

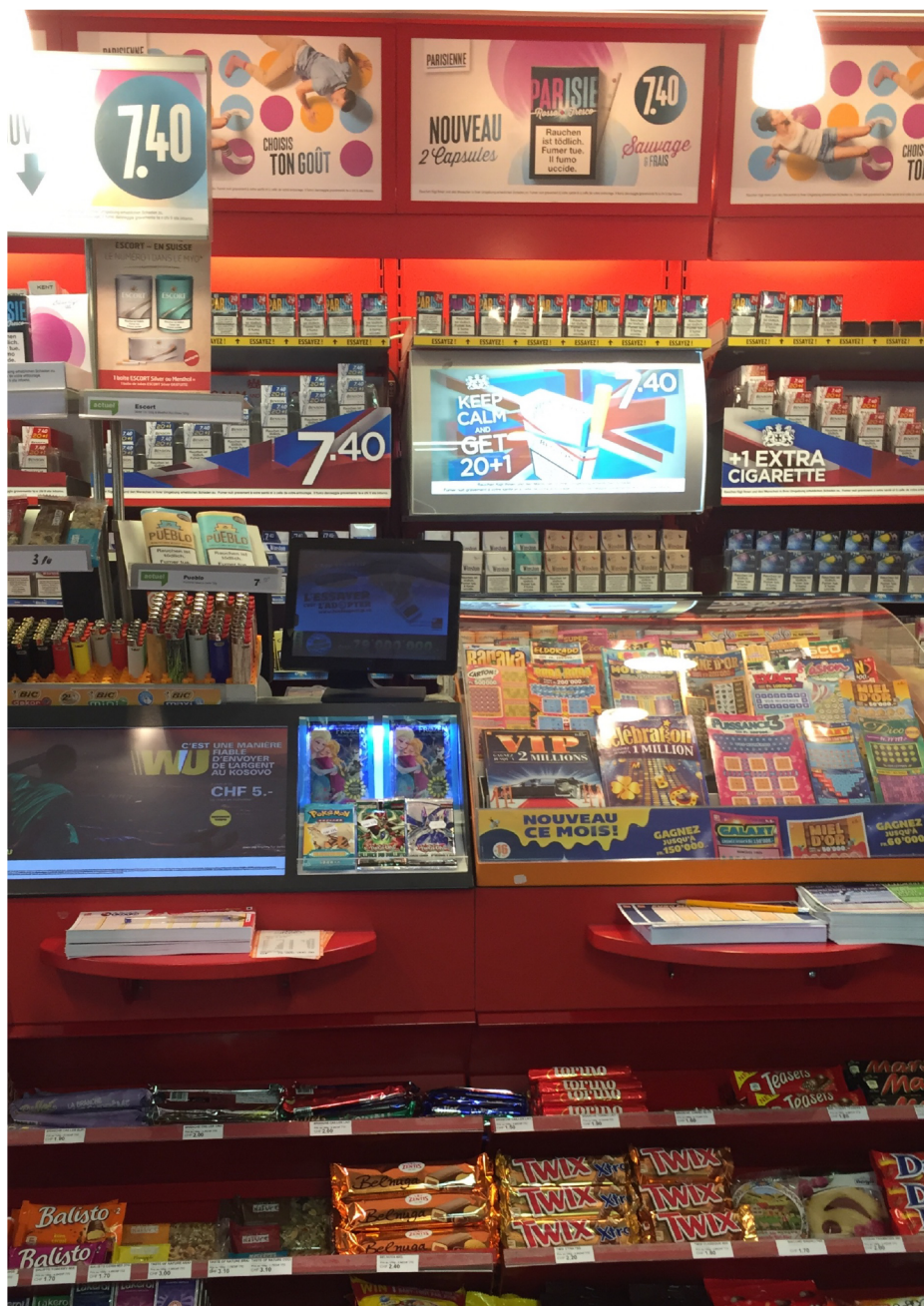


JOHNS HOPKINS  
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL  
of PUBLIC HEALTH

Institute for Global Tobacco Control

# Technical Report on Tobacco Marketing at the Point-of-Sale in the French-Speaking Region of Switzerland

## Product Display, Advertising, and Promotion around Primary and Secondary Schools



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## **Background and Introduction**

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease across the globe.<sup>1</sup> Although global estimates of tobacco marketing expenditures are not available, US cigarette manufacturers alone are estimated to have spent over 26 billion US dollars between 2011 and 2013 on advertising and promotion.<sup>2</sup> Tobacco companies use deceptive and predatory marketing practices to increase consumption of their products, and to make tobacco use appear glamorous or socially acceptable while dismissing the products' adverse health effects.<sup>3</sup> Article 13 of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) calls for a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS), including the retail display of tobacco products.<sup>4</sup> Evidence shows that the tobacco industry responds to partial TAPS bans that regulate only certain types of TAPS strategies (such as television or radio) by re-directing their resources to market their brands on unregulated channels such as the point-of-sale (POS).<sup>5</sup> Numerous longitudinal studies have demonstrated that exposure to tobacco product advertising and promotion increases the likelihood that youth will start to smoke.<sup>6</sup> The display of tobacco products at the POS has the same effect and influence on behavior as traditional media advertising.<sup>7</sup> Marketing in retail environments specifically has been shown to increase the likelihood of smoking initiation among youth.<sup>8</sup> One study found that stores where adolescents frequently shop may contain nearly three times as many marketing materials and shelf space for popular tobacco brands.<sup>9</sup>

