

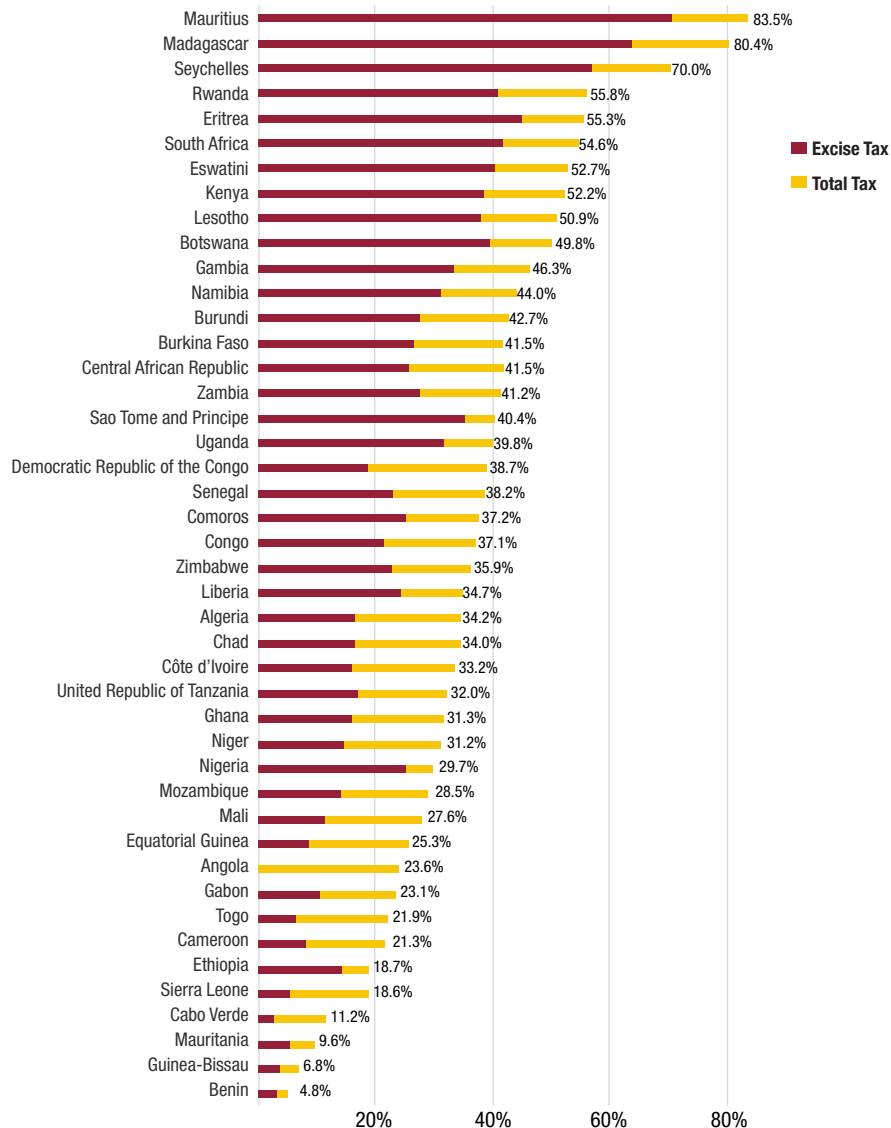
CIGARETTE TAXES IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES



Highest Excise and Total Tax Burden

The WHO recommends at least a 70% specific excise tax burden on tobacco products,¹ and the WHO Global Tobacco Control Report sets a policy target of at least 75% total tax burden of the most sold brand of cigarettes.² Figure 1 below shows the tax burdens as the percentage of the retail price of the most sold brand of cigarettes in each African country. Tables 1 and 2 show the top 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of tobacco excise and total tax burdens.

FIGURE 1: Excise and Total Tax Share in the Price of a Pack of the Most Sold Brand of Cigarettes, 2018



SOURCE: WHO Global Tobacco Control Report, 2019. (Table 9.1.1)

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TABLE 1: Top 10 Sub-Saharan African countries in terms of largest excise tax share of price

	COUNTRY	TOTAL EXCISE
1	Mauritius	70.5%
2	Sudan	63.6%
3	Madagascar	63.6%
4	Seychelles	57.0%
5	Eritrea	44.6%
6	South Africa	41.6%
7	Rwanda	40.6%
8	Eswatini	40.4%
9	Botswana	39.2%
10	Kenya	38.5%

TABLE 2: Top 10 Sub-Saharan African countries in terms of total tax share of price

	COUNTRY	TOTAL TAX
1	Mauritius	83.5%
2	Madagascar	80.4%
3	Seychelles	70.1%
4	Sudan	69.8%
5	Rwanda	55.9%
6	Eritrea	55.4%
7	South Africa	54.6%
8	Eswatini	52.7%
9	Kenya	52.3%
10	Lesotho	50.9%

NOTE: Lesotho ranks 11th in terms of excise tax burden (37.8%) while Botswana ranks 11th in terms of total tax burden at 49.9%.
SOURCE: WHO Global Tobacco Control Report 2019. (Table 9.9.1)

Type of Excise Taxes Applied

Among the countries with the highest excise and total tax burdens (listed in Tables 1 and 2),

- Six apply a specific excise tax system (best practice):
 - Eswatini
 - Mauritius
 - Kenya
 - Seychelles
 - Lesotho
 - South Africa
- Two apply a mixed excise system (both specific and *ad valorem* excise taxes):
 - Botswana (greater reliance on specific excise)
 - Rwanda (greater reliance on *ad valorem*)
- Three apply *ad-valorem* excise tax only:
 - Madagascar
 - Sudan
 - Eritrea
- All apply a uniform tax rate regardless of cigarettes prices or characteristics (best practice)

Affordability

Effective tobacco tax systems make tobacco products expensive. As of 2018, among the countries with the highest excise and total tax burdens (listed in Tables 1 and 2),

- Only two made cigarettes more expensive since 2008:
 - Mauritius
 - Madagascar
- Only two made cigarettes more expensive between 2016 and 2018:
 - Mauritius
 - Botswana



In Sub-Saharan Africa, only Mauritius stands out as the country that applies best practices for tobacco taxation. Mauritius:

- **has the highest share of excise and total taxes as a percent of retail price of most-sold cigarette brands, in line with WHO's recommendations;**
- **employs a pure specific excise tax system with a uniform tax rate; and**
- **has continually made cigarettes more expensive since 2018.**

1. World Health Organization. (2010). WHO Technical Manual on Tobacco Tax Administration. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/44316>. 2. World Health Organization. (2019). WHO Global Tobacco Control Report, 2019: Offer to help quit tobacco. Geneva: World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/tobacco/global_report/en/.