Larger, picture health warnings and plain packaging: The continuing worldwide trend

This report – Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report – provides an international overview ranking 206 countries/jurisdictions based on warning size, and lists those that have finalized requirements for picture warnings. Regional breakdowns are also provided. This report is in its seventh edition, with the sixth edition dated September 2018.

There has been tremendous progress internationally in implementing package health warnings, with many countries increasing warning size, more countries requiring picture warnings, and an increasing number of countries requiring multiple rounds of picture warnings. The worldwide trend for larger, picture health warnings is continuing and unstoppable, with many more countries in the process of developing such requirements. There is also enormous international momentum for implementation of plain packaging.

Report highlights include:

• 134 countries/jurisdictions worldwide have now required picture warnings, representing a global public health achievement. By the end of 2018, 117 countries/jurisdictions had implemented picture warnings. Canada was the first country to implement picture warnings in 2001.

• Altogether 70% of the world’s population is covered by the 134 countries/jurisdictions that have finalized picture warning requirements.

• Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Turkey now have the largest warning requirements in the world at 92.5% on average of the package front and back. Maldives, Nepal, and Vanuatu together with Benin (2022) are tied for third at 90%. In the 2018 report, Timor-Leste was top ranked at 92.5%, and has since been matched by Turkey.

• In total 122 countries/jurisdictions have required warnings to cover at least 50% of the package front and back (on average), up from 107 in 2018 and 24 in 2008. There are now 70 countries/jurisdictions with a size of at least 65% (on average) of the package front and back, and 10 with at least 85%.

• Progress since the 2018 report includes Turkey increasing picture warning size from 65% to 92.5% (85% front, 100% back) and implementing plain packaging; Maldives increasing warning size from 30% to 90% and requiring pictures; Benin adopting 90% picture warnings (effective in 2022); Gambia increasing warning size from 30% to 81.5% and requiring pictures; Mauritania requiring 70% picture warnings; Ethiopia increasing warning size from 30% to 70% and requiring pictures; Burkina Faso implementing 60% picture warnings; the United States adopting 50% picture warnings (effective 2022); and Colombia and Mexico implementing their 12th round of picture warnings. Since the 2018 report, countries/jurisdictions that had not previously implemented picture warnings and that finalized picture requirements include Albania, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gambia, Iraq, Maldives, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niue, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United States, and Uzbekistan.

• There are at least 38 countries/territories moving forward with plain packaging, with 21 having adopted the measure, 3 having it in practice, and 14 working on it. At the time of the 2018 report, 9 countries had adopted plain packaging and 16 were considering it. Plain packaging was first implemented in Australia in 2012 followed by France and the United Kingdom in 2016. Since the 2018 report, plain packaging has been adopted by Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Guernsey, Jersey, Myanmar, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand and Turkey.

Here are the top 10 countries/territories in terms of health warning size as an average of the front and back:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Well-designed package warnings are a highly cost-effective means to increase awareness of the health effects and to reduce tobacco use, as recognized by Guidelines to implement Article 11 (packaging and labelling) adopted under the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). A picture says a thousand words. Pictures can convey a message with far more impact than can a text-only message. For size, the effectiveness of warnings increases with size. A larger size allows for bigger and better pictures, a larger font size, and/or additional information, including cessation information.

