

Mexico

Overall score:

47

Summary of Findings

1. Industry participation in policy development

The current federal government has limited the participation of the tobacco industry; even in the meetings of the National Commission Against Addictions, participants are required to have no ties or representation of that industry. In 2019, with a campaign involving British American Tobacco (BAT), the Ministry of Health decided to withdraw its participation. However, initiatives for lax regulation of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products have been put forward in the federal Congress. The government keeps out all industry participation in the Conference of the Parties (COP) delegation.

2. Industry CSR activities

The collaboration of the Nayarit State Government and the two main tobacco companies in Mexico (Philip Morris and BAT) continues to be a matter of concern, especially due to the alleged support for farmers and their families.

3. Benefits to the industry

There is no publicly available record of the government postponing the implementation of policies required to regulate the tobacco industry. The government continues to give duty free status for two cartons of cigarettes, 50 cigars or a kilo of tobacco for international travelers. There should be greater transparency on the information provided by the Tax Administration Service to identify any benefits given to the tobacco industry.

4. Unnecessary interaction

In the Senate of the Republic, Senator Miguel Ángel Navarro, President of the Health Committee, participates in events organized by BAT. The question remains whether the cigarette tracking system is provided by the tobacco industry (Codentify), which has already been reported. In addition, Philip Morris participates with the federal government in the "Youth Building the Future" program (Programa "Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro").

5. Transparency

Federal regulation does not require disclosure of meetings with the tobacco industry. In the Congress of the Union, the registration of lobbyists is mandatory, where companies and organizations must express their interests and who they represent.

6. Conflict of interest

The federal government does not prohibit tobacco industry contributions to campaigns. Retired officials remain as lobbyists for the tobacco industry (now, in addition, allied with former officials who work for the soft drink industry). In the political party of the President of the Republic, Yeidckol Polevnsky continues as General Secretary.

7. Preventive measures

The Ministry of Health has assumed a leading role in spearheading preventive measures in the federal government. This institution, together with the Ministry of Economy, has internal guidelines related to Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The federal government in 2019 approved a regulation that prohibits employees from receiving any contributions. However, assistance offers, policy drafts or study visit invitations which could come from the tobacco industry, are still maintained.



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Recommendations

Mexico improved its score this year with the new measures in favor of transparency and against conflicts of interest led by the Ministry of Health. However, the interference of the tobacco industry in the Federal Congress remains, where lobbyists promote lax regulation of electronic cigarettes and heated tobacco products. There is a need to reinforce measures against conflicts of interest throughout the government.