The country of Switzerland is not a party to the FCTC- it signed the FCTC on June 25, 2004, but has not ratified the treaty.<sup>10</sup> Among Switzerland's population of eight million people,<sup>11</sup> an estimated 18.7% of male youth and 15% of female youth smoke tobacco products<sup>12</sup> and 25% of adults smoke tobacco products.<sup>12</sup> In October of 2004, Switzerland issued The Ordinance on Tobacco Products and Products Containing Tobacco By-Products Intended for Smoking (817.06), amended in October 2012.<sup>13</sup> This Ordinance does not restrict advertising at point-of-sale.<sup>13</sup> Subnational regulations in the cantons of Genève and Vaud, both located in the French-speaking region of Switzerland, do not permit tobacco advertising in the public domain or in the private domain if it can be seen in the public domain.<sup>12</sup> Subnational laws in the canton of Vaud restrict sale of tobacco to those younger than 18 years of age while no age restrictions on sale of tobacco exist in the canton of Genève.<sup>12</sup> There are no restrictions on tobacco product display. Compared to other European countries, Switzerland has among the weakest legislation governing tobacco advertising as it only prohibits advertising on television and radio at the federal level.<sup>14</sup> Switzerland is also unique in that it is home to the headquarters two of the world's largest transnational tobacco companies- Philip Morris International and Japan Tobacco International.<sup>15</sup>

## **Methods**

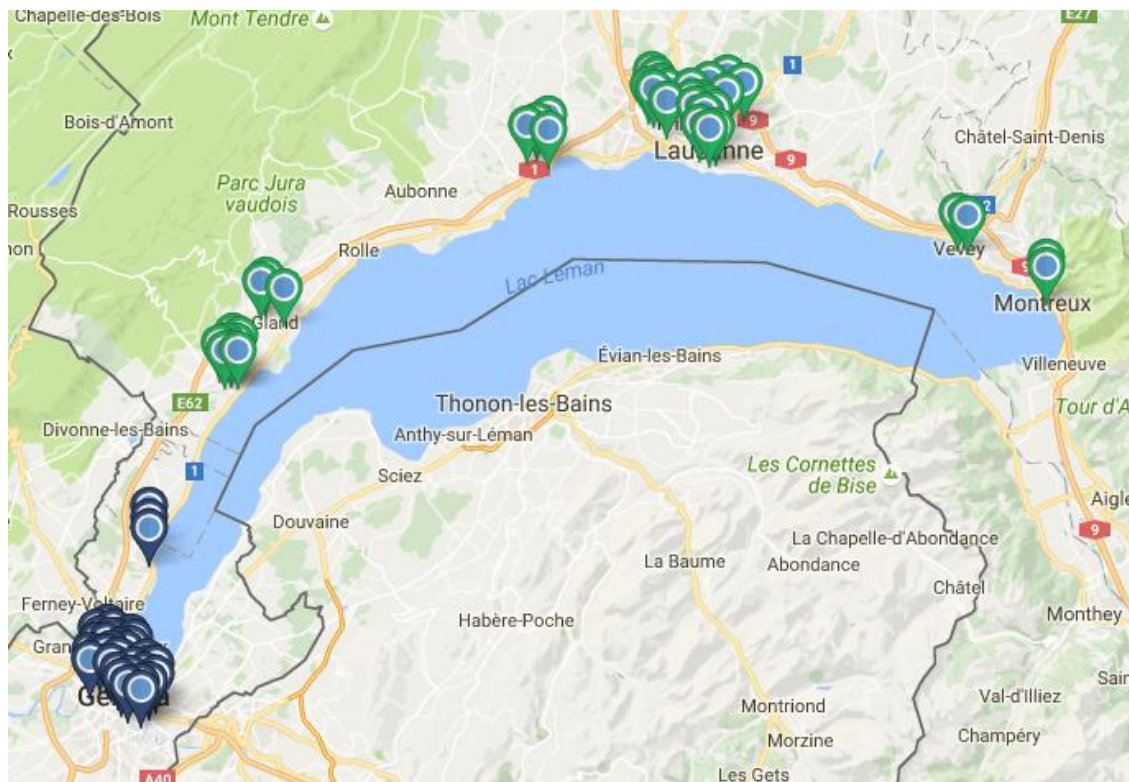
This report describes a study about tobacco marketing at the point-of-sale in the French-speaking region of Switzerland. The work was led by the Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH). IGTC partnered with Lignes de la Santé/CIPRET-Vaud. CIPRET-Vaud provided guidance and context about the sampling framework, and IGTC designed the survey instrument and data collection protocol. Investigators from IGTC trained six paid data collectors to conduct the fieldwork and submit daily reports for review in real-time. The IGTC study team was in Lausanne for training and data collection to troubleshoot any logistical or technical issues. Data cleaning, validation, and analysis were carried out by IGTC.

## **Sampling Approach**

This study surveyed retailers in nine cities in the French-speaking region of Switzerland, with a

combined population of around 450,000 people.<sup>15</sup> Seventy-six primary and secondary schools were selected within Genève, Versoix, Nyon, Gland, Morges, Renens, Lausanne, Vevey and Montreux (Figure 1), representing 36 schools in the canton of Genève and 40 schools in the canton of Vaud. The 76 primary and secondary schools selected were assigned unique identification codes. An online mapping and distance tool was used to define a sampling area radius of 200 meters surrounding each school, ensuring that none of the sampling areas overlapped. The study surveyed a convenience sample of grocery stores, supermarkets, kiosks, cafes, bars, and gas stations within each sampling area.

**Figure 1. Selected Schools in The Canton of Genève (N=36) And The Canton of Vaud (N=40)**



**Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument was designed to assess tobacco product placement, advertising, promotion, presence of health warnings, and brand stretching, including known trends in POS marketing that may target youth (Figure 2). The survey also asked whether the store was within eyesight of the school and provided fields for data collectors to enter the sampling area code, retailer address, name brands of tobacco products displayed or advertised, and other notes or comments about the retailer.