Plain packaging would curb the industry’s use of the package as a promotional vehicle, would reduce the appeal of tobacco products, would increase the effectiveness of package warnings, would curb package deception, and would decrease tobacco use. Plain packaging is recommended for consideration by international guidelines under the FCTC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2001; 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2002; 2004; 2009; 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>2004; 2006; 2013; 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>2005; 2007; 2010; 2014; 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>2005; 2009; 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>2006; 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2006; 2012; rotation of 2 sets every 12 months for both 2006 and 2012 rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>2006; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2019; 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>2006; rotation of 3 sets every 12 months starting 2011; 2016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>S.A.R. China (2007; 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>2008; 2018; rotation of 2 sets every 12 months for both 2008 and 2018 rounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>2008; 2016*</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2008; 2016;* 2021</td>
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<td>Egypt</td>
<td>2008; 2010; 2012; 2014; 2016; 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>2008; 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>Iran</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>2009; 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taiwan, China</td>
<td>2009; 2014; 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>2009; 2011; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>India</td>
<td>2009; 2011; 2013; 2016; 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021</td>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>(2010, rotation of 3 sets every 24 months)</td>
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<td>Liechtenstein</td>
<td>(2010, rotation of 3 sets every 24 months)</td>
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<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>(2010; 2013)</td>
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<td>Turkey</td>
<td>(2010; 2019; 2021)</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
<td>(2011)</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
<td>(2011; 2016*)</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>(2011; 2016*)</td>
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<td>Guernsey</td>
<td>(2011; 2021)</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>(2011; 2017*)</td>
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<td>Jersey</td>
<td>(2012; 2012)</td>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>(2012)</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
<td>(2012; 2016*)</td>
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<td>(2012; 2014; 2016; 2019)</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>(2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>(2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>(2016; 2018; 2021)</td>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>(2016)</td>
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<td>South Korea</td>
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<td>(2016)</td>
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<td>Greenland (Denmark)</td>
<td>(2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sudan &amp; Khartoum state</td>
<td>(2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>(2017)</td>
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<td>Belarus</td>
<td>(2017)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>(2017)*</td>
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<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>(2017)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>(2017*)</td>
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<td>(2017, rotation of 2 sets every 12 months)</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>(2017)*</td>
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<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>(2017)</td>
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<td>Laos</td>
<td>(2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>(2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>(2018)</td>
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<td>Moldova, Republic of</td>
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<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>(2019)</td>
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<td>Turks and Caicos Islands (UK)</td>
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<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>(2018; 2019)</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>(2019; 2021)</td>
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<td>Guyana</td>
<td>(2019)</td>
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<td>Iraq</td>
<td>(2019)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burkina, Faro</td>
<td>(2019; 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>(2019)</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>(2020)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>(2020)</td>
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<td>Niue</td>
<td>(2020)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>(2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>(2021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>(2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>(2021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>(2021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>(2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>(2022)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>(2022, rotation of 2 sets every 12 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>(2022)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For EU countries there is a rotation of 3 sets of 14 warnings every 12 months pursuant to Directive 2014/40/EU.
#### World’s Largest Warning Sizes

This listing indicates the world leaders in terms of size as an average of the package front and back. Only those countries with at least 70% on average are listed here (a full table begins on page 8). For each country the size (including a border, if required) is indicated in parentheses for the front, followed by the back. For example, (60%, 70%) means 60% of front and 70% of back.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Front Size</th>
<th>Back Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>(85%, 100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>(85%, 100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>(90%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>(90%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>(90%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>(90%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>(75%, 100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>(85%, 85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>(85%, 85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>(85%, 85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>(75%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>(75%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niue</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>(75%, 90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>(81.5%, 81.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>(80%, 80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>(80%, 80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>(80%, 80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>(78%, 78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(75%, 75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>(70%, 70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>(70%, 70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>(70%, 70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
<td>43 countries/jurisdictions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Regional Breakdown for Picture Health Warnings

**16 African Region (AFRO)**
- Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda

**24 Americas Region (AMRO)**
- Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Cayman Islands (UK), Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands (UK), United States, Uruguay, Venezuela

**14 Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO)**
- Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan & Khartoum state, U.A.E., Yemen

**9 South East Asian Region (SEARO)**
- Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste

**51 European Region (EURO)**
- Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Greenland (Denmark), Guernsey, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jersey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan

**20 Western Pacific Region (WPRO)**
- Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Hong Kong (S.A.R., China), Laos, Macau (S.A.R., China), Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Niue, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Taiwan (China), Vanuatu, Vietnam
Largest Warning Size by Region

This section provides size rankings per region as an average of front/back. For each country there is indicated in parentheses the size (including a border, if required) on the front, followed by the back. For example, (30%, 90%) means 30% of front and 90% of back. The regions indicated on this page are the six regions used by WHO.

The Historical Evolution of the World’s Largest Cigarette Package Health Warnings

The following lists each occasion where a new world precedent was set in terms of the size of cigarette package health warnings. The listing refers to size as an average of the package front and back. The listing includes the year of implementation.

