

# Review of: "Purchasing and sourcing of e-cigarettes among youth in Scotland and England following Scotland's implementation of an e-cigarette retail register and prohibition of e-cigarette sales to under-18s"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

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The study conducted by Katherine East, Jessica Reid, Sara Hitchman, and David Hammond offers an insightful examination of the impact of new e-cigarette regulations in Scotland on the purchasing behaviors of youth, compared to those in England. The methodology is robust, utilizing cross-sectional data from the ITC Youth Tobacco and Vaping Surveys conducted in 2017 and 2018. The statistical analyses, including logistic regressions, effectively compare changes in e-cigarette purchasing and sourcing between the two countries and among different age groups.

The results are compelling, indicating that despite the new regulations, there was no significant decrease in e-cigarette purchasing among minors in Scotland, nor was there a notable difference compared to England. Interestingly, the study found that purchasing from vape shops increased among minors in Scotland, suggesting that compliance with age-of-sale regulations may be lacking. The comprehensive discussion of these findings, in light of existing literature from the US and Canada, provides a thorough understanding of the complexities involved in regulating e-cigarette sales to youth.

In conclusion, the study effectively highlights the need for better enforcement of age-of-sale regulations for e-cigarettes in Scotland and England. It suggests that a licensing system, as recommended by the WHO, may be more effective in preventing sales to minors. Overall, this study is a valuable contribution to the field of public health and tobacco control, providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers.

## **Decision: Accept with minor revisions**

The study is well-conducted and presents important findings. However, minor revisions are needed to enhance clarity in the presentation of statistical analyses and to address the limitations in more detail.