

# Vermont 2022 Tobacco Retail Audit Report

August 2023








Professional  
Data Analysts

# Contents

-  **Background**
-  **Retailer landscape**
-  **Product availability**
-  **Advertisements**
-  **Pricing & pricing promotions**
-  **Discussion**

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# Strategies to reduce commercial tobacco use

## Foundational approaches



Tobacco price  
increase



Smokefree  
policies



Media  
campaigns



Cessation  
access

## Complementary retail strategies



Product  
availability



Pricing &  
promotion



Advertising



Age  
of sale



Retail  
licensure

# Selected Vermont Tobacco Control efforts



## Tobacco taxes

9<sup>th</sup> highest cigarette tax at \$3.08/pack

# 21

## Youth access laws

Federal minimal age = 21 years



## Licensing laws

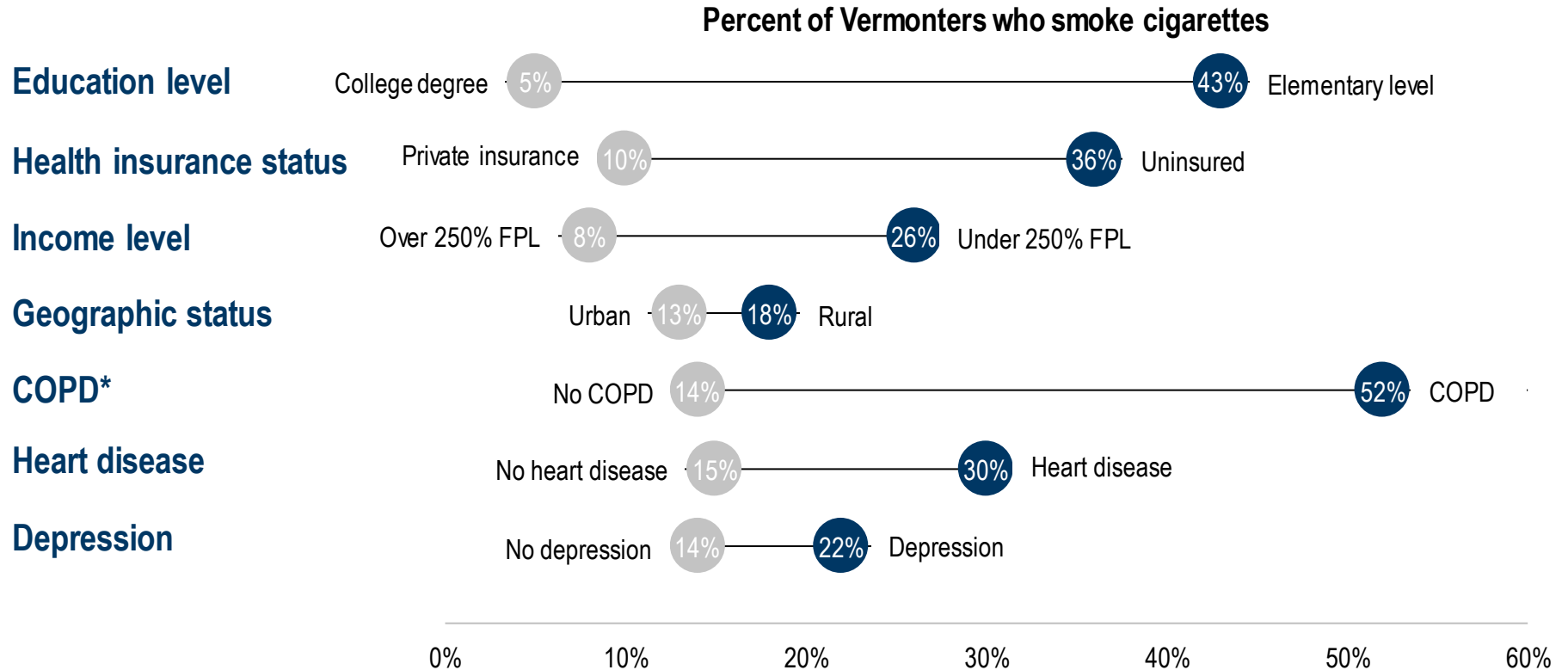
Retailers & wholesalers are required to obtain licenses to sell tobacco products & e-cigs



## Clean indoor air ordinances

Smoking is prohibited in public places including schools, restaurants, & retail stores

# Tobacco use disparities exist in Vermont



# Vermont Retail Audit



Goal: To understand the local retail environment + baseline for reducing tobacco-related disparities + plan feasible retail strategies to meet need



Vermont Retail Audits 2014, 2018, 2022

Vermont local retailer data is available at:

<https://liquorcontrol.vermont.gov/enforcement>



Retail audit 2022 represents approximately 90% of all tobacco licenses in Vermont. Overall, tobacco retailer licenses fluctuate across audit years:

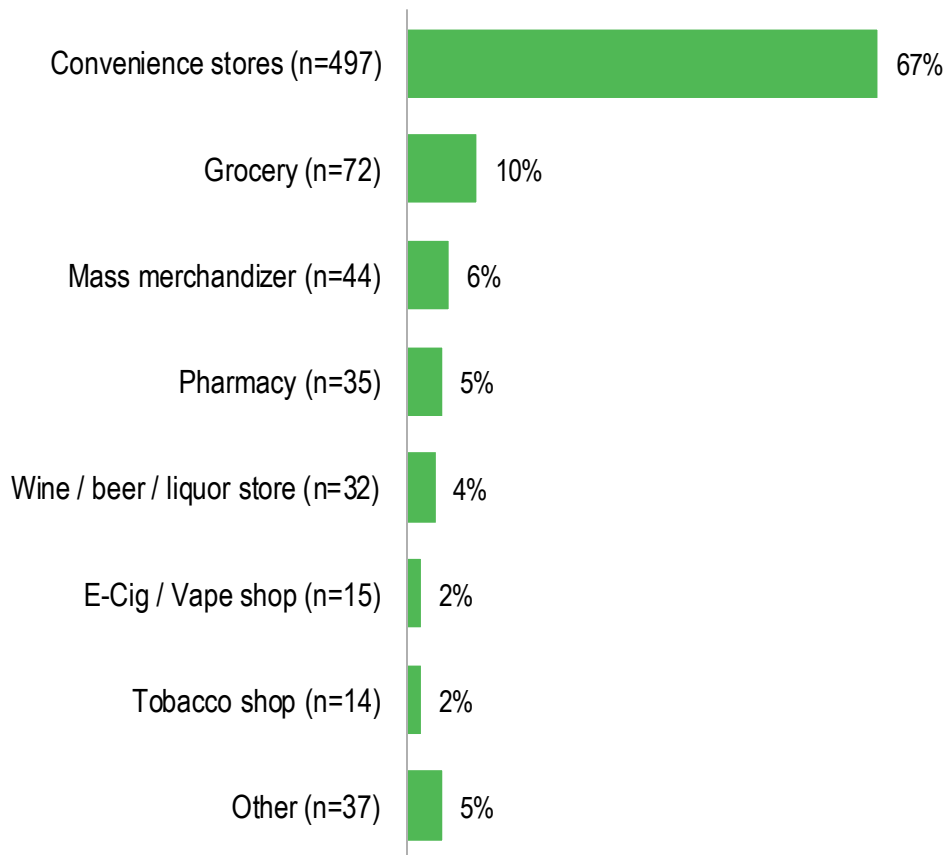
- 2014: 727 licensed retailers
- 2018: 1038 licensed retailers
- 2022: 830 licensed retailers

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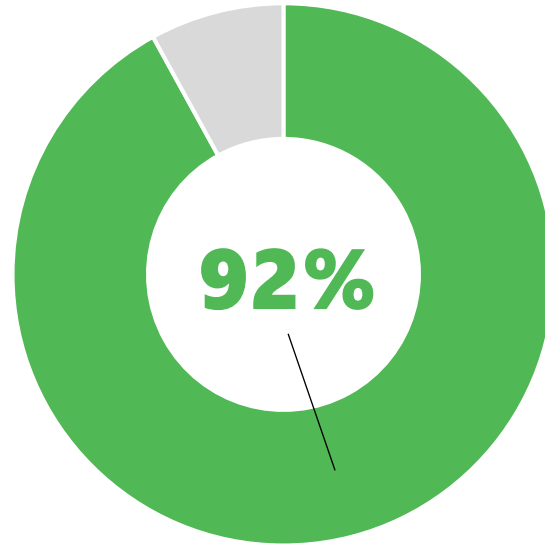