20% Canada, 1989
25% Thailand, 1993
29% Australia, 1995
30% Poland, 1998
35% Canada, 1994 (including border) # *

80% Uruguay, November 2009
82.5% Australia, 2012
85% Thailand, 2014
90% Nepal, 2015
92.5% Timor-Leste, 2018

# Warning size including the border varied somewhat depending on package format.
* The 1994 Canadian warnings were 25% plus a 3mm border surrounding the warning. This worked out to be about 35% including the border, although this varied depending on package format. Australia (1995) and Poland (1998) are included in the listing because respectively at the time they had the world’s largest warning size without a border.
50%+
Countries /jurisdictions requiring warnings of at least 50% of package front /back (on average)

30%+
Countries /jurisdictions requiring warnings on at least 30% of package front /back (on average)

Obligations under the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

Pursuant to Article 11 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the international tobacco control treaty, Parties to the Convention must require that all packages of tobacco products carry health warnings describing the harmful effects of tobacco use or other appropriate messages which “should be 50% or more of the principal display areas but shall be no less than 30% of the display areas” and may be in the form of or include picture warnings. For most cigarette packages, the “principal display areas” are the front and back of the package. Warnings must be in the national language or languages, must be rotated (a single warning is insufficient), must apply to cartons and other outer packages sold to consumers, and must be applied to all categories of tobacco products. Non-health messages (e.g. “Quit, save money”) may be included. Under the FCTC, no exceptions are allowed for duty-free stores, or for small volume brands. Each Party must implement warning requirements pursuant to Article 11 within three years after the FCTC comes into force for that Party.

Article 11 also has a provision regarding emission information elsewhere on the package, with the Article 11 Guidelines providing that qualitative information should be used without tar and nicotine ISO yield numbers. Further, Article 11 requires Parties to ensure that the industry’s use of the package is not “false, misleading, deceptive or likely to create an erroneous impression”. At least 137 countries/jurisdictions have specifically prohibited “light” and/or “mild” descriptors for cigarettes, and often other misleading descriptors as well.
Health warnings on packages of tobacco products are a highly cost-effective means of health communication. Package warnings reach every smoker (and consumers of other tobacco products) every day. Warnings are always working — 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. A pack a day smoker would take his or her pack out 20 times per day, 7300 times per year. Warnings are also seen by those around the consumers, such as family, friends and co-workers.

Effective package warnings increase awareness of the health effects and reduce tobacco use. As a result of health warnings, consumers receive more information, not less. Consumers are entitled to be fully informed of the many health effects of tobacco products, and the package is the best way to do that. Studies show that consumers, including children, underestimate the health effects, in low-, middle- and high-income countries.

Health departments determine the content of warnings, but the tobacco industry pays the cost. With such an extraordinary reach, it is not surprising that so many governments are improving package warning requirements. The tobacco industry opposes larger, picture warnings as a way to protect sales volumes — if such warnings would not work, then why is the industry so often opposed? An abundance of research studies as well as country experience, provide overwhelming evidence about the beneficial impact of larger, picture warnings.

Larger size is more effective

The FCTC Article 11 Guidelines recognize that the effectiveness of health warnings increases with size, and that “Parties should consider [...] more than 50%” and “aim to cover as much of the principal display areas as possible”.

A larger size means that warnings are more visible, more important, and have more impact. A larger size allows for bigger and better pictures, a larger font size and/or additional information, including cessation information. Further, a larger size makes it more difficult for the branded promotional part of the package to distract the consumer’s attention away from the warning. That larger sizes are more effective is confirmed by the considered decisions of governments worldwide where the trend is very much to increase warning size.

A picture says a thousand words

Pictures can convey a message with far more impact than can a text-only message. A picture really does say a thousand words. Pictures are particularly significant for individuals who are illiterate or who have low literacy, an aspect especially important in many countries. Pictures are also important to immigrants, temporary workers, as well as individuals from minority language groups who may not yet be able to read the national language(s).

Where tobacco advertising is not yet banned, tobacco companies use colour pictures in tobacco advertising. Further, the tobacco industry has often printed colour pictures on packages. If tobacco companies have used pictures to promote tobacco products, then governments should be able to use pictures to discourage tobacco use.

The feasibility of implementing picture warnings has been demonstrated in more than 130 countries/jurisdictions. If these countries can do it, then all countries can. It is notable that often, in the very same cigarette factory, some packages have picture warnings and some do not, depending on the country of destination.

To ensure better visibility and impact, picture warnings should be placed on both the front and back of the package (not just one of these), and should be placed at the top of the front/back, not the bottom, as provided in the Article 11 Guidelines.

