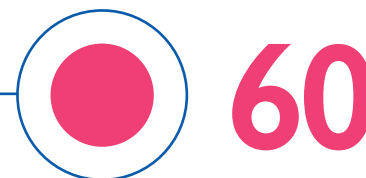


Venezuela



Summary of Findings

1. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There is no regulation that prohibits the participation of the tobacco industry (TI) in the discussion of public health policies related to tobacco control.

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

The Bigott Foundation is sponsored by BAT and its activities are promoted on the website of the Ministry of Popular Power for Communication and Information. The Government of Miranda of Venezuela carried out a “Mirandina Identity Cultural Route” in which the Bigott Foundation participated.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

There is no publicly available evidence of the TI requesting preferential treatment from the government in relation to the implementation of the laws. The National Integrated Customs and Tax Administration Service allowed Bigott Cigarette Company to reduce the price of a cigarette to offset the impacts of smuggling.

The Ministry of Popular Power for Tourism developed a tourist route, whose eighth tourist point is a rum, coffee, chocolate and tobacco shop, which encourages the consumption of these products.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

There is no documented record of meetings between the government and the TI.

5. TRANSPARENCY

Rules for tobacco disclosure or registration by industry entities, affiliated organizations, and persons acting on their behalf including lobbyists, are not mandated by the government.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no evidence of non-compliance with Article 3 of Resolution 071 of the Ministry of Popular Power for Health, which establishes the guidelines for the complete prohibition of advertising, promotion, sponsorship and regulation of the sale of tobacco products in Venezuela.

No information has been found of senior retired government officials joining the TI, nor was any evidence found of current government officials or family members holding positions in the TI.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No procedure for recording government interaction with the TI has been found. No information has been found on whether the government has formulated, adopted or implemented a code of conduct for public officials, describing the standards they must comply with in their relations with the TI.

Any marketing company, national manufacturer, importer, or exporter of cigarettes or products derived from tobacco, smoke-producing or not, must submit the application for business registration to the General Directorate of Environmental Health and Sanitary Comptroller under Resolution No. 109, which establishes the regulation and control of cigarettes and other products derived from tobacco intended for human consumption.

Previously, the government had an intergovernmental commission for tobacco control but it has ceased to meet. The government does not have a plan to constantly raise awareness about WHO FCTC Article 5.3.



Recommendations

1. Develop a code of conduct, including a clear and binding set of guidelines, for all government officials and employees in their interaction with the TI.
2. Strengthen the vigilance of current regulations in all areas in applying sanctions in case of non-compliance.
3. The meetings with the TI must be justified as strictly necessary, and the minutes and action points of these must be made accessible to the general public.