

Country profile

Costa Rica

Summary of MPOWER measures in Costa Rica

Compliance is scored 0–10 where 10 is the highest level of compliance. Compliance is measured only for P and E.
The methods used to compile this profile are described in the technical notes of the *WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023*.

M	P	O	W		E	R	
MONITORING	SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS	CESSATION PROGRAMMES	HEALTH WARNINGS	MASS MEDIA	ADVERTISING BANS	TAXATION	CIGARETTES LESS AFFORDABLE SINCE 2012
	8				8	55.1%	↔

MPOWER score colour key

Complete measure	Moderate measure	Minimal measure	No policy or weak measure	Not categorized/ No data
------------------	------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	--------------------------

Affordability category

YES cigarettes became less affordable	NO cigarettes did not become less affordable	↔ no trend change in affordability of cigarettes
--	---	---

The colours are explained in more detail in the MPOWER legend on the last page of this document.
In all tables “...” means data are not available and “–” means data are not required.

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

Date of signature	Date of ratification (or legal equivalent)
3 Jul 2003	21 August 2008

Population	Income group
5 180 829	Middle-income

National tobacco control programme as at 31 December 2022

Specific national government objectives in tobacco control	No
National agency or technical unit for tobacco control	No
Number of full-time equivalent staff	3
Government's expenditures on tobacco control, latest available year (2018), in currency reported by country	USD 49 700 000

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica

Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies

Nationally representative surveys of adults

Recent	Yes
Representative	Yes
Periodic	Yes

Nationally representative surveys of adolescents

Recent	Yes
Representative	Yes
Periodic	Yes

Tobacco use prevalence from the latest survey completed by 31 December 2022

	Tobacco use		Tobacco smoking		Cigarette smoking		Smokeless tobacco use		E-cigarette use	
	Current	Daily	Current	Daily	Current	Daily	Current	Daily	Current	Daily
Adults survey: Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), 2015; National, ages 15+										
Male	13.6	...	13.4	8.7	13.1	8.4	0.1	...	1.6	...
Female	4.5	...	4.4	2.9	4.4	2.9	0.0	...	0.9	...
Both sexes	9.1	...	8.9	5.8	8.8	5.7	0.1	...	1.3	...
Adolescents survey: Encuesta Nacional sobre Consumo de Drogas en población de Educación Secundaria, 2018; National, ages Grade 7-11										
Male	...	...	3.4	...	...	...	1.7 ¹	...	...	...
Female	...	...	1.8	...	...	...	1.6 ¹	...	...	...
Both sexes	...	...	2.6	...	...	...	1.6 ¹	...	...	...

¹ Global Youth Tobacco Survey, 2013; National, ages 13-15

WHO age-standardized estimated prevalence of smoking among those aged 15 years or more: Year 2021

These rates are modelled using all national survey data published since 1990 to estimate the underlying prevalence trends by sex, then applying age-standardization to allow comparison with other countries. They do not necessarily resemble country data from 2021. See the report for further details.

Prevalence (%)	Any tobacco use (smoked and smokeless)		Any tobacco smoking		Cigarette smoking	
	Current	Daily	Current	Daily	Current	Daily
Male	13.6	8.0	13.6	8.0	12.1	6.7
Female	4.7	2.6	4.7	2.6	4.1	2.2
Both sexes	9.1	5.3	9.1	5.3	8.1	4.4

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica



	2022	Compliance
Complete* smoke-free laws exist in the following places:		
Health-care facilities	Yes	8
Educational facilities except universities	Yes	7
Universities	Yes	5
Government facilities	Yes	7
Indoor offices and workplaces	Yes	8
Restaurants	Yes	10
Cafés, pubs and bars	Yes	8
Public transport	Yes	10
All other public places	Yes	
Compliance score		8
Law requires fines for smoking	Yes	
Fines levied on the establishment	Yes	
Fines levied on the smoker	Yes	
Funds dedicated for enforcement	Yes	
Complaint system that requires an investigation after a complaint	Yes	

* "Complete" means that smoking is not permitted, with no exemptions allowed. Ventilation and any form of designated smoking rooms and/or areas do not protect from the harms of second-hand tobacco smoke, and the only laws that provide protection are those that result in the complete absence of smoking in all public places.

Subnational laws on smoke-free environments

No subnational jurisdictions exist.