The table on pages 8–11 lists sizes for both the package front and back, recognizing that the front is more important due to greater visibility. There should be a large number of warnings appearing concurrently, and each set of warnings should be changed frequently, such as every 12 months, to convey information on the many health effects, and to keep warnings fresh and reduce wear out.
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country / Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Picture Warnings</th>
<th>Average Front / Back</th>
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<th>Plain Packaging</th>
<th>Minimum Size</th>
<th>Article 11</th>
<th>FCTC Deadline</th>
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# Countries/jurisdictions that are not Parties to the FCTC.
* Countries/jurisdictions that follow the EU Directive 2001/37/EC.\textsuperscript{51-54}
** Countries/jurisdictions that implement plain packaging in practice because of the country from which packages are imported.

In the table, the indicated average size for the front and back has been rounded; for example 12.5% appears as 13%. For countries with an average size of at least 80%, the average size has not been rounded.

Other countries: The following two countries are not listed in this report as information was not confirmed at press time: North Korea (D.P.R. Korea)\textsuperscript{50} and Tunisia.
Plain packaging – tremendous international momentum

Plain packaging prohibits brand colours, logos and design elements on packages, and would require that packages only come in a standard shape, material and format. (Plain packaging is also referred to as “standardized packaging”, or “plain and standardized packaging”, or “generic packaging”). Under plain packaging, health warnings continue to appear, but the brand portion of the package would have the same colour (e.g. drab brown) for all brands. The brand name would be allowed on packages, but only in a standard location, colour (e.g. light grey), font style and size.

Plain packaging would curb the industry’s use of the package as a promotional vehicle, would reduce the appeal of tobacco products, would increase the effectiveness of package warnings, would curb package deception, and would decrease tobacco use. Packages should not be used as mini-billboards promoting tobacco use. Both the Article 11 58 and the Article 13 59 Guidelines under the FCTC recommend that Parties consider implementing plain packaging. Plain packaging is supported by extensive evidence.60 The theme for the World Health Organization’s World No Tobacco Day on May 31, 2016 was “Get Ready for Plain Packaging”.61 Australia’s world precedent setting plain packaging had full implementation at the retail level as of Dec. 1, 2012.

There is tremendous international momentum on plain packaging. There are at least 38 countries/territories moving forward with plain packaging, with 21 having adopted the measure, 3 having it in practice, and 14 working on it. Plain packaging has been implemented in Australia (2012), France (2016), United Kingdom (2016), Norway (2017), Ireland (2017), New Zealand (2018), Saudi Arabia (2019), Turkey (2019), Thailand (2019), Canada (2019), Uruguay (2019), Slovenia (2020), Belgium (2020), Israel (2020), Singapore (2020), Netherlands (2020), Denmark (2021), and Guernsey (2021), and will be implemented in Hungary (2022), Jersey (2022) and Myanmar (2022). Plain packaging has been implemented in practice in 3 countries where packages are imported from a country with plain packaging – Monaco (from France), Cook Islands (from New Zealand), and Niue (from Australia). Plain packaging is under formal consideration in at least 14 countries: Armenia, Chile, Costa Rica, Finland, Georgia, Iran, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, and Sri Lanka. Timor-Leste has requirements that are very close to plain packaging.

Countries/jurisdictions requiring plain packaging

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<td>6. New Zealand</td>
<td>Mar. 14, 2018</td>
<td>June 6, 2018</td>
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<td>7. Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>8. Thailand</td>
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<td>9. Canada</td>
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<td>11. Uruguay</td>
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<td>15. Singapore</td>
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<td>17. Denmark</td>
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<td>18. Guernsey</td>
<td>July 31, 2021</td>
<td>July 31, 2022</td>
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</table>


Monaco,67 Cook Islands, Cook Islands, Niue – Plain packaging in practice; packages imported from France, New Zealand and Australia, respectively.

