

REDC

reSpectvapers

Understanding how vapers would react to a ban on flavoured vapes

Findings from an on-street survey of vapers

March 2022

RED C REF 574922



Research background and methodology



The Joint Committee on Health is currently considering the contents of the Public Health (Tobacco and Nicotine Inhaling Products) Bill, which includes provision for tighter regulation of e-cigarettes / vaping products. This has generated some public debate around the usage of flavoured vaping products and whether or not some / all of them should be banned.



RED C has carried out this research on behalf of Respect Vapers. It is based on a survey of people that use vaping products in order to understand why they use flavoured vapes and what the potential impact a ban of these products would have on their vaping / smoking behaviour.



RED C conducted an on-street face-to-face survey of n=221 people that regularly use vaping products (at least once a week or more often) in the city centres of Dublin, Cork and Galway over the period Friday 4th to Monday 7th March. The survey covers questions on their vaping behaviour, their use of vaping flavours and their views on how they and others may react to an outright ban on flavoured vapes.



This report presents the main findings from the research. Note that a quota-sampling approach was used and the data is weighted so that it broadly reflects the known profile of people that use vaping products.

Research summary findings



A large majority of vapers are ex-smokers

They also see vaping as something that has helped them quit smoking and has been more effective in helping them do this compared to other means like patches and gum



Only a relatively small number of flavours used by vapers

Tobacco, menthol and fruit are the most commonly used flavours and while taste is a big driver of appeal, the use of flavoured vapes is acknowledged by nearly all ex-smoking vapers as a means of staying off cigarettes



Vapers typically don't want a ban on flavour vapes

A majority don't want to see a ban on flavoured vapes being introduced and there is concern this could lead to the creation of a black market for flavoured vapes



Some concern that a ban could lead to increased incidence of smoking

Just over two-in-five vapers that were ex-smokers said they were likely to take-up smoking again if a ban came in, while around three-quarters were concerned that a ban would see an increase in more young people smoking.



A profile of vapers and their usage of e-cigarettes

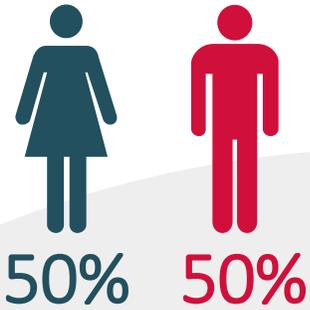


Most are using e-cigarettes at least once a day

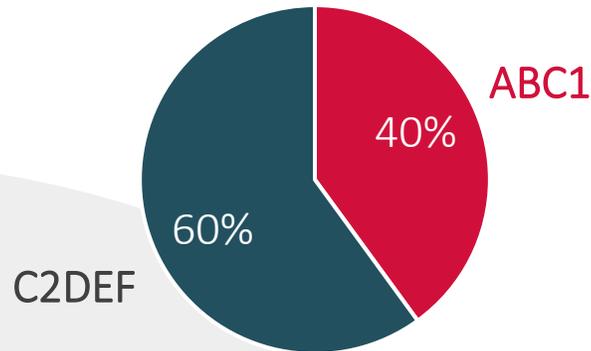
Around three-quarters also first started using e-cigarettes within the past two years i.e. at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Demographic profile of vapers