Treatment of tobacco dependence as at 31 December 2022

Is there a toll-free telephone quit line/help line with a live person available to discuss cessation with callers in Costa Rica?		Yes
Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT, e.g., patch, gum, lozenge, spray or inhaler)	Is this product legally sold in the country?	Yes
	Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?	Pharmacy without Rx
	Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?	Fully
	Is any NRT on the country's essential drugs list?	No
Bupropion (e.g., Zyban, Wellbutrin)	Is this product legally sold in your country?	Yes
	Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?	Pharmacy with Rx
	Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?	Fully
	Is this product legally sold in your country?	Yes
Varenicline	Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?	Pharmacy with Rx
	Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?	Partially
	Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Yes in some
	Hospitals	Yes in most
Is smoking cessation support available in the following places in your country?	Office of a health professional	Yes in some
	In the community	Yes in some
	Other	Yes in some
	Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Fully
Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this support?	Hospitals	Fully
	Office of a health professional	Fully
	In the community	Fully
	Other	Partially

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica



Health warnings on tobacco packages

	2022		
	Cigarettes	Other smoked tobacco	Smokeless tobacco
Does the law mandate that health warnings appear on tobacco packages?	Yes	Yes	Yes
What percentage of the principal display areas of the package is legally mandated to be covered by health warnings? FRONT AND REAR COMBINED	50	50	50
What percentage of the principal display areas of the FRONT of the package is legally mandated to be covered by health warnings?	50	50	50
What percentage of the principal display areas of the REAR of the package is legally mandated to be covered by health warnings?	50	50	50
Does the law mandate that the warning be placed at the top of the principle display areas of the package?	No	No	No
Does the law mandate font style, font size and colour for package warnings?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are the health warnings rotating on packages?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are the health warnings on packages written in the principal language(s) of the country?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law require that health warnings on packages are not obscured in any way, including by required markings such as tax stamps?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do the health warnings on packages include a photograph or graphic?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do health warnings appear on each package and any outside packaging and labelling used in the retail sale?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law on health warnings apply to products whether manufactured domestically, imported, AND for duty-free sale?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law state that warnings on packages do not remove or diminish the liability of the tobacco industry?	No	No	No
Do health warnings on packages describe the harmful effects of tobacco use on health?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law mandate specific health warnings on packages?	Yes	Yes	Yes
How many specific health warnings are approved by the law?	12	12	12

	2022		
	Cigarettes	Other smoked tobacco	Smokeless tobacco
Does the law require or establish fines for violations regarding health warnings on packages?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are there any laws requiring that tobacco packaging and labelling do not use misleading terms which imply the product is less harmful than other similar products, such as "low tar", "light", "ultra-light", or "mild"?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are there any laws requiring that tobacco packaging and labelling do not use figurative or other signs, including colours or numbers, as substitutes for prohibited misleading terms and descriptors?	No	No	No
Are there any laws requiring that tobacco packaging and labelling do not use descriptors depicting flavours?	No	No	No
Does the law ban the display of quantitative information on emission yields (such as tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide) on tobacco packaging, including when used as part of a brand name or trademark?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law mandate the display of qualitative information on relevant constituents and emissions of tobacco products on tobacco packaging?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the law mandate that this information is displayed on one or more of the principal display areas (front, rear) of the package?	No	No	No
Does the law prevent the display of expiry dates on tobacco packaging?	No	No	No
Is it mandatory for the quit line number to appear on packaging or labelling?	No	No	No
Does the law mandate plain packaging?	No	No	No

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica



Anti-tobacco mass media campaigns between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2022

Was there a national campaign aired during the period?	No
Was the campaign aired on television and/or radio?	—
Before the campaign, was any research about the target audience conducted or used to develop the campaign messages/materials?	—
Were the campaign materials tested with the target audience before the campaign was run?	—
Did you obtain air time (radio, television) and/or placement (billboards, print advertising, etc) by purchasing or securing them using either your organisation/institution's internal resources or an external media planner or agency?	—
Did you, or your media planner/agency, use a monitor to confirm that the campaign materials were used as planned/scheduled on television, radio, print, billboards, internet, etc?	—
Did you work with journalists to gain publicity or coverage in the news for the campaign?	—
Was an evaluation done to assess the impact of the campaign?	—
Was this campaign part of a comprehensive government tobacco control program?	—