# All audited, licensed tobacco retailers in Vermont (N=746)



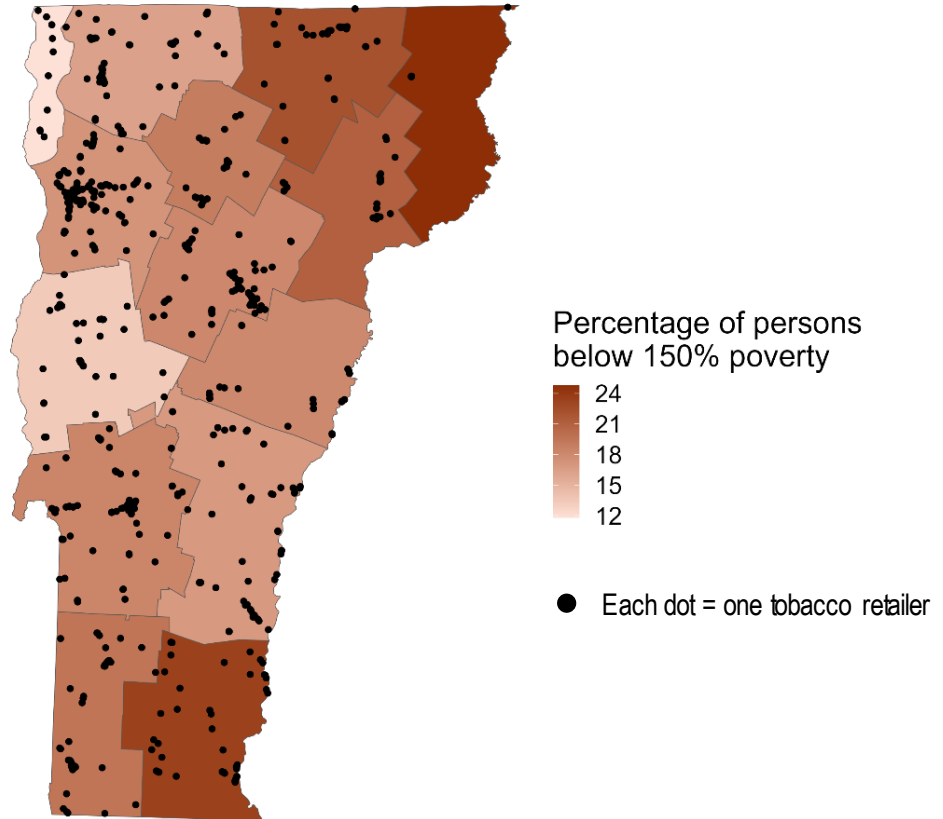
In Vermont,  
a tobacco  
retail license  
is **free** with  
the purchase  
of an alcohol  
retail license.

Percent of Vermont's tobacco retailers who sell alcohol



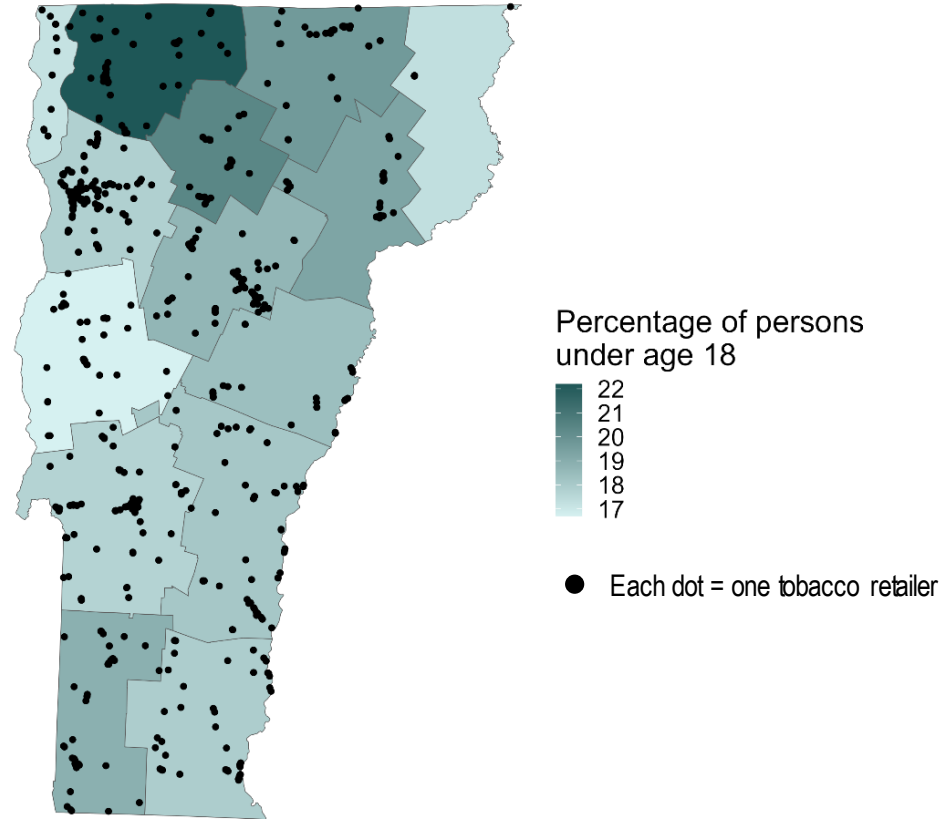
**Areas with  
higher  
levels of  
poverty  
have  
higher  
tobacco  
retailer  
density**