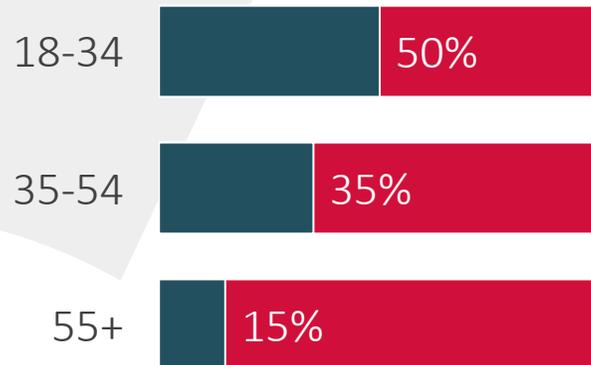
Gender



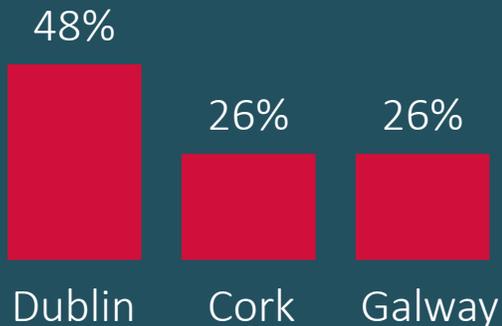
Social Grade



Age group



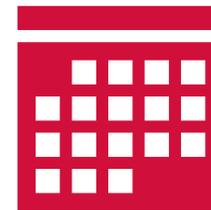
Location of Interviews



How long using e-cigarettes



How often using e-cigarettes



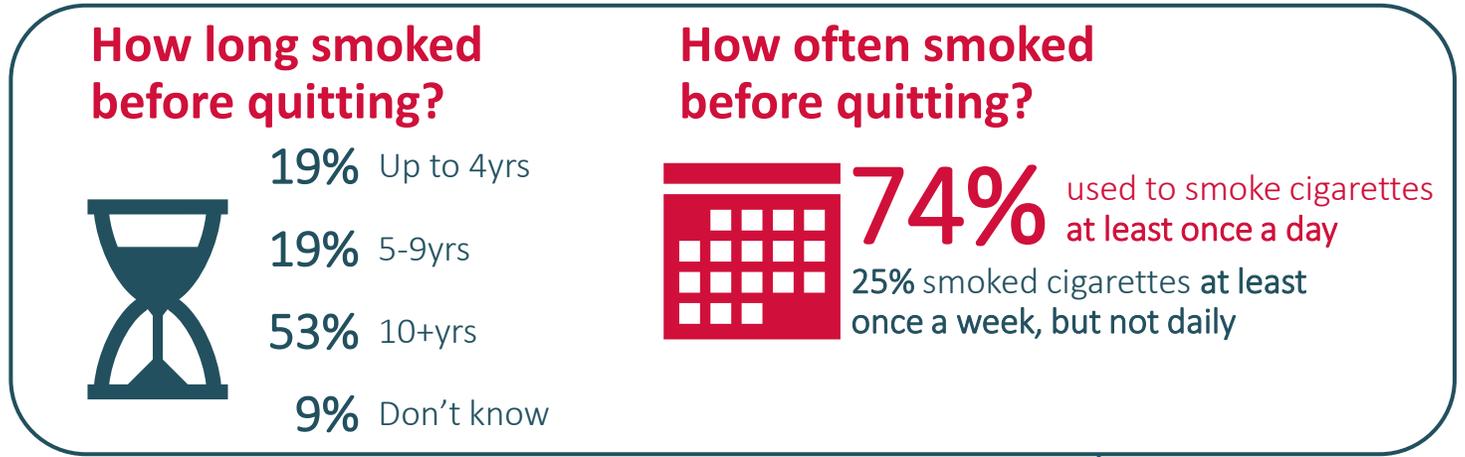
Most vapers are also ex-smokers

Just around one-in-eight said that they both use e-cigarettes and are smokers, while only one-in-twenty said they had never smoked before.

Most vapers that are also smoking haven't been smoking for very long and are not smoking on a daily basis.

Vapers that were ex-smokers tended to have been smoking for a considerable period of time and were heavy smokers, smoking at least once a day.