**Figure 2. Survey Instrument Content**

<b><i>Product Placement</i></b>	<b><i>Display or Ad Characteristics</i></b>
Cashier zone	Advertising Signage
Behind the cashier zone	Use of movement
On a branded stand or cabinet	Use of lights
On a power wall	Use of video
Eye level of children	Mention of flavor
Near sweets, snacks, or soda	Mention of menthol
<b><i>Promotion</i></b>	Any English words
Discounts (coupons, sales, vouchers)	Signage with warning labels
Free tobacco product	<b><i>Brand Stretching</i></b>
Free gift (with or without purchase)	Tobacco accessories with tobacco branding
Imitation tobacco products (candy and toys)	Functional products with tobacco branding
Presence of brand representative	Products with tobacco branding (not accessories)
Contest or competition	<b><i>Other</i></b>
Loyalty scheme	Tobacco packs with warning labels
Tobacco brand sponsorship of event or activity	Signage that tobacco is not sold to youth under 18 years of age (in canton of Vaud)
	Sale of single sticks

***Data Collection Protocol***

Observations and photos were collected from retailers during normal business hours from July 27-29, 2016. Each data collector received a packet of sampling area maps including the unique school identification code and space to record the addresses of retailers in that area (Appendix A). Street names and radii boundaries were clearly visible on all sampling area maps. Data collectors identified grocery stores, supermarkets, kiosks, cafes, bars, and gas stations within the sampling area by using the maps to follow a systematic walking pattern, observing all streets within the 200-meter radius. All grocery stores, supermarkets, kiosks, cafes, bars, and gas stations within the sampling area were observed, but an abbreviated survey was used to record data about retailers that did not sell tobacco. Data collectors wrote the address of each retailer they observed on the corresponding sampling area map. Observational data and photos of tobacco product displays or ads were recorded and uploaded to a cloud-based database in real-time within Magpi, a mobile data collection application installed on smartphones. The mobile app automatically captured the date, geographic coordinates, and data collector name for each record uploaded to the dataset. The order of questions and format of response options were designed to facilitate rapid and discrete observation by data collectors. At the end of each day, data collectors reported the address and sampling area code of each retailer they observed by entering information into a spreadsheet hosted on Google Drive. The IGTC study team reviewed these reports daily in order to check the uploaded dataset and ensure that the mobile software application was functioning properly.

***Training***

Six paid data collectors attended one full day of training to use the study protocol on July 26, 2016 – immediately before the data collection period. The IGTC study team explained in detail the

purpose of the study, the current tobacco control law, the survey content, key terms and definitions, the Mapgi software application, and data collection procedures. Data collectors were instructed to behave as customers in order to discretely observe the retail environment and capture photos. In order to estimate the placement of products at the eye level of children, each data collector used a measuring tape to identify a 1-meter reference point on their body. The data collection team was trained to recognize required health warnings and signage announcing age sales restrictions. During the training, data collectors participated in a field test of the study protocol to practice using the survey, mobile app, and data collection procedures in nearby retailers.

## **Results**

There were a total of 76 school sampling areas. Data collectors observed 430 grocery stores, supermarkets, kiosks, cafes, bars, or gas stations within a 200-meter radius of schools. 242 retailers observed sold tobacco products - 33 of which were located within eyesight of a school. Retailers that sold tobacco products were identified within 60 of the 76 school sampling areas; seven areas only contained retailers that did not sell tobacco and nine areas were located on the countryside and did not contain any retailers or contained retailers that were closed during normal working hours.

Health warnings on tobacco advertisements are not required in Switzerland. Health warnings were visible on tobacco advertisements in slightly more than a quarter (26%) of retailers that sold tobacco products.

Health warnings were visible on all tobacco packs displayed in 62% of the retailers that sold tobacco products.

In the canton of Vaud where age restrictions on the sale of tobacco exist and signage is required, less than half of retailers (39%) displayed signs that tobacco is not sold to those under 18 years of age.

Single cigarettes were available for sale at nine retailers. Two of these retailers were within eyesight of a school.

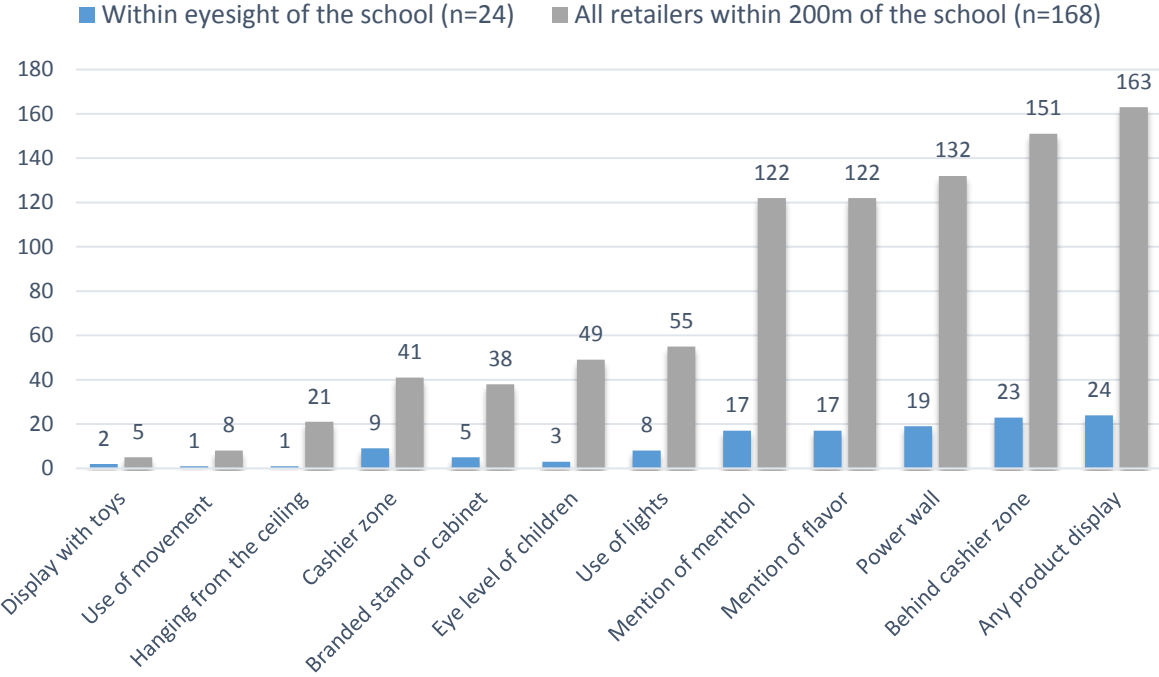
Seventy-four retailers only sold tobacco from vending machines inside their establishment, including 40 cafes, 33 bars, and one supermarket. 168 retailers sold tobacco at the counter.