**Tobacco retailer density & socio-economic status**









**Areas with  
higher  
populations  
of children  
have lower  
tobacco  
retailer  
density**

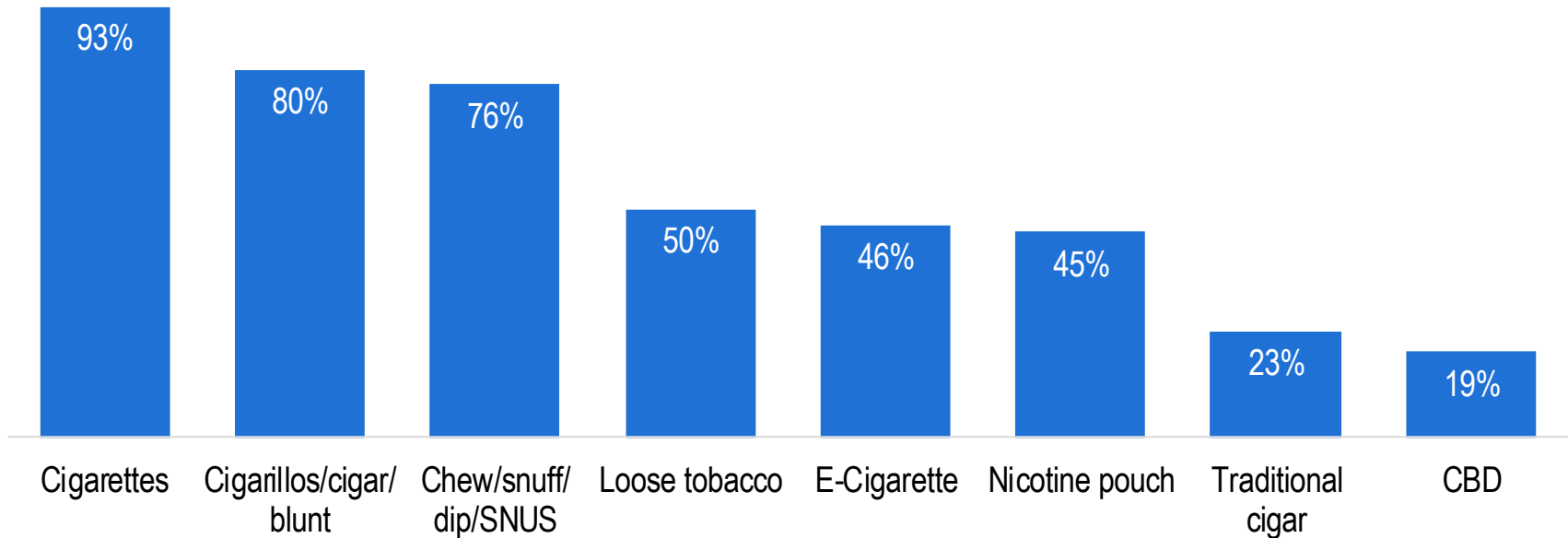
Tobacco retailer density & population of children



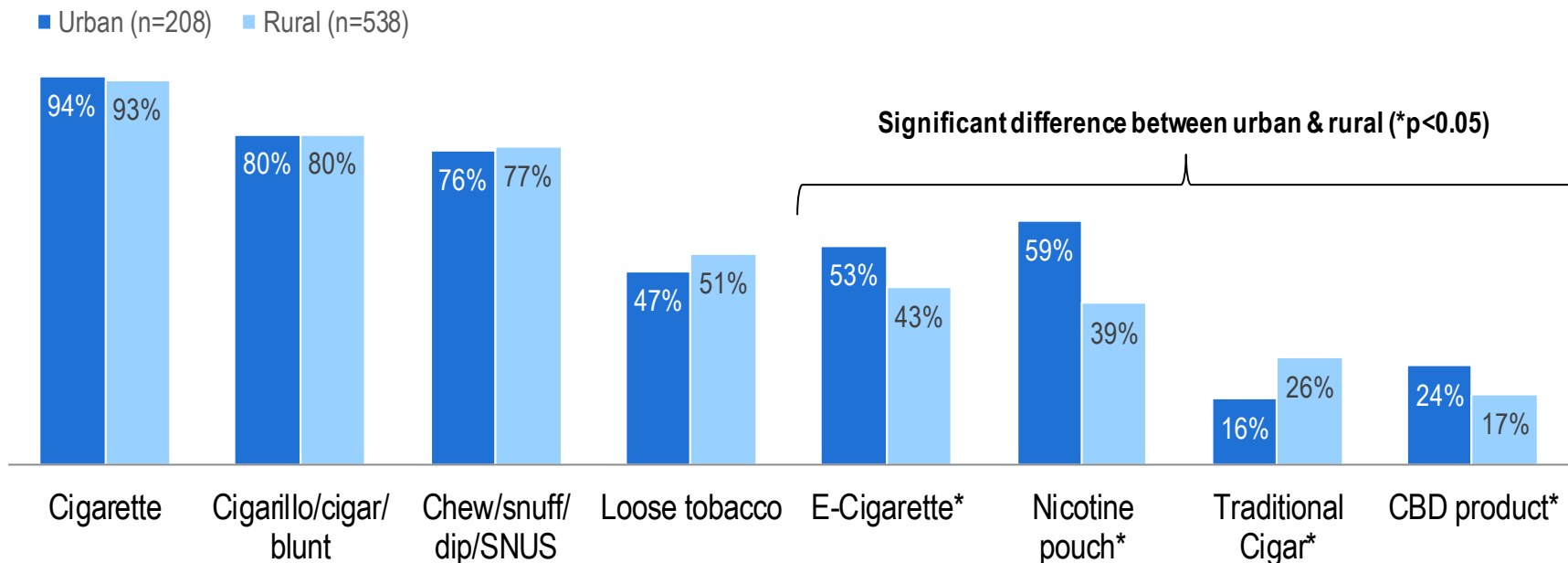
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# Types of tobacco product (all audited tobacco stores n=746)