Base: all respondents (n=221)



Current smoker

Ex-smoker



Caution! Small base (n=29)



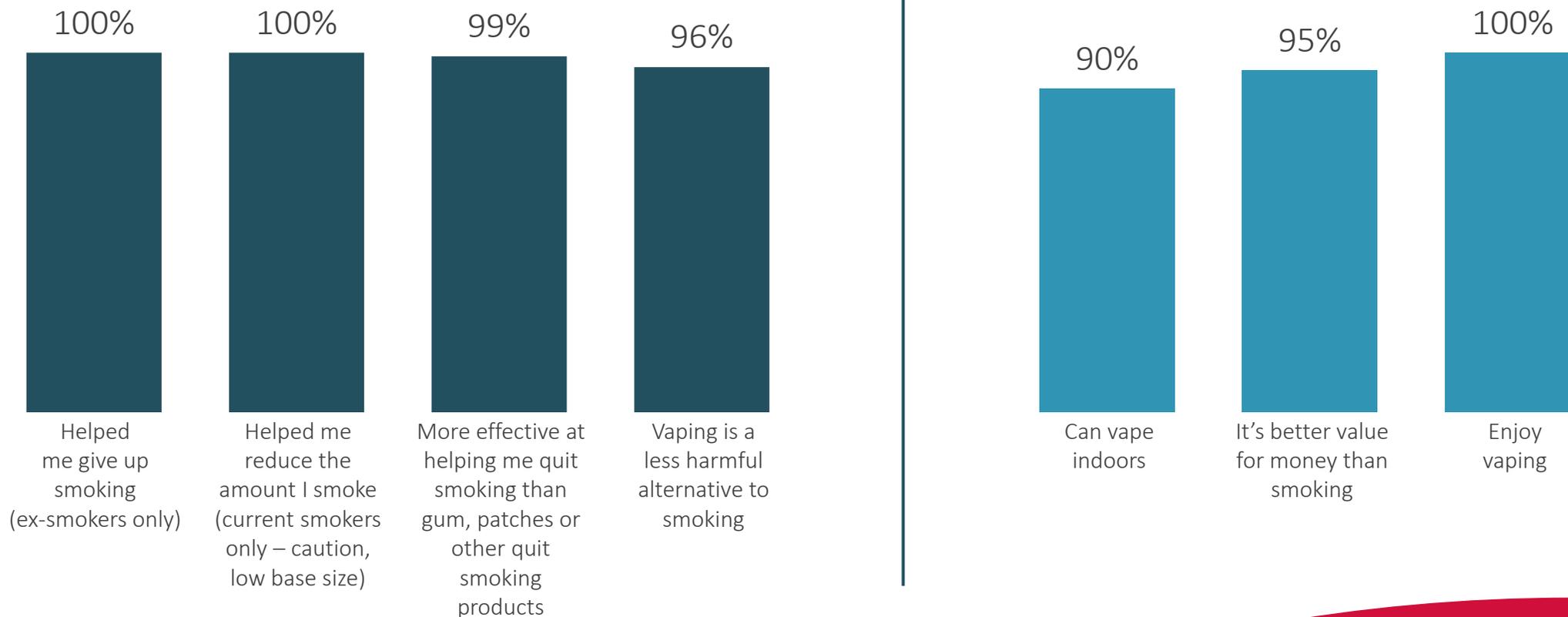
E-cigarettes have helped vapers quit / reduce smoking



There is a general belief that vaping is less harmful than smoking. They also enjoy vaping, see it as better value for money and something they can do indoors (unlike smoking cigarettes).

