England

Tobacco Control Policies

The United Kingdom became a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on March 16, 2005.

Smoke Free Places: Smoking is prohibited in public transport, indoor public places, and indoor workplaces, including work vehicles. There are a few limited exceptions to the ban. Specifically, smoking is permitted in designated rooms in hotels, long term care homes, palliative hospices and off shore installations such as oil rigs; and smoking is permitted for sampling cigars or pipe tobacco in specialist tobacco shops.

Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship: Tobacco advertising and promotion is generally prohibited, subject to a few exceptions such as direct person-to-person communications and retailer incentive programs. Point-of-sale tobacco advertising is prohibited in large and small retail shops, although permitted inside specialist tobacconists for tobacco products other than cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco. Display of tobacco products is prohibited in large and small retail shops, although permitted, subject to some restrictions, in specialist tobacconists and bulk tobacconists. There are some restrictions on tobacco sponsorship and the publicity of such sponsorship.

Tobacco Packaging and Labeling: Standardized (plain) packaging is required for all packages of cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco produced after May 20, 2016. Products produced before that date were permitted to be sold until May 20, 2017. Packaging must be Pantone 448 C - a medium brown color - made of carton or soft material, be cuboid in shape, and may not contain any elements - including text, trademark or other symbols - other than the required health warnings, brand name and variant name, quantity of cigarettes (or weight of hand rolling tobacco), and details about the producer in a standard typeface, font color, and size.

Rotating graphic health warnings must occupy 65 percent of the front and 65 percent of the back of all smoked tobacco product packaging. For smokeless tobacco product packaging, one text-only health warning must occupy 30 percent of the front and 30 percent of the back of the package. Misleading packaging and labeling, which could include terms such as “light” and “low tar” and other signs, is prohibited.

Tobacco Taxation and Prices: The World Health Organization recommends raising tobacco excise taxes so that they account for at least 70 percent of retail prices. Tobacco excise taxes in the United Kingdom are below these recommendations.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENTS COMPLETE SMOKING BAN			
Health-care facilities	Yes	Private offices	Yes
Primary and secondary schools	Yes	Public transport	Yes
Universities	No	Restaurants	Yes
Governmental facilities	Yes	Bars and Pubs	Yes
Can subnational jurisdictions enact more stringent smoking restrictions?	Yes		

BANS ON TOBACCO ADVERTISING, PROMOTION, AND SPONSORSHIP			
Domestic TV and radio	Yes	Promotional discounts	Yes
Domestic magazines and newspapers	Yes	Non-tobacco products or services with tobacco brand names	Yes
Outdoor advertising	Yes	Tobacco products with non-tobacco brand names	Yes
Point-of-sale advertising	No	Paid placement in media	Yes
Retail product display	No	Financial sponsorship, including corporate social responsibility	Yes
Internet advertising	Yes	Publicity of sponsorships	Yes
Free distribution	Yes		

HEALTH WARNINGS ON SMOKED TOBACCO PRODUCTS			
Text warnings describe health impacts	Yes	Number of published warnings at any given time	13
Warnings include a picture or graphic	Yes	Warnings required to rotate	Required
% of principal display areas covered (front and back)	65%	Warnings are written in the principal language(s)	Yes
Front	65%	Ban on misleading packaging and labeling	Yes
Back	65%	Health warnings on smokeless tobacco products	Yes

TOBACCO TAXATION AND PRICE			
PRICE OF MOST SOLD BRAND, PACK OF 20 CIGARETTES		TAXES ON MOST SOLD BRAND (% OF RETAIL PRICE)	
In country currency	10.40 GBP	Total taxes	84%
In US dollars	12.67 USD	Total excise	67%

Sources:

SF, APS, PL: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Legal Website. Available at: www.tobaccocontrollaws.org

Tax: WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic, 2023. Available at: www.who.int/teams/health-promotion/tobacco-control/global-tobacco-report-2023

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