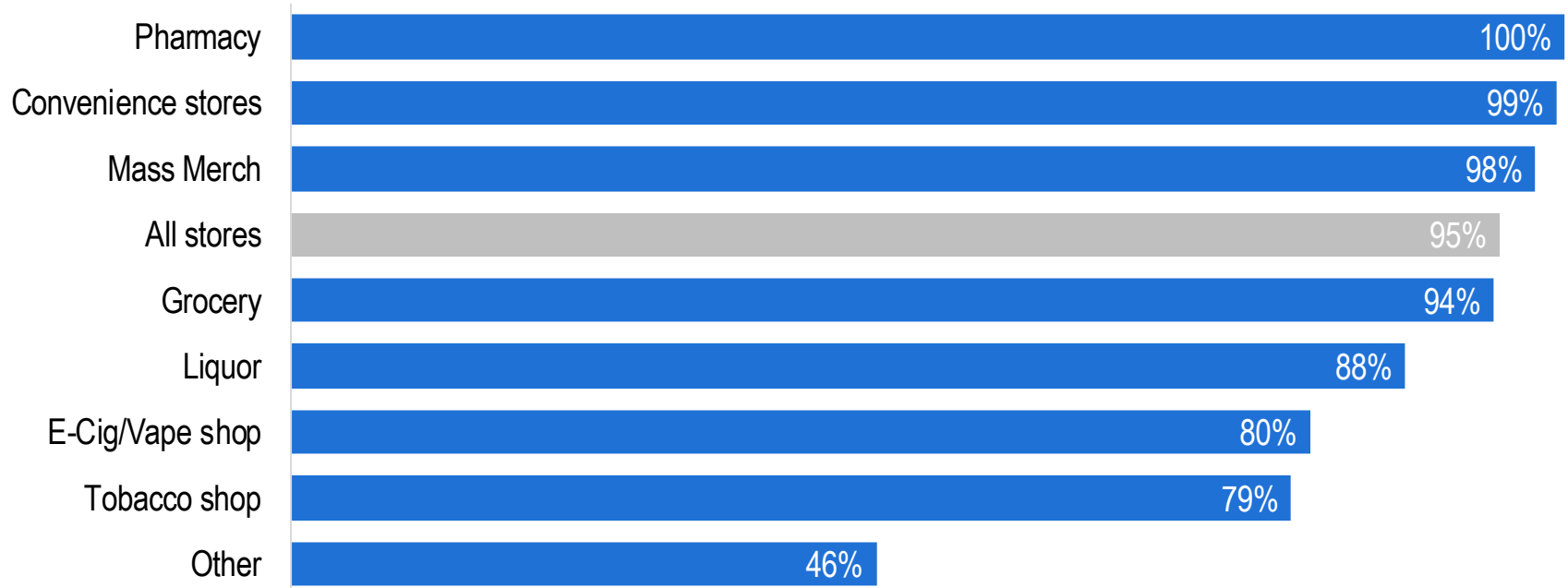


# Tobacco product availability by urban/rural



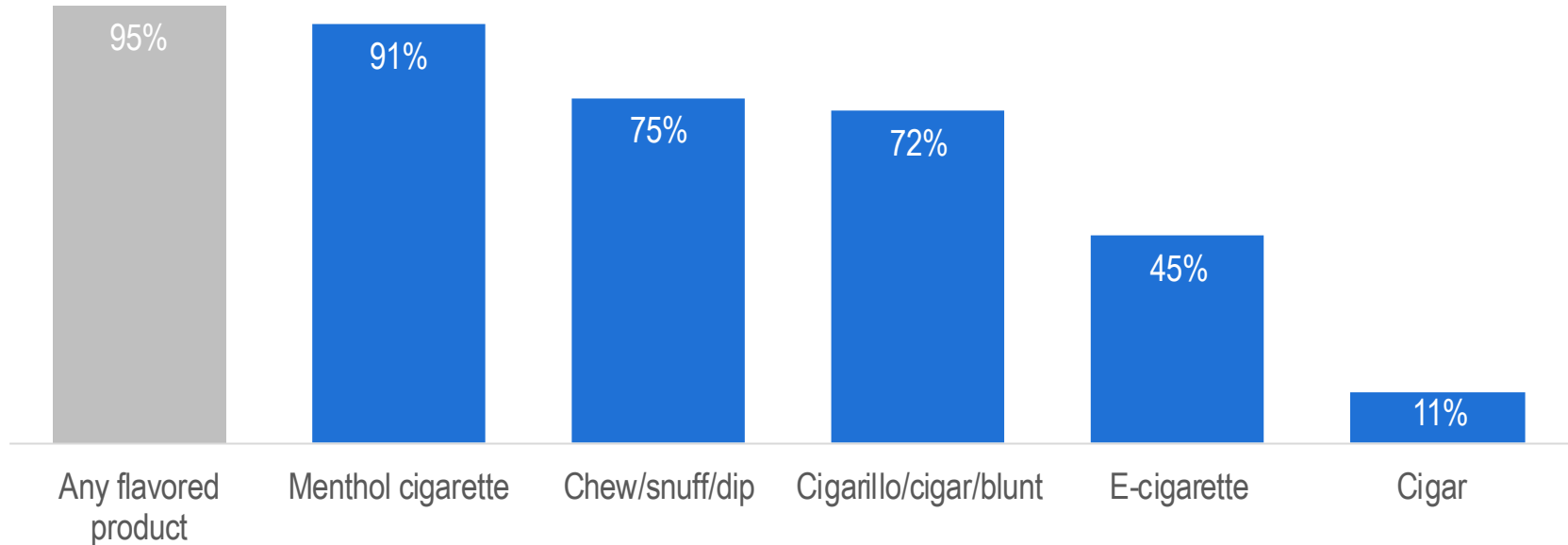
Note: Urbanity was determined based on rural-urban commuting area (RUCA 2010) codes that classify U.S. zip codes using measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting.

