

# Jordan

Overall score:

79

## I. Industry participation in policy development:

Tobacco companies sit in Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization (JSMO) Committee for tobacco products' packaging and labelling specification issues. Through their front groups, they also have interfered with the implementation of the smoke-free public places law (Art.8) by proposing amendments on separation regulations and tobacco display, fighting for inclusion of ministries that will support their interest (such as the Ministry of Tourism), and successfully lobbying to be part of the committee that inspects Public Health Law implementation through the joint committee of Ministry of Tourism. They also are included, through their front groups, in the National Joint Committee of the Government of Jordan that decides on Tobacco Control and FCTC implementation across the government.

**II. Tobacco industry-related CSR activities:** The four top tobacco companies operating in Jordan are Phillip Morris International (PMI), Union Tobacco International, Japan Tobacco International and British American Tobacco. These companies in Jordan supported many initiatives by giving donations, supporting training activities, or providing funds for many programs.

The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Naour Municipality, National Police, Parliamentarians and other governmental agencies have endorsed CSR activities of PMI.

According to Department of Statistics, the tobacco industry spent 273,000 JOD in donations and sponsorship in 2015. However, no recent reports exist.

**III. Benefits given to the tobacco industry:** The government postponed the implementation of the public health law 47 due to the lobbying of industry front groups. Rather than implementing

smoke-free public places law, especially in restaurants, cafes and hotels, they allowed instead the establishment of designated smoking areas as a transition phase towards a full implementation. This "transition phase", which started in 2010, is still in effect, leading to confusion among the public and resistance to full smoke-free implementation due to costly separation and ventilation investments. Recently, the government is considering to re-allow cultivation of tobacco in the country and formed a committee to study the feasibility.

## IV. Unnecessary interaction with the tobacco industry:

According to interviewed officials, there are no meetings or participation from the Ruling Monarchy with the tobacco industry. However, there have been signs of tobacco industry support to many youth programs executed by NGOs run by royal family members.

## V. Procedure for transparency measures:

The government does not disclose the outcome of its meetings or interactions with tobacco companies or their allies such as front groups. The government has no rules defining the level of interaction with the industry or their front groups. However, as part of the Code of Conduct, ministers and public workers have to disclose conflicts of interest or previous work with the tobacco industry. This code of conduct does not apply to the Parliament.

**VI. Avoiding conflicts of interest:** The government has no shares in tobacco companies, but some of the House of Representative members and ministers are known to have shares in tobacco companies or own restaurants that serve tobacco products. It is also documented that previous Prime Ministers had meetings with tobacco industry, front groups or parliamentarians/ministers who own shares in the industry and expressed a pro-tobacco policy as

a follow up to these meetings. Previous ministers who worked in the industry or their front groups have been appointed into positions that have a direct conflict of interest, such as Minister of Tourism who is involved in the law enforcement and sanctions of violations.

**VII. Preventive measures:** There is a circular shared among governmental agencies prohibiting interaction with the tobacco industry and receiving any form of support or donations or attending any of their sponsored activities. To reduce shisha consumption, no new licenses were issued to cafes and restaurants as of 2017.

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## Recommendations

Since the ratification of the FCTC treaty in 2004, Jordan has shown evidence of some regulation of tobacco companies interactions, however, the index score shows that the level of industry interference is high. To address the main causes for the industry's influence:

1. Acceptance of support and sponsorship to various projects and causes from the tobacco industry through CSR activities must be prohibited.
2. Policies to limit and provide transparency to interactions between the government and the industry must be implemented.
3. Regulation to ban acceptance of gifts/support from the industry and prohibit officials from endorsing/supporting tobacco industry initiatives must be enforced.
4. A national policy to prohibit tobacco industry from participation in policy decisions must be enacted.