

Country profile Saudi Arabia

Summary of MPOWER measures in Saudi Arabia

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, 2021*.

M	P	O	W		E	R	
MONITORING	SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS	CESSATION PROGRAMMES	HEALTH WARNINGS	MASS MEDIA	ADVERTISING BANS	TAXATION	CIGARETTES LESS AFFORDABLE SINCE 2010
	5				10	73.8%	YES

MPOWER score colour key

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

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

24 June 2004

9 May 2005

Population

Income group

34 813 867

High-income

National tobacco control programme as at 31 December 2020

Specific national government objectives in tobacco control	Yes
National agency or technical unit for tobacco control	Yes
Number of full-time equivalent staff	100
Government's expenditures on tobacco control, latest available year (2008), in currency reported by country	SAR 18 000 000

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Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies

Nationally representative surveys of adults		Nationally representative surveys of adolescents	
Recent	Yes	Recent	No survey in the past 5 years
Representative	Yes	Representative	—
Periodic	Yes	Periodic	—

Tobacco use prevalence from the latest survey completed by 31 December 2020

	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), 2019; National, ages 15+										
Male	30.1	...	28.2	...	...	...	1.5 ¹	0.5 ¹	...	...
Female	4.2	...	3.8	...	...	...	0.3 ¹	0.2 ¹	...	...
Both sexes	19.8	...	...	...	...	...	0.9 ¹	0.3 ¹	...	...
Adolescents survey: Global Youth Tobacco Survey, 2010; National, ages 13-15										
Male	21.2	...	...	...	13.0	...	4.8	...	...	...
Female	9.1	...	...	...	5.0	...	1.8	...	...	...
Both sexes	14.9	...	...	...	8.9	...	3.4	...	...	...

¹ Saudi Health Information Survey, 2014; National, ages 15+

WHO age-standardized estimated prevalence of smoking among those aged 15 years or more: Year 2019


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 2019. 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	26.7	21.4	25.6	22.0	19.5	15.3
Female	2.1	1.0	2.0	0.9	1.4	0.6
Both sexes	14.4	11.2	13.8	11.5	10.5	7.9

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 **Protect** people from tobacco smoke

 **Offer** help to quit tobacco use

	2020	Compliance
Complete* smoke-free laws exist in the following places:		
Health-care facilities	Yes	9
Educational facilities except universities	Yes	9
Universities	Yes	9
Government facilities	Yes	8
Indoor offices and workplaces	Yes	6
Restaurants	☆	—
Cafés, pubs and bars	☆	—
Public transport	Yes	9
All other public places	—	
Compliance score		5
Law requires fines for smoking	Yes	
Fines levied on the establishment	No	
Fines levied on the smoker	Yes	
Funds dedicated for enforcement	Yes	
Complaint system that requires an investigation after a complaint	No	

* "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.

☆ Designated smoking rooms with strict technical requirements are permitted under the law.

Subnational laws on smoke-free environments

Subnational jurisdictions do not have the authority to adopt laws that ban tobacco smoking in any or all of the places mentioned above.