At retailers where tobacco was sold at the counter, packs were frequently displayed behind the cashier zone and on a power wall of tobacco products. Packs with flavors, including menthol, were frequently displayed. Some tobacco displays used lights (33%) and were located at the eye level of children (29%) (Figures 3 and 4).

**Figure 3. Tobacco Displayed on a Power Wall**



**Figure 4. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Counter Sales and Tobacco Product Displays**

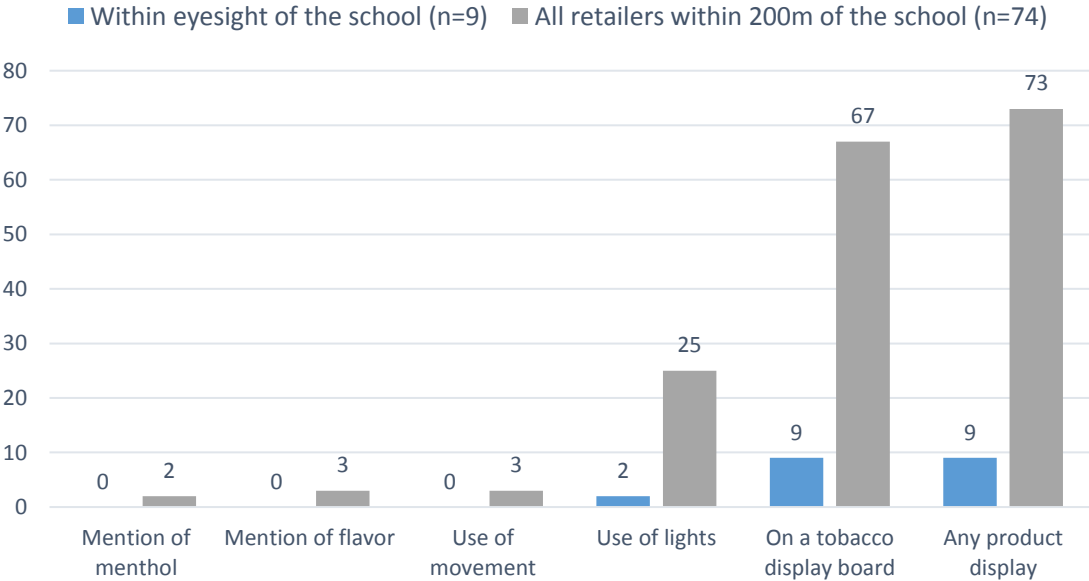


At retailers where tobacco was only sold at a vending machine, tobacco was frequently displayed on a display board attached to the vending machine (Figures 5 and 6). Some displays (34%) used lights to draw attention to tobacco products.

**Figure 5. Tobacco Vending Machine with Tobacco Packs Displayed on Display Board**



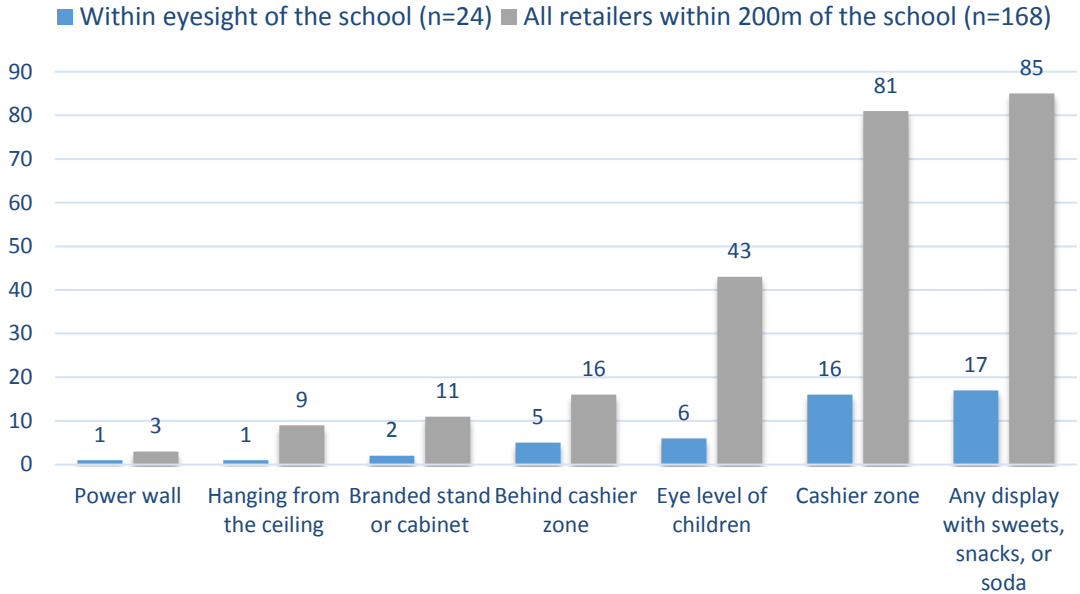
**Figure 6. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Vending Machines that Included Tobacco Product Displays**





At retailers that sold tobacco at the counter, tobacco products were frequently displayed with sweets, snacks, or soda in or near the cashier zone. Some tobacco products were also displayed with sweets, snacks, or soda at the eye level of children (Figures 7 and 8).