Reasons for using e-cigarettes / vaping products

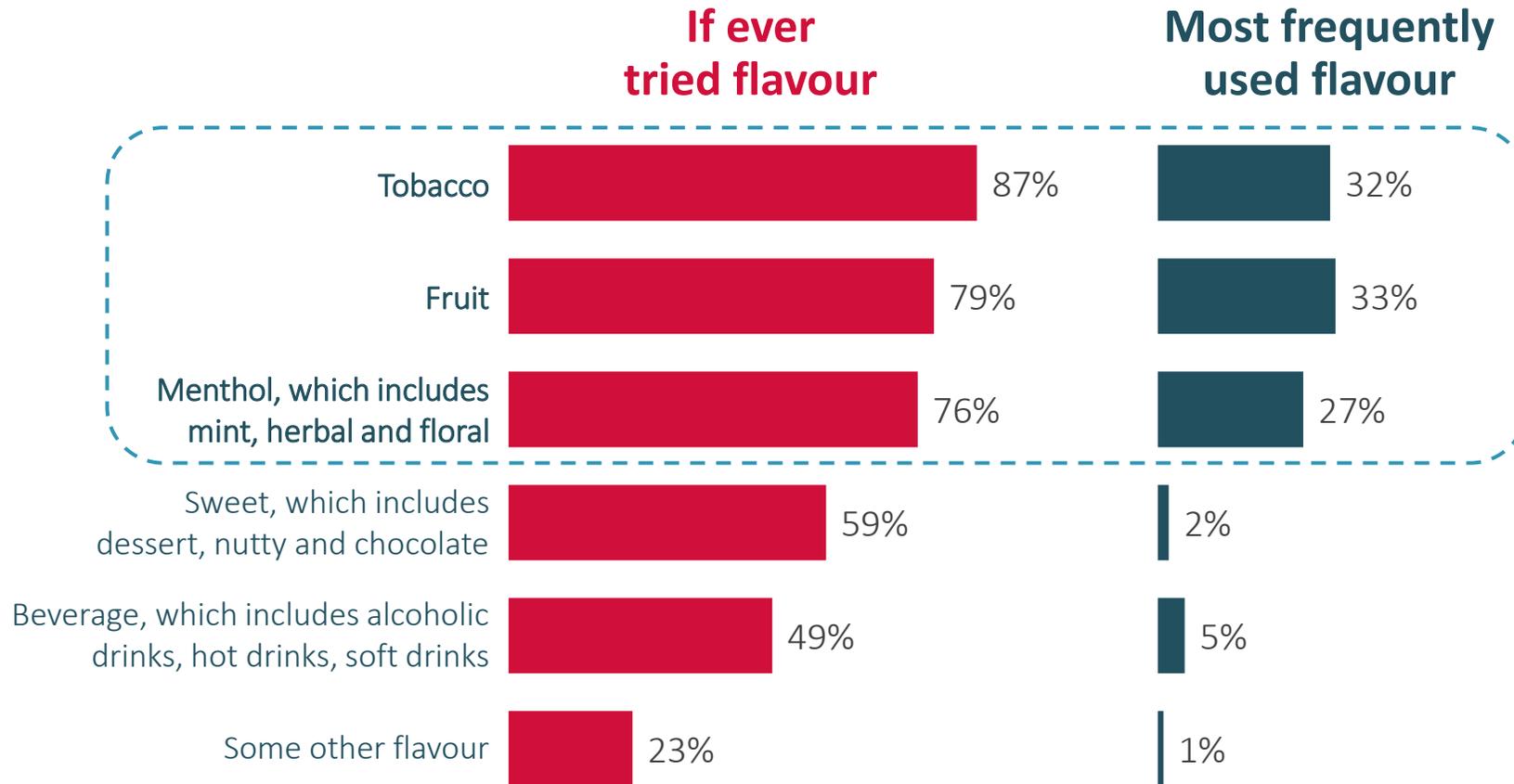
Prompted - % answering yes for each





Types of
flavoured vapes
used and why
vapers use them

Tobacco, fruit and menthol are the most frequently used flavours by vapers



Even though more than half of vapers have tried a sweet flavour and around half have tried a beverage flavour, only a very small proportion claim to use these flavours on a regular basis.

Tobacco is more frequently used by men (42%) and those in older age groups i.e. aged 35+ (50%).

Fruit flavours are more popular amongst women (41%) and those in younger age groups i.e. 18-34 (41%).

