

# LEBANON

Tobacco industry profile



**World Health Organization**

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

COUNTRY PROFILE		INDUSTRY					
<p>Trends</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2013, 43% of men and 34% of women were tobacco smokers (1).</li> <li>Males consume 1.5 packs per day, one of the highest consumption rates in the world (2).</li> <li>36.2% of all youth smoke tobacco (41.9% of boys and 31.4% of girls) (2011) (3).</li> </ul>	<p>Régie Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombacs (the Régie) (2,6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State-owned monopoly in charge of exporting and importing tobacco products, subsidizing tobacco farmers.</li> <li>The Ministry of Finance has direct control of finances: net profits, expenses and losses are directly linked to the Treasury.</li> <li>A price support programme for tobacco subsidy sets a predetermined price and quota for quantity produced for licensed tobacco farmers.</li> <li>Total subsidies to farmers reached US\$ 51.1 million in 2008 (2).</li> <li>Imports leaves and international cigarette brands to sell on the local market.</li> </ul>					
	<p>Products</p>	<p>Common products include (3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>nargileh (42%)</li> <li>cigarettes (34.7%)</li> <li>waterpipe (24.5%)</li> </ul>					
<p>Finance</p>	<p>The tobacco sector generated around US\$ 189.1 million in fiscal revenues in 2008 (2).</p> <p>The total social cost is US\$ 327 million annually, with a direct cost of US\$ 262.1 million (2).</p> <p>Total per capita expenditure on health was US\$ 987 in 2014 (4).</p> <p>Total expenditure on health was 6.4% of gross domestic product in 2014 (4).</p>	<p><b>BRANDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Price of a 20 cigarette pack of Marlboro, the most sold brand in 2014, is US\$ 2.16 (7).</li> <li>Price of the cheapest brand in 2014 was US\$ 0.50 (7).</li> <li>The locally manufactured cigarette brands have a market share close to 21%, with imported brands accounting for the remainder (2).</li> </ul>					
	<p>Mortality</p>	<p>Approximately 11.3% of adults suffer from smoking-related heart disease (2).</p> <p>Noncommunicable diseases are estimated to account for 85% of total deaths, with tobacco as a leading risk factor (5).</p>	<p><b>BY THE NUMBERS</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1.1%</td> <td>Gross domestic product lost due to tobacco smoking in 2008 (2).</td> </tr> <tr> <td>68.6%</td> <td>Proportion of students aged 13–15 years living in homes where others smoke cigarettes in their presence, 2011 (3).</td> </tr> </table>		1.1%	Gross domestic product lost due to tobacco smoking in 2008 (2).	68.6%
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<b>TRADE</b>		<b>LOBBYING</b>					
<p><b>Imports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Régie is responsible for the importation of all tobacco products into the country (2).</li> <li>Imports are mainly from Germany, Switzerland, Turkey and Poland (8).</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The tobacco industry continued to interfere in order to weaken and postpone consideration of a 100% smoke-free law. Legislation took 5 years to pass, from 2007 to 2011 (9).</li> <li>In February 2011, media leaks indicated that exemptions for Lebanese restaurants (for waterpipe)</li> </ul>					

<p><b>Exports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exports raw leaf tobacco, often low quality (2).</li> <li>Unmanufactured tobacco exports in 2014 were mainly directed to Bulgaria, France, Egypt and Azerbaijan (8).</li> </ul> <p><b>Exports, 2014 (million US\$) (8)</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Cigarettes</td> <td>0.04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unmanufactured tobacco</td> <td>25.10</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Imports, 2014 (million US\$) (8)</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Cigarettes</td> <td>184.59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unmanufactured tobacco</td> <td>12.24</td> </tr> </table>	Cigarettes	0.04	Unmanufactured tobacco	25.10	Cigarettes	184.59	Unmanufactured tobacco	12.24	<p>and hotel lobbies (for cigarette smoking) were being considered (10).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The tobacco industry built and maintained strong alliances that were and are regularly mobilized to effectively oppose regulations (11).</li> </ul>
Cigarettes	0.04								
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<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>									
24 000	Registered tobacco farmers, 40% of whom rely on other sources of revenue (2).								
5–14 years	Age of some children working in the production of tobacco in 2010, as child labour continues to exist in tobacco farming (12).								
<b>MARKETING</b>									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tobacco Control Law passed in 2011 banned all forms of tobacco promotion and advertising. Advertisements in print media are now extremely rare (9).</li> <li>Major international brands, such as Philip Morris and British American Tobacco, use “below the line” indirect advertising, such as sponsorship and brand stretching, using 3D designs and colors but no product names as this is not subject to the ban on direct advertising (13).</li> </ul>	<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>								
<b>NEXT STEPS</b>									
<p>As a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), Lebanon should continue to make progress in implementing tobacco regulation. It is recommended that Lebanon focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully operationalizing the Guidelines of Article 5 of the WHO FCTC at national level;</li> <li>introducing a multisectoral approach to the implementation of Article 5.3, within the implementation of the WHO FCTC;</li> <li>putting in place a mechanism to monitor the tobacco industry activities and report publicly on that if and when possible.</li> </ul>									

## References

1. [WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic 2015: Appendix XI](#)
2. [The economics of tobacco in Lebanon: an estimation of the social costs of tobacco consumption](#)
3. [Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2011 Lebanon](#)
4. [WHO country health profile: Lebanon](#)
5. [Noncommunicable diseases country profiles: Lebanon](#)
6. [Régie libanaise des tabacs et tombacs](#)
7. [WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2015, Appendix II](#)
8. [UN Comtrade database](#)
9. [WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic \(p.57\)](#)
10. [Lebanon's first comprehensive tobacco control law sees the light](#)
11. [The tobacco industry's thwarting of marketing restrictions and health warnings in Lebanon](#)
12. [Findings on the worst forms of child labor: Lebanon](#)
13. [Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health tobacco control programme, legislation](#)