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica



	2022	Compliance
Bans on direct tobacco advertising		
National TV and radio	Yes	10
International TV and radio	Yes ¹	
Local magazines and newspapers	Yes	8
International magazines and newspapers	Yes ²	
Billboards and outdoor advertising	Yes	7
Advertising at point of sale	Yes	10
Advertising on internet	Yes	
Other direct bans	Yes	
Compliance score of direct bans		8
Law requires fines for violations of direct advertising bans	Yes	
Bans on tobacco promotion and sponsorship		
Free distribution	No	...
Promotional discounts	No	...
Non-tobacco products identified with tobacco brand names	Yes	10
Brand name of non-tobacco products used for tobacco product	Yes	8
Appearance of tobacco brands in TV and/or films (product placement)	Yes	3
Appearance of tobacco products in TV and/or films	Yes	2
Prescribed anti-tobacco advertisements required to be presented before, during or after the broadcasting or showing of any visual entertainment media product that depicts tobacco products, use or images	—	
Complete ban on sponsorship	Yes	8
Ban on Corporate Social Responsibility activities (CSR)	Yes	
Tobacco companies/the tobacco industry publicizing their CSR activities	Yes	
Entities other than tobacco companies/the tobacco industry publicizing the CSR activities of the tobacco companies	Yes	
Tobacco companies funding or making contributions (including in-kind contributions) to smoking prevention media campaigns, including those directed at youth	Yes	
Law explicitly bans tobacco products display at point of sale	Yes	
Other indirect bans	Yes	
Compliance score of indirect bans		7
Law requires fines for violations of indirect advertising bans	Yes	

¹ The law does not explicitly address cross-border advertising. However, given that advertising is banned on all TV and radio, it is interpreted that both domestic and international levels are covered by the ban.

² The law does not explicitly address cross-border advertising. However, given that advertising is banned in all magazines and newspapers, it is interpreted that both domestic and international levels are covered by the ban.

Subnational laws on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

No subnational jurisdictions exist.

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica

2022

Sales restrictions

Law bans tobacco vending machines	Yes
Law bans internet sales of tobacco products	Yes
Law bans imitation of tobacco products (candies, toys, sweets, etc.)	Yes
Minimum age at which a person may purchase tobacco products	18
Law bans the sale of single sticks of cigarettes	Yes
Minimum number of cigarettes allowed in a pack	20

ENDS 2022

ENNDS 2022

Regulation of ENDS and ENNDS

General bans	None	None
National laws or regulations regulate e-cigarettes	Yes	Yes
Ban on use of ENDS/ENNDS in indoor public places, workplaces and public transport	Complete ban	Same as ENDS
Health warning on device packaging	Warning required	None
Health warning on e-liquid packaging	Warning required	None
Ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship of devices	Partial ban	No explicit ban
Ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship of e-liquids	Partial ban	No explicit ban
Minimum age of sale	18	18
How flavours are regulated	Not regulated	Not regulated

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica



Tobacco taxation policy and prices as at 31 July 2022

Price of lowest cost brand and premium brand of cigarettes

	Price of lowest cost brand of cigarettes	Price of premium brand cigarettes
Tax inclusive retail sales price (TIRSP) for a pack of 20 cigarettes, country-reported value, 2022	CRC 1 648.00	CRC 2 300.00

Taxes on the most sold brand of cigarettes

	WHO's estimate for 2022
Price of most sold brand of cigarettes (standardized to a pack of 20)	
In currency reported by country	CRC 2 000.00
In international dollars (purchasing power parity adjusted)	5.94
In US dollars at official exchange rates	2.98
Taxes on this brand (% of retail price) *	
Total taxes	55.14%
Specific excise	25.47%
Ad valorem excise	20.33%
Value added tax (VAT) or sales tax	8.57%
Import duty	0.00%
Other taxes (Instituto de Desarrollo Rural (Inder) tax)	0.77%

* Individual categories of tax may not add to total due to rounding.

Affordability

% of GDP per capita required to purchase 100 packs (or 2000 cigarettes) of the most sold brand of cigarettes (the higher the %, the less affordable)	2.39%
Cigarettes are less affordable in 2022 compared to 2020	No
Cigarettes have become less affordable between 2012 and 2022 (trend average)	No change

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica

Taxes on the most sold brand of specific tobacco products other than cigarettes

Price of most sold brand of...	Other smoked tobacco product (standardized to one piece for cigars and cigarillos and 20 grams for the other products)	Smokeless tobacco product (standardized to 20 grams)	Heated tobacco product (per 20 sticks)
In currency reported by country
In international dollars (purchasing power parity adjusted)
In US dollars at official exchange rates
Taxes on the most sold brand (% of retail price) *			
Total taxes
Specific excise
Ad valorem excise
Value added tax (VAT) or sales tax
Import duty
Other taxes

* Individual categories of tax may not add to total due to rounding.