Vaping does help to reduce incidence of smoking



Appeal of taste and variety of flavours are also key reasons for using flavoured vapes

Reasons for using flavoured vapes



NOTE: 80% that use a flavour other than tobacco say they like to try different flavours

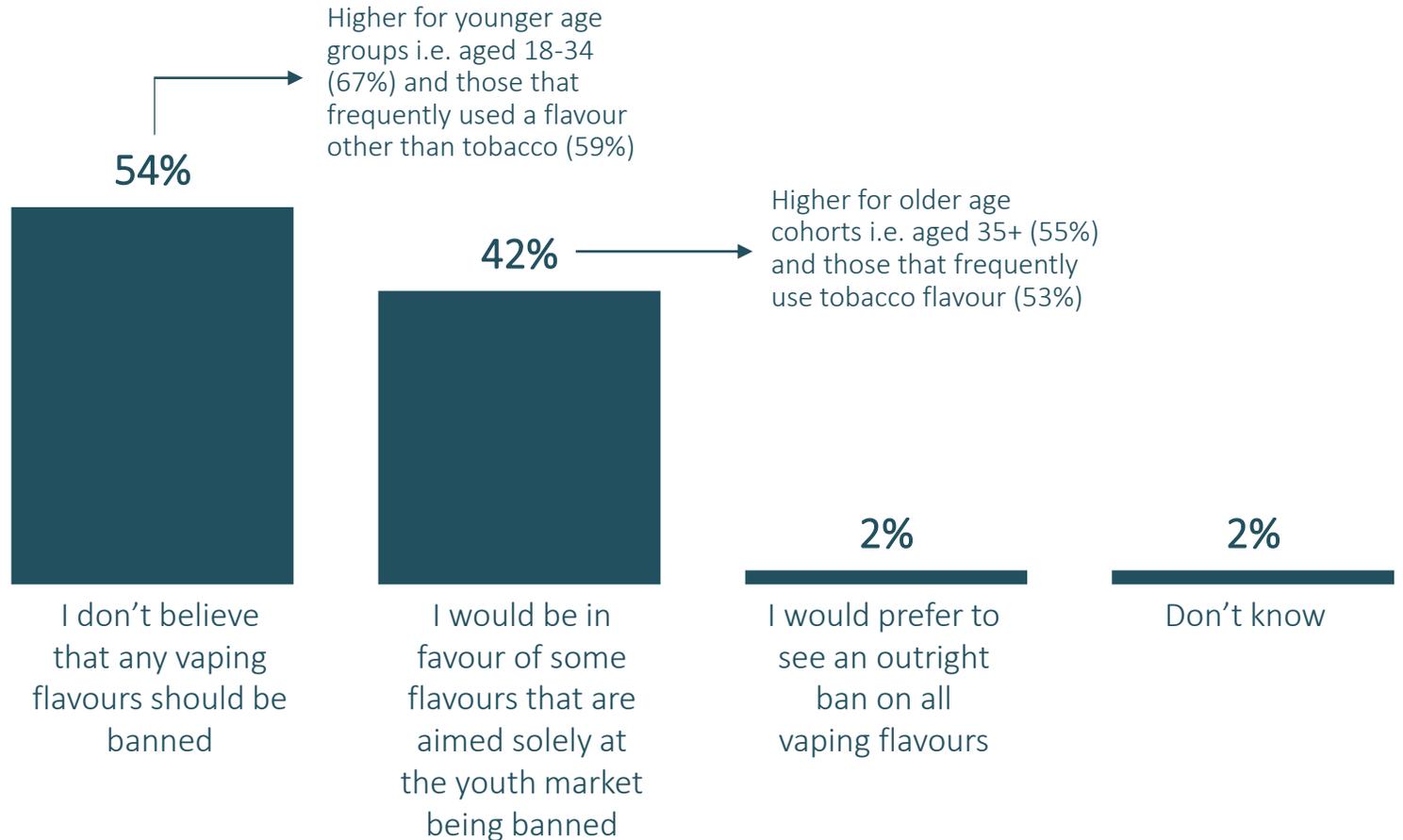
How vapers might react to a ban on flavoured vapes



Vapers don't want to see an outright ban on flavours

There is support amongst some vapers for a ban that would be aimed solely at flavours popular with the youth market – this view is held more strongly amongst older age cohorts and by those that frequently use tobacco flavour vapes.

