Economics of Tobacco in Tunisia

Consumption and Prevalence

In 1999, Tunisia consumed 11,200 million cigarettes, up by 6% from the year 1993 consumption. Cigarette consumption per person 15 years and older was 86 packs in 1999, down from 95 packs in 1993.

Source: USDA

In Tunisia, smoking prevalence is high among males but very low among females. According to a study in 1996, 61% of men aged 20 and over were smokers, while only 4% of women smoked. A separate study did in 1994 also revealed that 39% of male medical students and 2% of female medical students were smokers.

In 1999, cigarette was subject to 18% VAT plus 135% excise tax in Tunisia, with imported products subject to 32% import duties. We estimated the tax as % of retail price in 1999 for imported and domestic cigarettes as 74% and 64%, respectively. Overall, cigarettes tax accounted for 67% of retail prices in 1999.

![Graph of Prices of the Most Popular Brands and Total Cigarette Tax as % of Retail Prices, 1999]

Source: The World Bank Estimates

Health Issues

In 1990, there were an estimated 368 deaths per 100,000 males aged over 45 from cancers of the trachea, lung and bronchus in Egypt. By comparison, only 20 females 100,000 over 45 died of these diseases. For all smoking related diseases, mortality rates for women are substantially lower than men, reflecting relatively low smoking prevalence among women. A large part of the gender differences in these mortality rates is attributable to tobacco use.
Tobacco Control Measures

?? Health warning and cigarette ingredients are required to be shown on cigarette packages. Cigarette advertising is also banned in Tunisia.

?? Smoking is banned on public transportation and restricted in many places, such as educational facilities, government buildings, health care facilities.

?? Public information messages on television alert the public to the health hazards of smoking are available in Tunisia.

Production and Trade

?? RNTA (Regie Nationale des Tabacs et des Allumettes) is the sole cigarettes manufacturer in Tunisia. In 1999, Tunisia produced 9,200 million cigarettes, or 82% of its consumption. The rest are imported cigarettes.

Overall, Tunisia is a net tobacco importer. In 1997, the net trade deficits from tobacco was about 10 million US dollars, considerably lower than 1996’s 29 million US dollars deficits.

*Source: USDA*

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*Source: FAO*