**Figure 7. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Counter Sale and Tobacco Product Displayed Near Sweets, Snacks, or Soda**



**Figure 8. Tobacco Pack Display above Soda and Other Drinks**

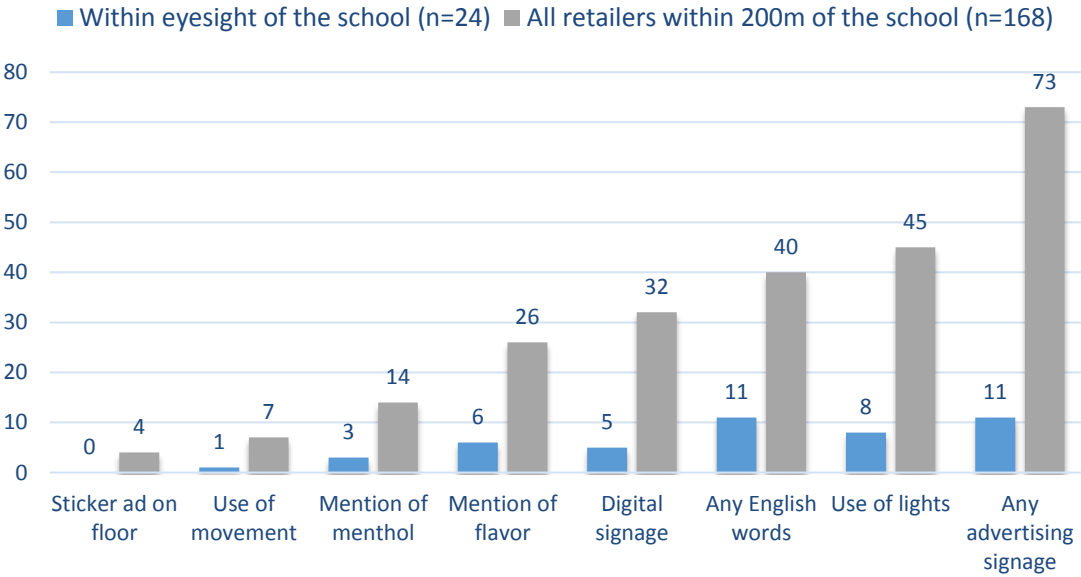


Tobacco was frequently advertised using signage at retailers that sold tobacco at the counter (Figures 9 and 10). Many advertisements were backlit and contained content written in English. Some retailers displayed digital signage, such as video advertisements (Figure 11).

**Figure 9. Backlit Advertising Signage**



**Figure 10. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Counter Sale and Tobacco Advertising**

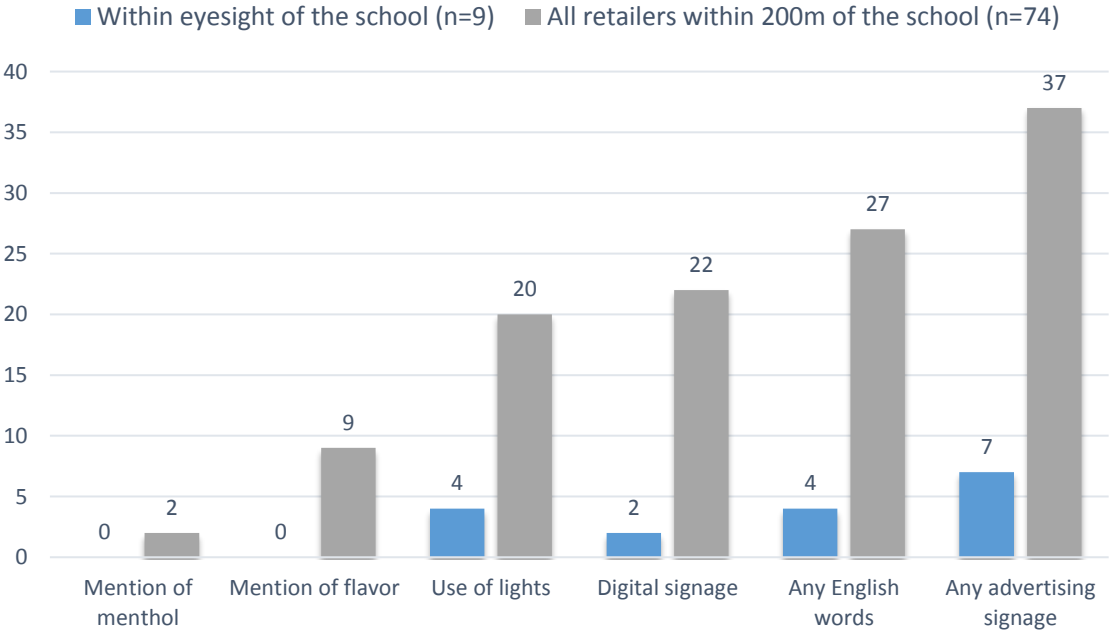


**Figure 11. Digital Advertising Signage**



Tobacco was also frequently advertised using signage at retailers that sold tobacco from a vending machine (Figure 12). Many advertisements contained content written in English, as well as digital signage. Some retailers used signage that was backlit (Figure 13).

