

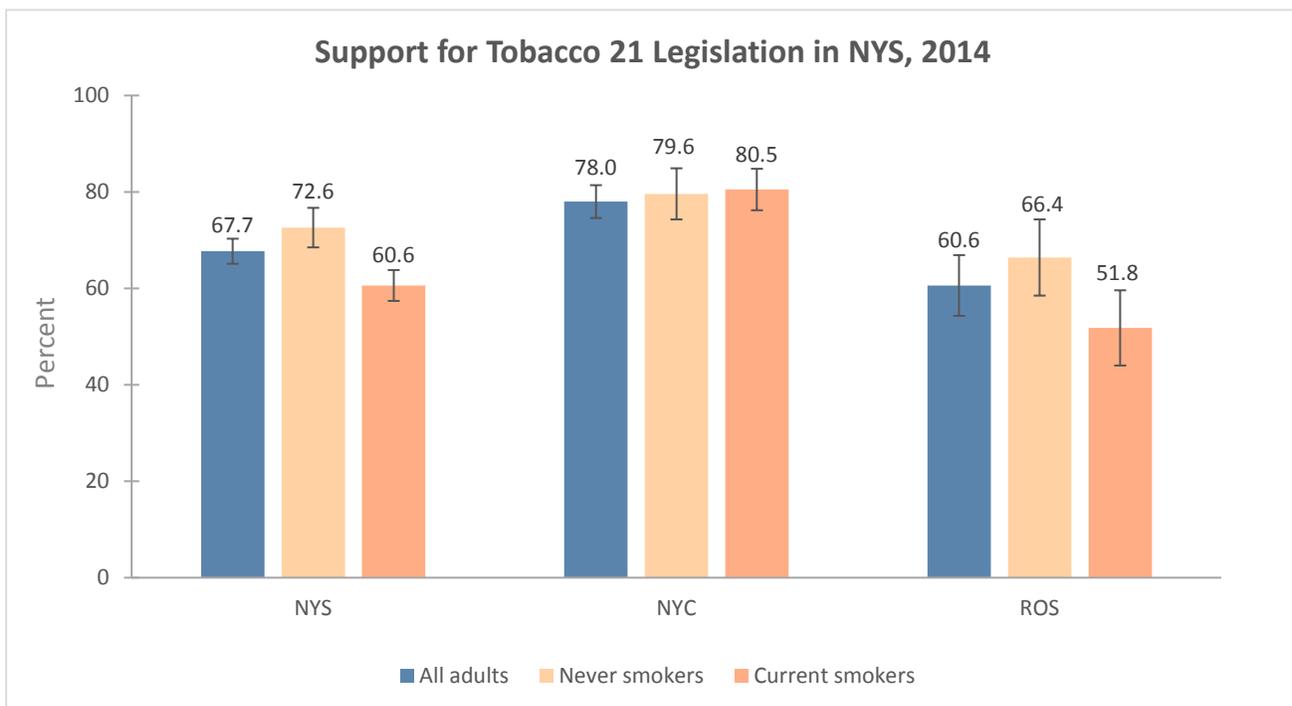


Support for Increasing the Legal Age of Sale of Tobacco Products

The vast majority of smokers report having smoked their first cigarette in their early teens. Brain development is ongoing through adolescence, and teens are especially vulnerable to the addictive effects of nicotine. The Institute of Medicine reports that raising the minimum legal age of sale (MLA) of tobacco products from 18 to 21 years of age (also referred to as Tobacco 21), would result in a decrease in initiation and a subsequent decrease in addiction to tobacco, resulting in lower tobacco-related morbidity and mortality.¹

In 2014, the New York State (NYS) Adult Tobacco Survey (ATS) asked respondents: *What is your opinion about a policy that would require people to be 21 years old before they could purchase cigarettes and other tobacco products?* Sixty-eight percent (68%) of adults in NYS, 78% of adults in New York City (NYC) and 61% of adults in the Rest of State (ROS) favor raising the minimum legal age of sale for tobacco to 21 years. While support for the policy was higher among non-smokers, the majority of smokers in NYS (60.6%) favor raising the minimum legal age of sale to 21 years as well. Regional analyses indicate that support for the policy is higher in NYC vs ROS.

In NYS, NYC and Suffolk, Albany, Schenectady, Chautauqua, Cortland, and Cattaraugus counties currently have Tobacco 21 policies. Hawaii and California passed statewide Tobacco 21 legislation. In addition, localities in Arizona, Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio also have passed bills for Tobacco 21.²



1. Institute of Medicine. 2015. *Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

2. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. *States and Localities that have Raised the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco Products to 21*. Accessed 10/19/2016. Source: New York State Adult Tobacco Survey, 2014. Contact the Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health at (518) 473-0673 or type 'StatShot' in the subject line of an e-mail and send it to tcp@health.ny.gov. Stat Shots can be accessed online at http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/