Treatment of tobacco dependence as at 31 December 2020

Is there a toll-free telephone quit line/help line with a live person available to discuss cessation with callers in Saudi Arabia?	Yes										
Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT, e.g., patch, gum, lozenge, spray or inhaler)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Is this product legally sold in the country?</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?</td> <td>Pharmacy without Rx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Is any NRT on the country's essential drugs list?</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table>	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?	Yes		
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?	Yes										
Bupropion (e.g., Zyban, Wellbutrin)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Is this product legally sold in your country?</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?</td> <td>Pharmacy with Rx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> </table>	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				
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Varenicline	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Is this product legally sold in your country?</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Where and how can this product be legally purchased in your country?</td> <td>Pharmacy with Rx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this product?</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> </table>	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										
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 smoking cessation support available in the following places in your country?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Health clinics or other primary care facilities</td> <td>Yes in most</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hospitals</td> <td>Yes in some</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office of a health professional</td> <td>Yes in some</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In the community</td> <td>Yes in most</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>Yes in some</td> </tr> </table>	Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Yes in most	Hospitals	Yes in some	Office of a health professional	Yes in some	In the community	Yes in most	Other	Yes in some
Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Yes in most										
Hospitals	Yes in some										
Office of a health professional	Yes in some										
In the community	Yes in most										
Other	Yes in some										
Does the national/federal health insurance or the national health service cover the cost of this support?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Health clinics or other primary care facilities</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hospitals</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office of a health professional</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In the community</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>Fully</td> </tr> </table>	Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Fully	Hospitals	Fully	Office of a health professional	Fully	In the community	No	Other	Fully
Health clinics or other primary care facilities	Fully										
Hospitals	Fully										
Office of a health professional	Fully										
In the community	No										
Other	Fully										

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Health warnings on tobacco packages

	2020				2020		
	Cigarettes	Other smoked tobacco	Smokeless tobacco		Cigarettes	Other smoked tobacco	Smokeless tobacco
Does the law mandate that health warnings appear on tobacco packages?	Yes	Yes	Sale is banned	Does the law require or establish fines for violations regarding health warnings on packages?	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	65	65	—	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	—
What percentage of the principal display areas of the FRONT of the package is legally mandated to be covered by health warnings?	65	65	—	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?	Yes	Yes	—
What percentage of the principal display areas of the REAR of the package is legally mandated to be covered by health warnings?	65	65	—	Are there any laws requiring that tobacco packaging and labelling do not use descriptors depicting flavours?	Yes	No	—
Does the law mandate that the warning be placed at the top of the principle display areas of the package?	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	—
Does the law mandate font style, font size and colour for package warnings?	Yes	Yes	—	Does the law mandate the display of qualitative information on relevant constituents and emissions of tobacco products on tobacco packaging?	Yes	Yes	—
Are the health warnings rotating on packages?	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	—
Are the health warnings on packages written in the principal language(s) of the country?	Yes	Yes	—	Does the law prevent the display of expiry dates on tobacco packaging?	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	—	Is it mandatory for the quit line number to appear on packaging or labelling?	Yes	Yes	—
Do the health warnings on packages include a photograph or graphic?	Yes	Yes	—	Does the law mandate plain packaging?	Yes	Yes	—
Do health warnings appear on each package and any outside packaging and labelling used in the retail sale?	Yes	Yes	—				
Does the law on health warnings apply to products whether manufactured domestically, imported, AND for duty-free sale?	Yes	Yes	—				
Does the law state that warnings on packages do not remove or diminish the liability of the tobacco industry?	No	No	—				
Do health warnings on packages describe the harmful effects of tobacco use on health?	Yes	Yes	—				
Does the law mandate specific health warnings on packages?	Yes	Yes	—				
How many specific health warnings are approved by the law?	4	4	—				

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Anti-tobacco mass media campaigns between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2020

Was there a national campaign aired during the period?	Yes
Was the campaign aired on television and/or radio?	Yes
Before the campaign, was any research about the target audience conducted or used to develop the campaign messages/materials?	Yes
Were the campaign materials tested with the target audience before the campaign was run?	Yes
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?	Yes
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?	Yes
Did you work with journalists to gain publicity or coverage in the news for the campaign?	Yes
Was an evaluation done to assess the impact of the campaign?	Yes
Was this campaign part of a comprehensive government tobacco control program?	Yes

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Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

