



# Oman


Tobacco industry profile



**World Health Organization**

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

COUNTRY PROFILE		INDUSTRY
 Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the latest national survey conducted in 2008, 16.6% of males and 0.7% of females are current tobacco smokers (1).</li> <li>• In 2010, the prevalence of shisha and cigarette smoking among youth is nearly equal: 1.8% of students smoked cigarettes, 1.5% smoked shisha and 1.6% uses smokeless tobacco (2).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Domestic</b></p> <p><b>Khimji Ramdas (7)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong relationship with Philip Morris International as it distributes many of their products throughout the country.</li> <li>• The consumer product division that handles the Philip Morris brands holds a 40% plus share of the market.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enhance (8)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 51% partner with Nestle Oman Trading in joint venture.</li> <li>• the leading provider of brand distribution and retail management solutions in Oman.</li> <li>• provides distribution and sales management for global companies, which include British American Tobacco.</li> </ul>
 Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cigarettes: 9.7% of men, 0.1% of women (1)</li> <li>• Other smoking tobacco products (cigars, pipes, waterpipes): 12.3% of men, 0.1% women (1)</li> <li>• In 2010, smokeless tobacco (among youth): 2.5% of males, 0.9% of females (2)</li> <li>• “afzal” (illegally sold smokeless tobacco) commonly used by Omani youth (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>International</b></p> <p><b>British American Tobacco</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners with Enhance to distribute brands in Oman (8).</li> <li>• top brands: Dunhill, John Player Gold Leaf, Rothmans, Royals (9)</li> </ul> <p><b>Phillip Morris International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not have any official headquarters in the country, but products are imported aggressively through Khimji Ramdas (7)</li> <li>• Products considered to be of premium standard among tobacco consumers (7)</li> </ul>
<p>\$</p> <p>Finance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2014, the total revenues from taxation on all tobacco products amounted to 9 831 359 Omani rials (4)</li> <li>• Total per capita</li> </ul>	

	<p>expenditure on health was US\$ 1442 in 2014 (5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total expenditure on health as was 3.5% of gross domestic product in 2014 (5).</li> </ul>	
 Mortality	Noncommunicable diseases are estimated to account for 68% of total deaths, of which tobacco use is a leading risk factor (6).	

<b>TRADE</b>	<b>CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY</b>
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<p><b>Imports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tobacco imports increased from US\$ 48.9 million in 2008 to US\$ 116.4 million in 2010. Cigarettes are one of the top 10 imported products in Oman (10).</li> <li>As a result of the free trade agreement, tariffs on tobacco products imported from the United States of America will be lifted in 2018 (10).</li> </ul> <p><b>Exports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tobacco exports increased from US\$ 21 million in 2008 to US\$ 78 million in 2010 (10).</li> <li>Main trade partners are Gulf Cooperation Council countries (11).</li> </ul> <p><b>Trade value, 2015 (million US\$) (11)</b></p> <p><b>Export</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Cigarettes</td> <td style="text-align: right;">162.34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unmanufactured tobacco</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.03</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Import</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Cigarettes</td> <td style="text-align: right;">249.64</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unmanufactured tobacco</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.20</td> </tr> </table>	Cigarettes	162.34	Unmanufactured tobacco	1.03	Cigarettes	249.64	Unmanufactured tobacco	0.20	<p><b>Corporate social responsibility is an inherent contradiction, as the industry’s core functions are in conflict with the goals of public health policies with respect to tobacco control.</b></p> <p>Corporate social responsibility activities have been reported. However, countries are encouraged to abide by Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework convention on Tobacco control, protecting public health policies with respect to tobacco control from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry, through banning corporate social responsibility activities by the tobacco industry, often used to circumvent laws regulating the industry.</p>
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<b>MARKETING</b>	<b>TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE</b>
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<p>On 5 April 2016, the Minister of Information issued a ministerial decision banning all forms of tobacco advertising and promotion that could be read, seen or listened to, including those published in electronic media (12).</p>	<p>Since the 1970s, the tobacco industry has sought to weaken policy in the Region as multinationals formed the Middle East Working Group, now known as the Middle East Tobacco Association (META). The Association was formally constituted for the purpose of “promoting and defending the tobacco industry in the Gulf Cooperation Council</p>
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countries”, and is currently located in Jebel Ali Free Zone in the United Arab Emirates (13).

### By the numbers

11.9%

proportion of students who live in homes where others smoke in their presence, 2010 (2)

OMR 0.90  
(US\$ 2.34)

price of a 20-cigarette pack of the most sold brand in 2014 (4)

3.3%

proportion of students who currently used any form of tobacco in 2010 (2)

### NEXT STEPS

As a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), Oman should continue to make progress in implementing tobacco regulation. It is recommended that Oman focus on:

- fully operationalizing the Guidelines of Article 5 of the WHO FCTC at national level;
- introducing a multisectoral approach to the implementation of Article 5.3, within the implementation of the WHO FCTC;
- putting in place a mechanism to monitor the tobacco industry activities and report publicly on that if and when possible.

### References

1. [WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, country profile: Oman](#)
2. [Global Youth Tobacco Survey country fact sheet: Oman.](#)
3. [Determination of heavy metals in the common smokeless tobacco \*afzal\* in Oman](#)
4. [WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, Appendix 8](#)
5. [WHO country profile: Oman](#)
6. [Noncommunicable diseases country profile: Oman](#)
7. [Khimji Ramdas – Consumer Products Group](#)
8. [Enhance – Oman Tobacco Division](#)
9. [British American Tobacco, Middle East](#)
10. [Tobacco control in Oman: it's time to get serious.](#)
11. [UN Comtrade database](#)
12. [Decision of the Minister of Information bans tobacco advertising and promotion](#)
13. [Voice of truth, 2nd ed](#)