



The ratification of the FCTC was a turning point for Turkey. It sets up the foundation of many key tobacco control regulations.

Introduction

The impact assessment for the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was conducted in Turkey from 23 to 26 February 2016. The mission was supported by the Convention Secretariat and it was led by members of the independent Impact Assessment Expert Group, established by the Conference of the Parties.

Key tobacco control milestones

2005

The WHO FCTC enters into force

2007

National Tobacco Control Unit is established in the Ministry of Health

2008

New legislation amending the Law on Prevention of Hazards of Tobacco Products (No. 5727) is adopted

2009

Implementation of a comprehensive smoking ban

2013

WHO FCTC Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products is signed

2015 - 2018

The National Tobacco Control Action Plan includes plain packaging of tobacco products

Key facts

Since 2012, a minimum of

65%

of the surface of tobacco packaging must be covered by a warning



27%

of the adult population are smokers; **41.4%** of men and **13.1%** of women



82.13%

of the retail price for the most widely sold brand of cigarette is tax



81.9%

of the retail price for the most widely sold brand of water pipe tobacco is tax



Only

13%

of tobacco used for manufacturing is produced domestically



One year of smoke-free policy resulted in a:

32%

decrease in visits to emergency departments and hospital admissions



18%

decrease in acute bronchitis, **20%** in asthma and **21%** in COPD





The FCTC has been an incredible tool. We use it as best practice in tobacco control. Our dedicated tobacco control activities have gained momentum through the FCTC.

Key observations

● The WHO FCTC has been fundamental in improving Turkey's national tobacco control legislation, requiring several amendments to make it more compliant with WHO FCTC articles and guidelines. In 2008, the Law Amending the Law on Prevention of Hazards of Tobacco Products (Law No. 5727) expanded the scope of previous smoke-free legislation to include all educational facilities, restaurants, cafés, bars and commercial taxis. It also introduced bans on the sale of tobacco products on school premises and banned all forms of tobacco sponsorship.

● Turkey's government has used WHO FCTC articles and guidelines as a key reference to support its position in court, for example, when challenged by the British American Tobacco (BAT) in 2009.

● Using WHO FCTC guidelines, Turkey has developed regulatory mechanisms for tobacco control, including a national regulatory body and provincial inspection teams. The National Tobacco Control Unit, established under the Ministry of Health in 2007, is responsible for the implementation of tobacco control policies and action plans at the national level. Under Law No. 5727, 81 Provincial Tobacco Control Boards were established in all Turkish provinces to discuss and organize implementation of tobacco control laws. The inspection teams in each province, on the other hand, conduct inspections for policy violations through the Smoke-free Zone Inspection System.

● Turkey has made significant progress in the implementation of several effective tobacco control policies since the WHO FCTC's entry into force. In 2008, a comprehensive ban on all forms of tobacco advertising was introduced. This was later extended to include a point-of-sale ban. Smoke-free legislation was also expanded in 2008, when it was applied to hospital-ity venues, all other indoor public places, workplaces and public transport. In 2013, the definition of tobacco products was expanded to include herbal or aromatic water pipes and cigarettes not containing tobacco.



● In terms of Article 14, Turkey has introduced effective cessation services and programmes. A 24/7 quitline was also established. As of 2014, cessation drugs have been available in pharmacies without a prescription and free of charge, if recommended by a physician. Some 412 smoking cessation clinics have been established across the country.

● Turkey raised tobacco prices and increased tax measures immediately after the ratification of the WHO FCTC. These

policies resulted in increased cigarette prices and tax revenues, and reduced cigarette affordability, sales and smoking prevalence. In 2013, Turkey switched to a mixed tax system for cigarettes and other smoked tobacco products, including specific and ad valorem taxes, as well as VAT. Between 2005 and 2011, cigarette prices increased by 195%, cigarette tax revenue by 124%, while cigarette sales decreased by 15.5%.

● The WHO FCTC has been a useful resource for Turkey in implementing strong measures to reduce the illicit tobacco trade and smuggling. In addition to a track and trace system, and digital tax stamps, in 2011 the Turkish Government launched an Action Plan to Combat Smuggling of Tobacco and Tobacco Products. Turkey signed the WHO FCTC Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products on 10 January 2013. The ratification of the Protocol is about to be finalized by the Turkish Great National Assembly.



Outcomes

- ✓ Reinforced collaboration between the different sectors, government bodies, agencies and civil society.
- ✓ Facilitated progressive escalation of health warnings on tobacco products and is serving as a supporting legal framework to introduce plain packaging.
- ✓ Served as a turning point in combating the illicit trade of tobacco.

- ✓ Served as the basis and reference point for Turkey's tobacco industry liability regulations which did not exist before WHO FCTC ratification.
- ✓ Turkey was among the first countries in the world to implement a comprehensive smoking ban (as of 2008).