# Retailers selling flavored tobacco products



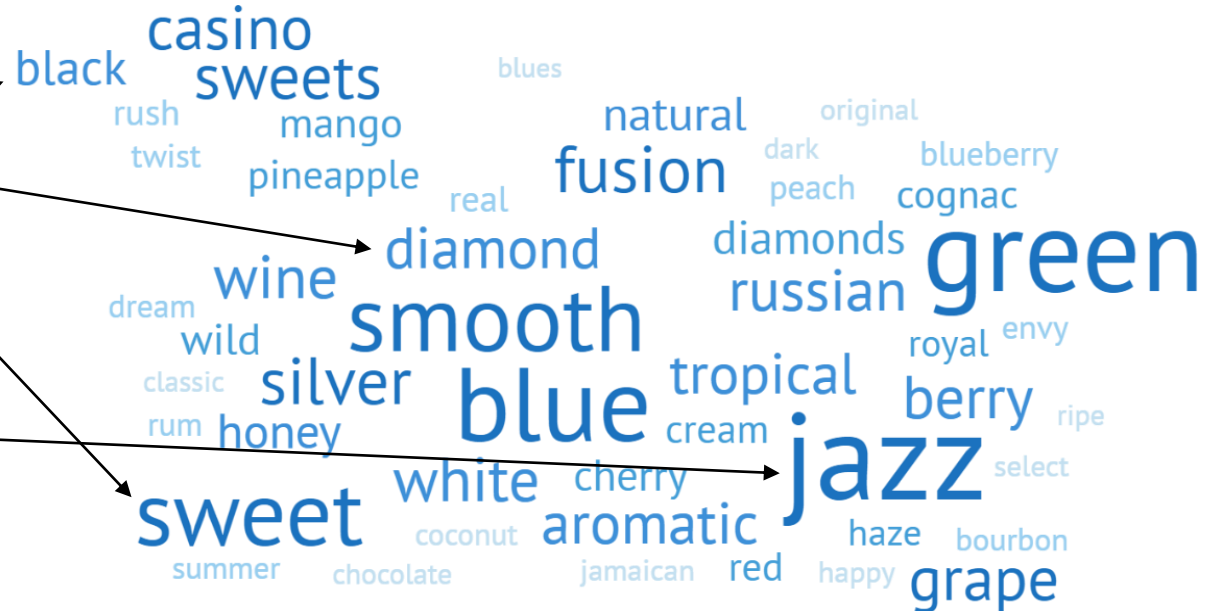


# Flavored tobacco product availability








# Cigarillos/Cigars/Blunts

## Ambiguous flavor type available in-store

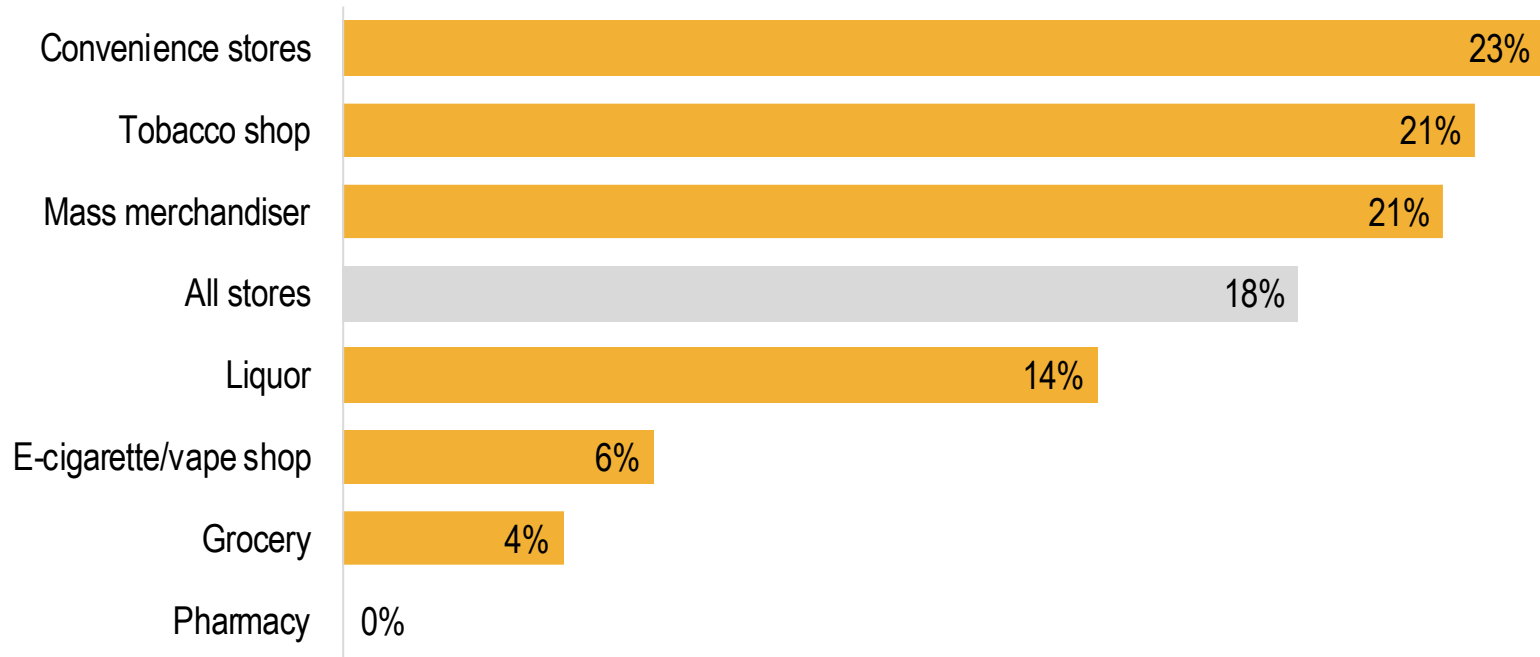


Word Cloud: Visual representation of words, where the size of each word corresponds to its frequency in the dataset