**Figure 12. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Vending Machines that Included Tobacco Advertising**

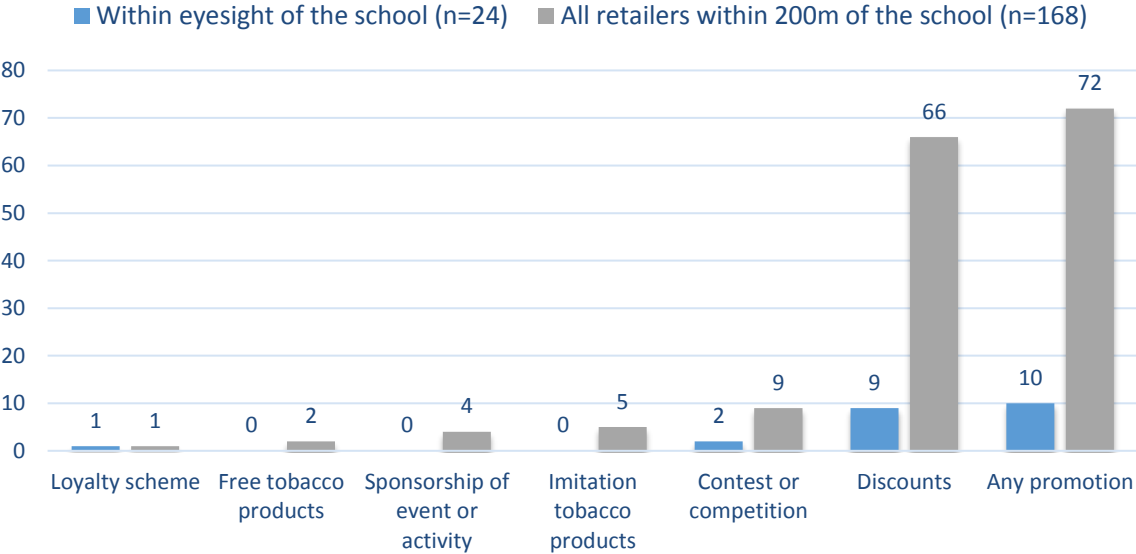


**Figure 13. Tobacco Vending Machine with Signage Advertising Flavored Cigarettes**



Of retailers that sold tobacco products at the counter, 39% advertised discounts (Figure 14). At retailers where tobacco was sold from vending machines, 12 offered discounts and 1 promoted a loyalty scheme.

**Figure 14. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Counter Sales and Tobacco Product Promotion**

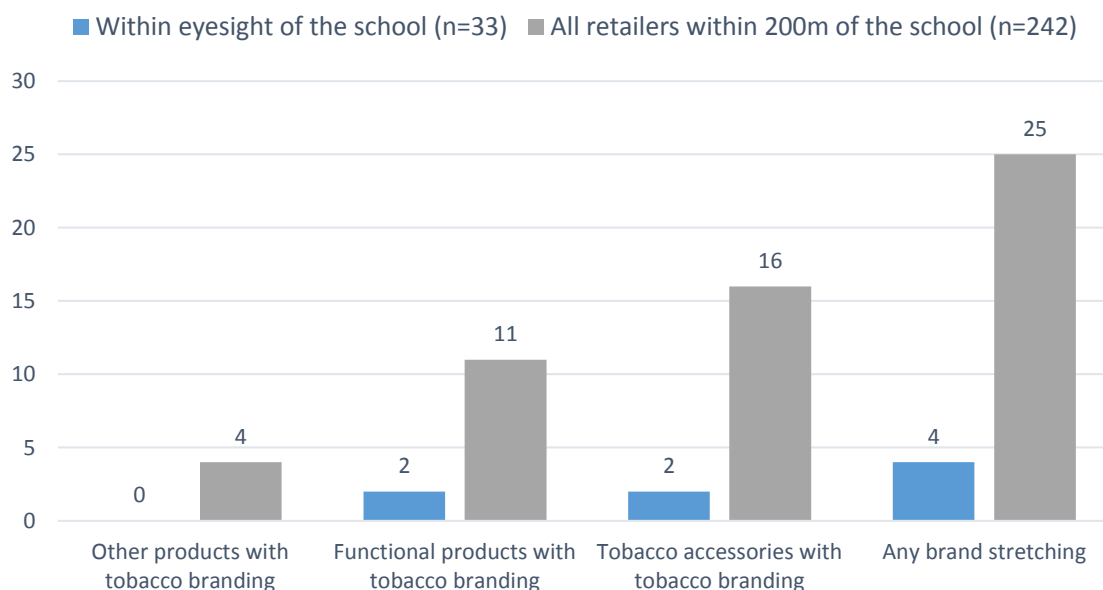


Brand stretching was observed at some retailers. 16 retailers distributed tobacco accessories (e.g. matches) with tobacco branding, 11 retailers displayed functional products with tobacco branding (e.g. ash trays, trash cans) (Figures 15 and 16), and four retailers distributed other products with tobacco branding (e.g. cups, hats).

