cigarettes are sold | 13.3% |
| 5.2% |  On posters | 8.5% |

'Smoking literacy'

On whether smoking causes the following diseases

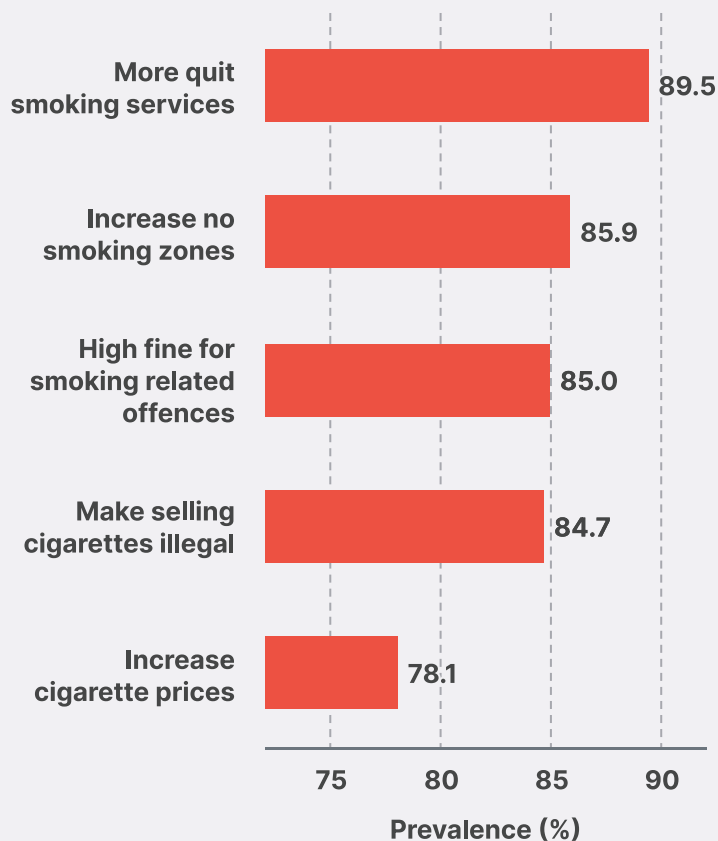


On second-hand smoke being the cause of serious illness in non-smokers



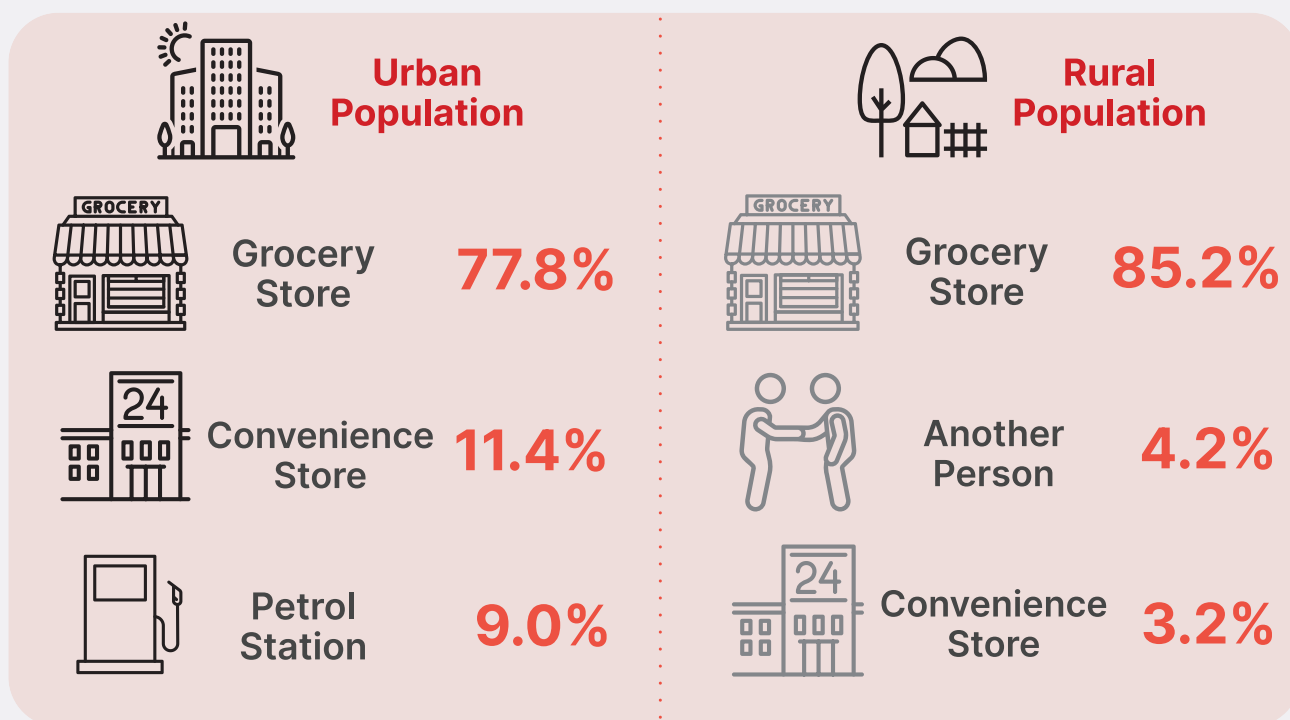
85.9% knew or believed that second-hand smoke caused serious illness in non-smokers

Perception of actions that might help reduce the number of smokers in Malaysia



Of ash and cash

Top three places from which smokers purchase manufactured cigarettes



Average cigarette expenditure per month (2011 vs 2023)*

National

RM 177.7 -24.0% from 2011

Urban

RM 194.8 -26.3% from 2011

Rural

RM 136.3 -10.3% from 2011

Urban and rural smokers buy their cigarettes mainly from **grocery stores** but differ in other sources. **Rural smokers** also had significantly **less reduction** in money spent per month on buying cigarettes.

*GATS Malaysia 2011 cost data were adjusted for inflation for direct comparison to 2023 using the Inflation Rate for Average Consumer Prices from the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook Database April 2023.

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MALAYSIA 2023



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