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# Retailers with any exterior tobacco advertisements



# Words used in external convenience store ads



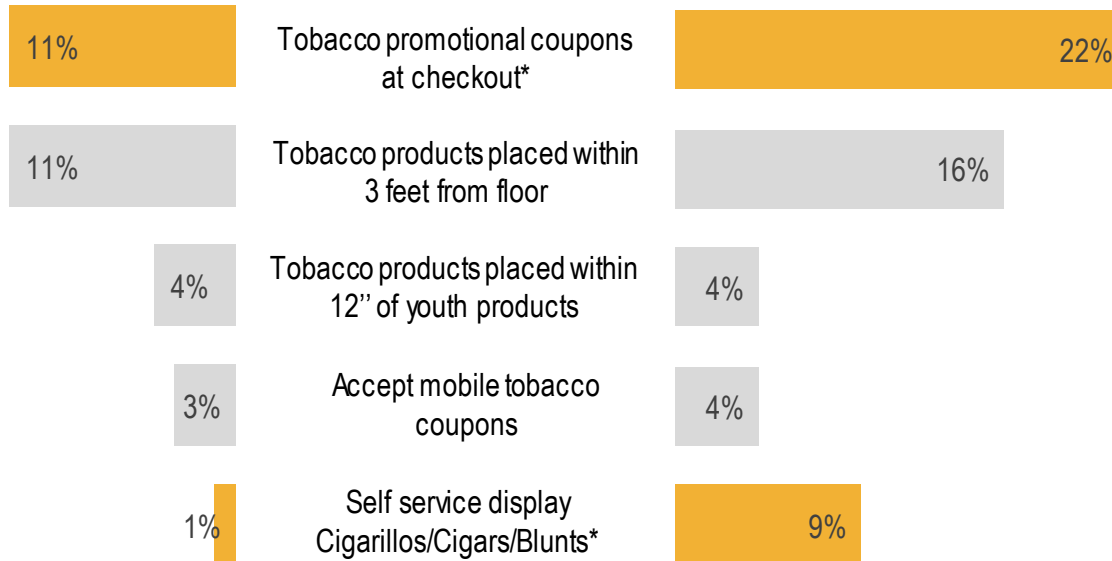
**Word Cloud:** Visual representation of words, where the size of each word corresponds to its frequency in the dataset.