**Figure 15. Tobacco Branding on Functional Products**

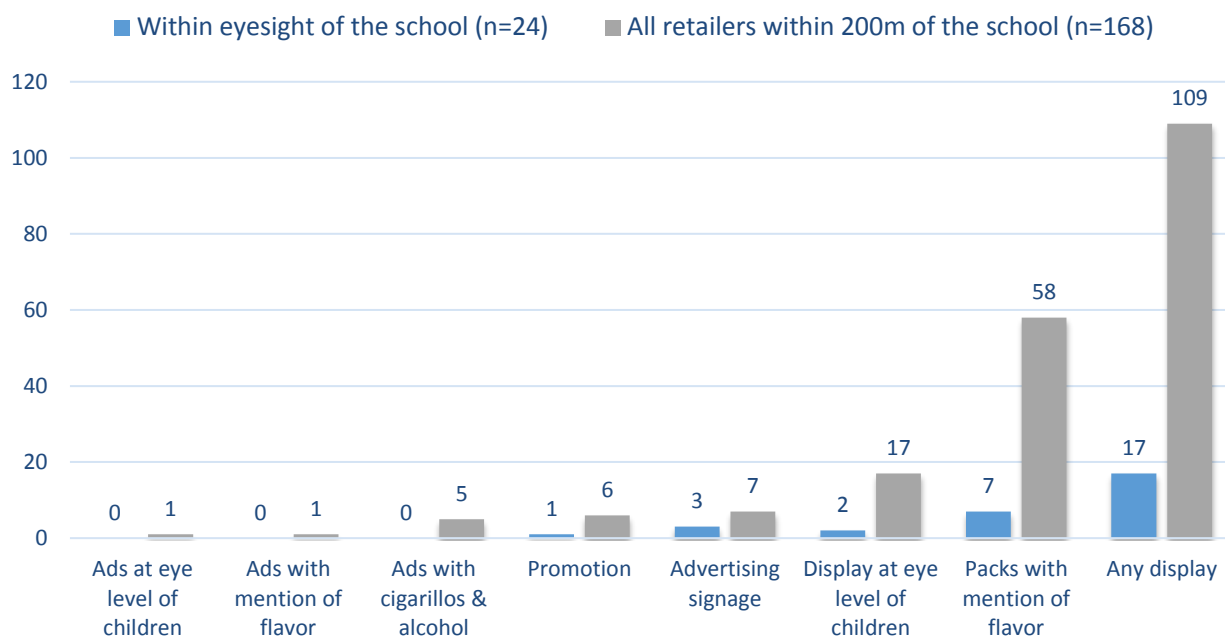


**Figure 16. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Brand Stretching (All Retailers)**



Cigarillos were frequently displayed and advertised at retailers that sold tobacco at the counter. Flavored cigarillos were frequently displayed. Some cigarillos were displayed at the eye level of children and some advertisements promoted cigarillos and alcohol together. No cigarillos were sold at retailers that sold tobacco at vending machines.

**Figure 17. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Counter Sales and Cigarillo Marketing**



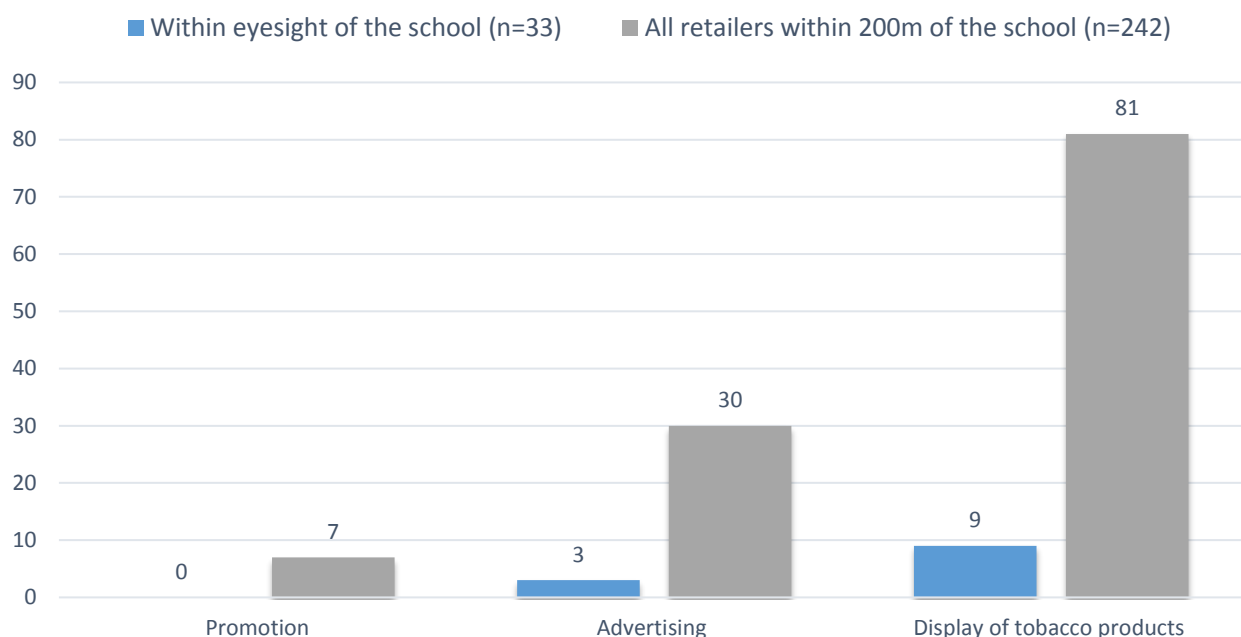
Parisiennes and Marlboro were the most frequently marketed tobacco brands observed in retailers, followed by Winston, Camel, and Kent (Figure 18).

**Figure 18. Brands Displayed at the Point-of-Sale**

Brands Displayed at the POS	# of Retailers
Parisiennes	186
Marlboro	183
Winston	169
Camel	162
Kent	153
Philip Morris	129
Muratti	91

Display of tobacco products and tobacco product advertising was frequently visible from outside the retailer (Figures 19 and 20).