	2020	Compliance
Bans on direct tobacco advertising		
National TV and radio	Yes	10
International TV and radio	Yes ¹	
Local magazines and newspapers	Yes	10
International magazines and newspapers	Yes ²	
Billboards and outdoor advertising	Yes	10
Advertising at point of sale	Yes	10
Advertising on internet	Yes	
Other direct bans	Yes	
Compliance score of direct bans		10
Law requires fines for violations of direct advertising bans	Yes	
Bans on tobacco promotion and sponsorship		
Free distribution	Yes	10
Promotional discounts	Yes	10
Non-tobacco products identified with tobacco brand names	Yes	9
Brand name of non-tobacco products used for tobacco product	Yes	10
Appearance of tobacco brands in TV and/or films (product placement)	Yes	10
Appearance of tobacco products in TV and/or films	Yes	4
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	10
Ban on sponsorship contributions (financial or other support)	No	
Ban on publicizing sponsorship or other support	Yes	
Ban on Corporate Social Responsibility activities (CSR)	No	
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	No	
Law explicitly bans tobacco products display at point of sale	Yes	
Other indirect bans	Yes	
Compliance score of indirect bans		9
Law requires fines for violations of indirect advertising bans	Yes	
Law completely bans tobacco vending machines	Yes	
Law bans internet sales of tobacco products	No	

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.

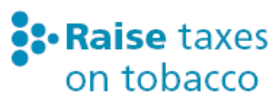
² The law does not explicitly address cross-border advertising. However, given that advertising is banned in all magazines and newspapers, it is interpreted that both domestic and international levels are covered by the ban.

Subnational laws on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

All subnational jurisdictions are covered by national legislation at the highest level of achievement.

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Tobacco taxation policy and prices as at 31 July 2020

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, 2020	SAR 15.00	SAR 28.00

Taxes on the most sold brand of cigarettes

WHO's estimate for 2020

Price of most sold brand of cigarettes (standardized to a pack of 20)	
In currency reported by country	SAR 28.00
In international dollars (purchasing power parity adjusted)	17.64
In US dollars at official exchange rates	7.47
Taxes on this brand (% of retail price) *	
Total taxes	73.84%
Specific excise	0.00%
Ad valorem excise	46.51%
Value added tax (VAT) or sales tax	13.04%
Import duty	14.29%
Other taxes	0.00%

* 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)	3.81%
Cigarettes are less affordable in 2020 compared to 2018	Yes
Cigarettes have become less affordable between 2010 and 2020 (trend average)	Yes

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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 20 grams)	Smokeless tobacco product (standardized to 20 grams)	Heated tobacco product (per 20 sticks)
	Waterpipe tobacco		
In currency reported by country	SAR 4.38	...	SAR 28.00
In international dollars (purchasing power parity adjusted)	2.76	...	17.64
In US dollars at official exchange rates	1.17	...	7.47
Taxes on the most sold brand (% of retail price) *			
Total taxes	65.03%	...	73.84%
Specific excise	0.00%	...	0.00%
Ad valorem excise	46.51%	...	46.51%
Value added tax (VAT) or sales tax	13.04%	...	13.04%
Import duty	5.48%	...	14.29%
Other taxes	0.00%	...	0.00%

* 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)	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.

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Use of earmarked tobacco taxes for health

No earmarking of tobacco taxes for health reported.

Supplementary tax information

	Most recent data reported
Type of excise applied	Ad valorem excise
Uniform excise tax applied Yes (uniform), No (tiered/varying rates)	Yes
Greater reliance on specific tax in mixed excise regime	—
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)	—
Price dispersion: share of cheapest brand price in premium brand price (the higher the % the smaller the gap)	53.57%
Sales of duty (or excise) free cigarettes banned	No

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

	Most recent data reported
Is tax revenue data for all tobacco products or cigarettes only?	All tobacco products
Year	2018
Currency	SAR
Total Excise (specific and ad valorem)	7 200 000 000.00
Value added tax (VAT) and other sales taxes	...
Import duties	...
All other taxes (excluding corporate taxes on tobacco companies)	...
Total	...

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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 2018 and June 2020 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 2010 and 2020.
NO	Cigarettes more affordable – per capita GDP needed to buy 100 packs (or 2000 cigarettes) of the most sold brand declined on average between 2010 and 2020.
↔	No trend change in affordability of cigarettes since 2010.