# Internal advertisements across stores by Urban/Rural

Rural

\* Significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ )

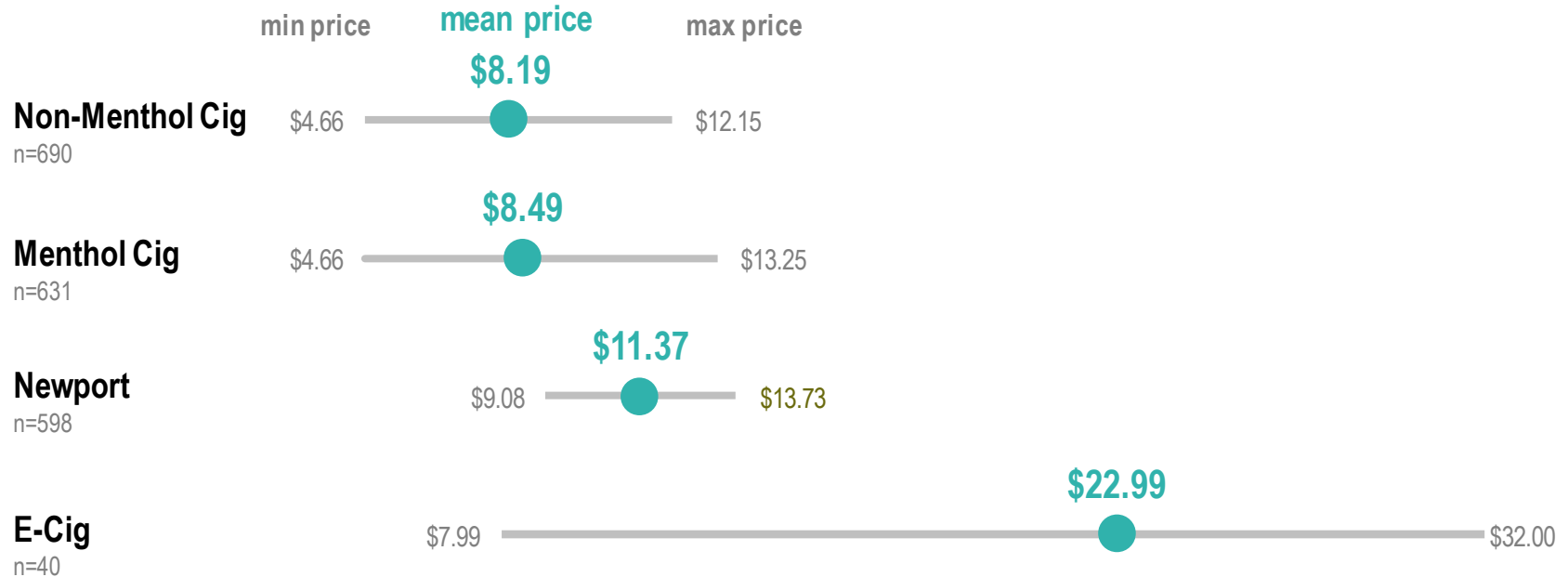
Urban



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# Cheapest advertised price by product





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# Implementing Retail Strategies

1. Work with community partners to identify retail strategy that's right for your community and has support.
2. Vermont is Dillon's rule state – will likely determine whether policy change occurs at the state or local level.
3. Raise awareness about the importance of reducing industry influence in the retail environment.
4. Monitor the retail environment and evaluate the effect of retail strategies

# Implementing Retail Strategies

How can the strategy be implemented?

<b>Policy problem</b>	<b>Point-of-sale policy domains</b>	<b>Relevant policies</b>
<b>Cheap cig prices</b>	Non-tax price increases	Establish minimum cigarette pack price; ban discounts
<b>Tobacco products/ads near youth items</b>	Advertisement/ product placement	Ban self service for OTPs
<b>Type of store selling tobacco products</b>	Licensing and density	Ban sales at certain types of stores

# References

1. CDC Guide on Tobacco where you live: Retail strategies to promote health equity.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/guides/pdfs/best-practices-retail-user-guide-508.pdf>
2. Cigarette and Tobacco Tax rates in Vermont: <https://tax.vermont.gov/business-and-corp/miscellaneous-taxes/cigarette-and-tobacco-tax/rates>
3. Vermont retail audit 2014 report:  
[https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HPDP\\_CounterToolsTechnicalReport\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HPDP_CounterToolsTechnicalReport_FINAL.pdf)
4. Vermont retail audit 2018 report: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/wp5op7xn1znwr7q/GMT20180430-164951\\_VT-Counter\\_1280x800.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/wp5op7xn1znwr7q/GMT20180430-164951_VT-Counter_1280x800.mp4?dl=0)