**Figure 19. Number of Tobacco Retailers with Tobacco Promotion, Advertising and Display Visible from Outside the POS (All Retailers)**



**Figure 20. Tobacco Advertising Posted on a Window Visible From Outside the Point-of-Sale**



### Discussion

This study identified numerous examples of retailers that sell tobacco and advertise and market tobacco products in close proximity to schools and thus are easily accessible by students. Many retailers sold cigarettes from vending machines, a common practice throughout Switzerland. Digital signage and lights were frequently used, tactics used to draw attention to advertisements. Flavored cigarettes were frequently displayed and advertised, which youth may find particularly appealing.

**Limitations**

This study used a convenience sample of schools in the French-speaking region of Switzerland. Therefore, the results may not be representative of all types of tobacco retailers or generalizable to all areas of Switzerland. In addition, data collection was conducted during the summer when most schools are not in session and many people are on holiday- therefore, we may have observed more open retailers during other months and potentially more expenditures on advertising at retailers observed during months when school is in session and the stores are more commonly frequented.

**Conclusions**

Partial bans of tobacco marketing allow the tobacco industry to exploit deficiencies or loopholes in regulations by redirecting their resources to mediums that are not regulated. This study clearly demonstrates that the tobacco industry places their products and ads in areas that are visible and accessible to youth. A complete ban of tobacco product display, advertising, and promotion at the point-of-sale would comply with FCTC provisions and more effectively achieve the goal of protecting the public from the harms of tobacco use.



## **Key Terms and Definitions**

**Advertising signage:** branded print or digital/electronic media such as posters, banners, flyers, or shelf liners that are intended to promote awareness and favorable opinions of a tobacco brand or product

**Brand stretching:** the presence of non-tobacco items that carry a tobacco brand name

**Cashier zone:** directly on top of, in front of, or to the side of the counter or cash register where consumers make a purchase

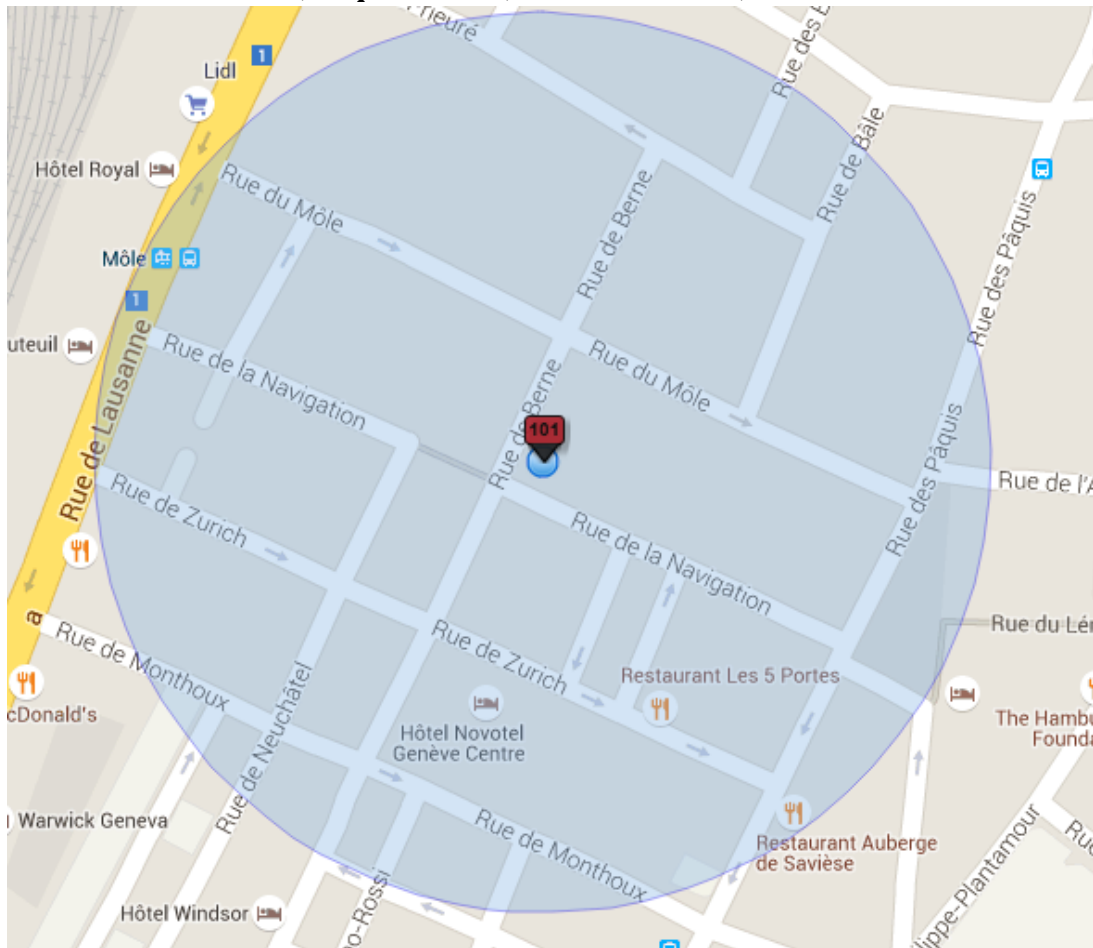
**Eye level of children:** placement of products 1 meter or less from the ground

**Power wall:** an excessive display of tobacco products showing multiple packs on multiple shelves

**Product display:** physical packs of tobacco products that are visible to potential consumers

## Appendix A. School Sampling Area Map

### 101, Pâquis-Centre, Rue de Berne 50, Genève



Please record the address of each store you observe. If needed, continue lettering and addresses on next page.

A.	F.
B.	G.
C.	H.
D.	I.
E.	J.

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