Taxes on the cheapest brand of e-liquids of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and Electronic Non-Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENNDS)

Price of cheapest brand of...	Closed systems e-liquids (1 ml)	Closed systems disposables (1 ml)	Open systems e-liquids (10 ml)
In currency reported by country
In international dollars (purchasing power parity adjusted)
In US dollars at official exchange rates
E-liquid contains nicotine (Yes=ENDS, No=ENNDS)			
Taxes on the cheapest brand (% of retail price) *			
Total taxes
Specific excise
Ad valorem excise
Value added tax (VAT) or sales tax
Import duty
Other taxes

* Individual categories of tax may not add to total due to rounding.

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica

Use of earmarked tobacco taxes for health

All revenues from the specific excise tax (509.40 CRC per pack) are used to fund programs for the prevention and treatment of diseases related to tobacco use, cancer treatment, harmful use of alcohol, and sports.

Supplementary tax information

	Most recent data reported
Type of excise applied	Mixed
Uniform excise tax applied Yes (uniform), No (tiered/varying rates)	Yes
Greater reliance on specific tax in mixed excise regime	Yes
Minimum specific tax applied in ad valorem or mixed excise regime	Yes
Retail price used as base of ad valorem component in ad valorem or mixed excise regime (or retail price exclusive of VAT)	No
Specific tax component automatically adjusted for inflation (or other)	Yes
Price dispersion: share of cheapest brand price in premium brand price (the higher the % the smaller the gap)	71.65%
Sales of duty (or excise) free cigarettes banned	No

Annual tax revenues from tobacco products at the national/federal level

	Most recent data reported
Year	2021
Is tax revenue data for all tobacco products or cigarettes only?	All tobacco products
Currency	CRC
Total Excise (specific and ad valorem)	27 019 180 142.40
Value added tax (VAT) and other sales taxes	32 589 943 195.00
Import duties	137 084 344.61
All other taxes (excluding corporate taxes on tobacco companies)	994 149 351.04
Total	60 740 357 682.01

WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023

Country Profile: Costa Rica

Legend: Summary of MPOWER measures (see page 1)

MONITORING: PREVALENCE DATA

	No known data or no recent data or data that are not both recent and representative
	Recent and representative data for either adults or youth
	Recent and representative data for both adults and youth
	Recent, representative and periodic data for both adults and youth

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS: SMOKING BANS

	Data not reported
	Complete absence of ban, or up to two public places completely smoke-free
	Three to five public places completely smoke-free
	Six to seven public places completely smoke-free
	All public places completely smoke-free (or at least 90% of the population covered by complete subnational legislation)

CESSATION PROGRAMMES: TREATMENT OF TOBACCO DEPENDENCE

	Data not reported
	None
	NRT and/or some cessation services (neither cost-covered)
	NRT and/or some cessation services (at least one of which is cost-covered)
	National quit line, and both NRT and some cessation services cost-covered

HEALTH WARNINGS: HEALTH WARNINGS ON CIGARETTE PACKAGES

	Data not reported
	No warnings or small warnings
	Medium size warnings missing some or many appropriate characteristics OR large warnings missing many characteristics
	Medium size warnings with all appropriate characteristics OR large warnings missing some appropriate characteristics
	Large warnings with all appropriate characteristics

MASS MEDIA: ANTI-TOBACCO CAMPAIGNS

	Data not reported
	No national campaign conducted between July 2020 and June 2022 with duration of at least three weeks
	National campaign conducted with one to four appropriate characteristics
	National campaign conducted with five to six appropriate characteristics, or with seven characteristics excluding airing on television and/or radio
	National campaign conducted with at least seven appropriate characteristics including airing on television and/or radio

ADVERTISING BANS: BANS ON ADVERTISING, PROMOTION AND SPONSORSHIP

	Data not reported
	Complete absence of ban, or ban that does not cover national television, radio and print media
	Ban on national television, radio and print media only
	Ban on national TV, radio and print media as well as on some but not all other forms of direct and/or indirect advertising
	Ban on all forms of direct and indirect advertising (or at least 90% of the population covered by complete subnational legislation)

TAXATION: SHARE OF TOTAL TAXES IN THE RETAIL PRICE OF THE MOST SOLD BRAND OF CIGARETTES

	Data not reported
	<25% of retail price is tax
	≥25% and <50% of retail price is tax
	≥50% and <75% of retail price is tax
	≥75% of retail price is tax

AFFORDABILITY

YES	Cigarettes less affordable – per capita GDP needed to buy 100 packs (or 2000 cigarettes) of the most sold brand increased on average between 2012 and 2022.
NO	Cigarettes more affordable – per capita GDP needed to buy 100 packs (or 2000 cigarettes) of the most sold brand declined on average between 2012 and 2022.
↔	No trend change in affordability of cigarettes since 2012.