Statement that best represents the view of vapers

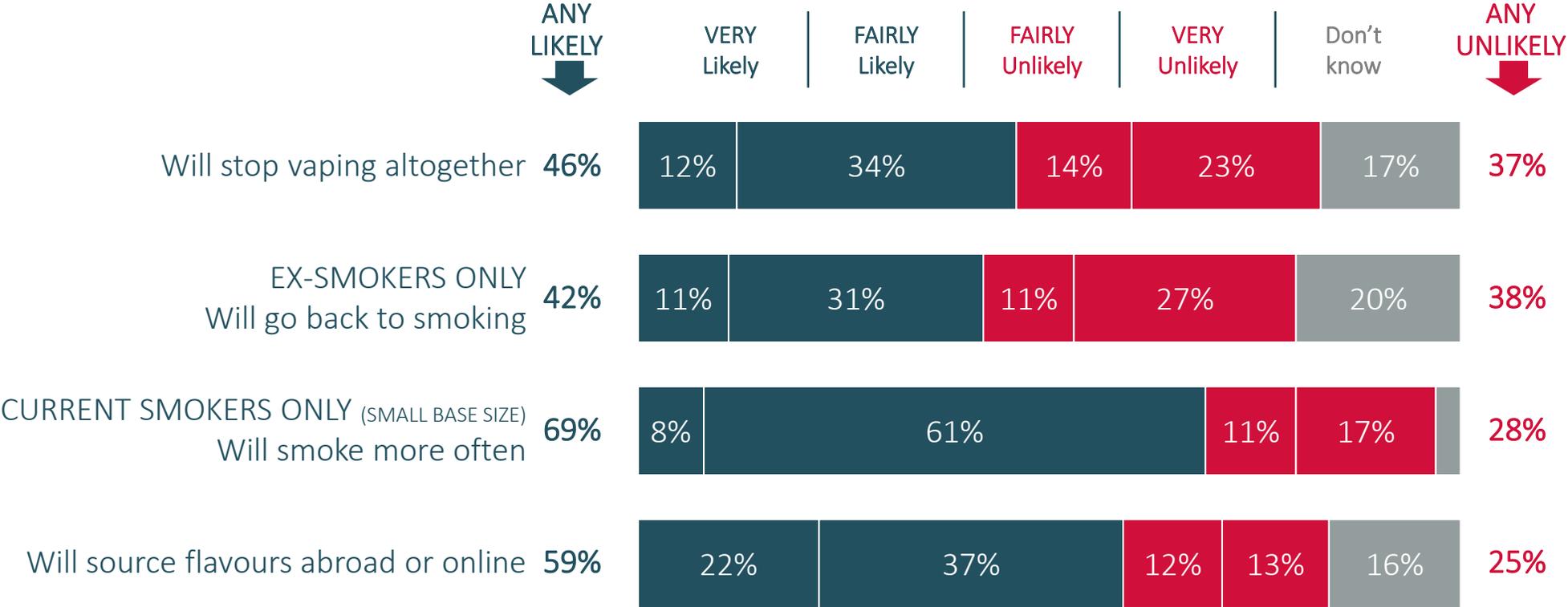


Q.10 Some people are calling for all e-liquid flavours to be banned. Which of the following statements best represents your view?
Base: all respondents (n=211)

Many likely to look elsewhere for flavoured vapes if ban introduced

Nearly half of vapers suggest they will stop vaping altogether if ban is introduced. Also concern that some ex-smokers will take up smoking again if a ban comes in.

