

Effects of and challenges to bans on menthol and other flavours in tobacco products

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Abstract

In May 2020, the European Tobacco Products Directive (TPD), which bans characterizing flavors in cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco (RYO) in the European Union (EU), extended its application to menthol^{1,2}. Countries which were early adopters of flavor bans include Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, the United Kingdom (UK), amongst others³. Two main regulatory approaches exist: a ban on characterizing flavors that allows for the presence of additives but not at detectable sensory levels (e.g. EU, UK), and a total ban on flavor additives that eliminates their presence altogether (e.g. Brazil, Canada). As more countries work towards adopting tobacco flavor bans, it is critical to understand how these policies are implemented, ascertain their population-level impact, and identify the regulatory challenges.

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