Likely actions as a result of a ban on vaping flavours



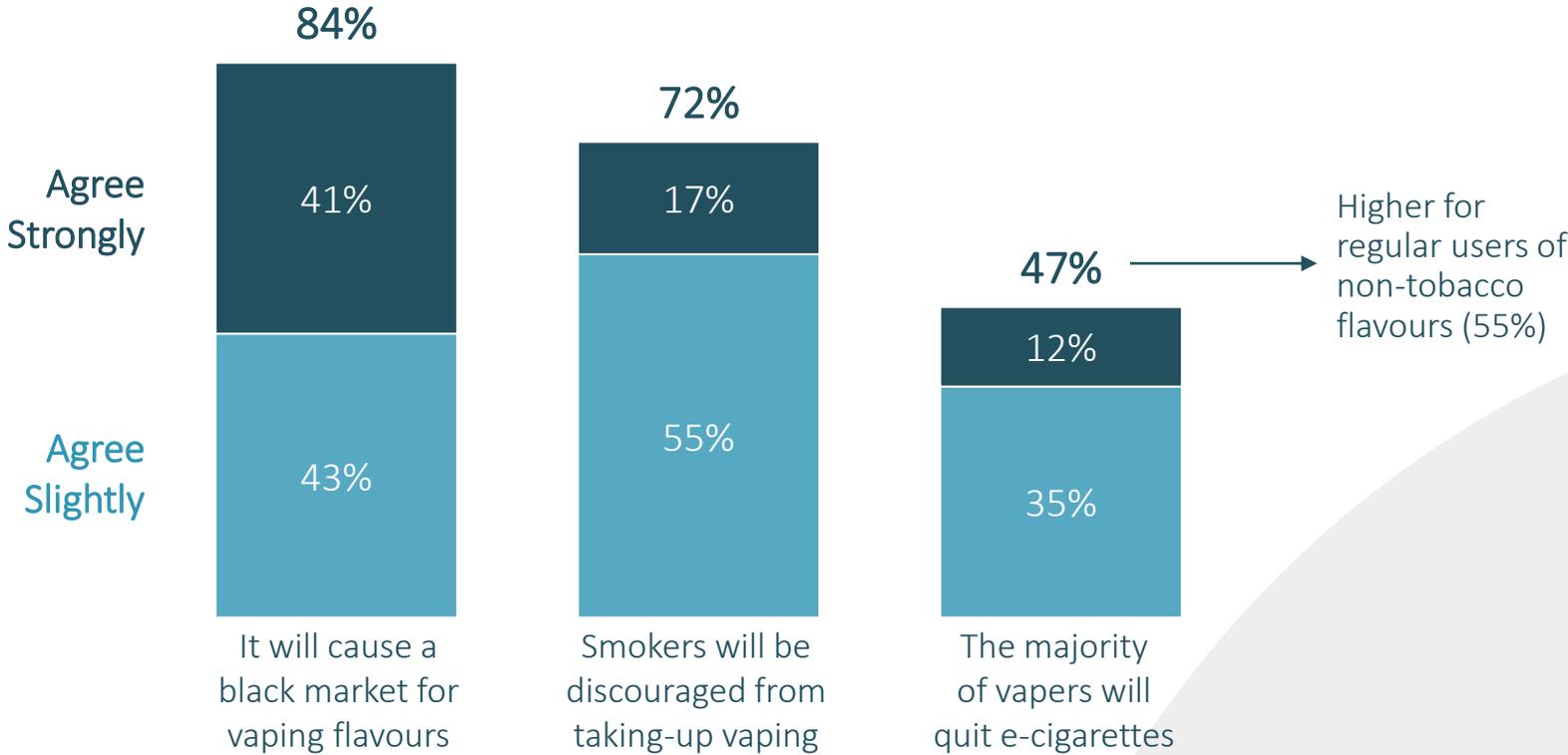
Q.11 If all vaping flavours are banned, how likely will you be to do each of the following?
 Base: all respondents (n=211); ex-smokers (n=182); current smokers (n=28)

Black market for flavours seen as being likely if ban introduced



It is also believed that existing smokers will be less likely to take-up vaping. Those that use flavours other than tobacco regularly are more likely to believe that vapers will quit e-cigarettes altogether.

Views of market impact of a ban on vaping flavours



Q.12 To what extent do you agree or disagree that a ban of vaping flavours will result in the following?
Base: all respondents (n=221)

Concern that ban on flavours will increase incidence of smoking



Belief amongst many that while young people will be discouraged from taking up vaping, that it will encourage them to take-up smoking. Also strong belief that current vapers will go back to smoking.

Views of market impact of a ban on vaping flavours



Q.12 To what extent do you agree or disagree that a ban of vaping flavours will result in the following?
Base: all respondents (n=221)

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