European Union – Tobacco Products Directive adopted April 3, 2014, explicitly states that 27 EU countries have the option of implementing plain packaging.76

Timor-Leste – Has made substantial though not complete progress towards plain packaging, with requirements effective Sept. 6, 2018. Brand portion of packages must be in standard base colour, but logos and brand names in stylized fonts are still allowed (though only in white).77
Countries in progress

Armenia – On Feb. 13, 2020, plain packaging legislation was adopted to come into effect Jan. 1, 2024, though technical regulations are still necessary to be adopted.62

Chile – Bill with regulatory authority approved by Senate July 9, 2015, approved by House Health Committee Jan. 22, 2018, forwarded to House Agricultural Committee, which held hearings on at least Oct. 5, 2021.63

Costa Rica – On May 5, 2021, plain packaging bill that would still require an implementing regulation introduced in the Legislative Assembly and signed by at least 28 of 57 members.64

Finland – On Sept. 24, 2021, Finland notified a draft decree to require plain packaging, with a proposed coming into force date of Jan. 1, 2023.65

Georgia – Legislation adopted May 30, 2017, with regulatory authority to require plain packaging.66

Iran – Plain packaging approved by President in 2019 and national guidelines for plain packaging developed,67 but regulations not yet adopted.

Malaysia – On Feb. 12, 2019, Deputy Health Minister stated that plain packaging is under consideration.68

Mauritius – On Dec. 16, 2020, Mauritius notified draft plain packaging regulations.69

Mexico – In its 2020 Report to the FCTC, Mexico identified plain packaging as a priority.70

Nepal – On May 8, 2017, Minister of Health announced that Nepal to have plain packaging by 2018.71

South Africa – On May 9, 2018, a draft bill to be introduced in Parliament was published with a consultation period ending Aug. 9, 2018.72

South Korea – On May 21, 2019, Ministry of Health and Welfare announced an intention to implement plain packaging as part of a set of intended Comprehensive Tobacco Control Policies.73

Spain – On Mar. 11, 2021, Minister of Health stated that a comprehensive tobacco control plan was being developed that would include plain packaging.74

Sri Lanka – On Apr. 10, 2018, Cabinet approved plain packaging legislation to be drafted, and on May 3, 2018, the government stated that plain packaging was a priority.75
Minimum surface area

More countries/jurisdictions are requiring a minimum surface area for warnings, in addition to a minimum percentage size for the package front/back. This can help deal with small package formats, and "superslims" cigarette packages, to ensure a minimum overall area for the warning. For cigarettes, though things can vary, the common standard-length seen internationally is about 83-84 mm, resulting in the surface of a flip-top package front/back being about 49 cm$^2$.

Here are minimum surface areas for warnings for cigarette packages, though this is not an exhaustive list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Minimum Surface Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quebec (Canadian province)</td>
<td>46.5 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada, front &amp; back (2022)</td>
<td>43.7 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand, back (2018)</td>
<td>46.8 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand, front (2018)</td>
<td>35.1 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia, back (2012)</td>
<td>42.1 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia, front (2012)</td>
<td>35.1 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comoros, front &amp; back (2014)</td>
<td>30.0 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU, front &amp; back (2016)</td>
<td>22.9 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK, front &amp; back (2016)</td>
<td>22.9 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guernsey (2021) and Jersey (2022)</td>
<td>14.0 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India, front &amp; back (2016)</td>
<td>14.0 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan, front &amp; back, or 18.2 cm$^2$ if only one principal display area (2020)</td>
<td>13.0 cm$^2$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For Canada, the 43.7 cm$^2$ minimum area applies for any cigarette. Canada has two categories of cigarette lengths, regular, and king size, with king size defined as 82.0 mm to 85.0 mm, comparable to the typical international standard length. For king size cigarettes in Canada, the minimum warning surface area is 51.0 cm$^2$. Canada requires cigarettes to be sold in the slide and shell package format, which increases minimum warning surface area. Comoros and India are examples that apply their minimum warning surface area to all tobacco products.
Information Collection

Considerable effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this report. Information obtained as of October 22, 2021, has been included to ensure that the report was as up-to-date as possible before publication. However, for a few countries, it was not possible to confirm national requirements prior to press time. Moreover, national requirements for package warnings are constantly evolving and, as such, it may be that for some countries listed in this report further progress may have been made but is not reflected in this report.

Country information was only included in this report once legal requirements (such as an Act, regulation, or decree) were finalized, and no further approval steps were needed. For some countries, the transition period for warning implementation on packages has not been completed; however, if no further approval steps were needed, these new requirements were included in the report. Where new information for a country could not be confirmed prior to publication, this new information was not included.

This report provides information only for packages of cigarettes, not other tobacco products. Information for cigarette cartons has not been compiled.

For More Information

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/global-resources
www.tobaccocontrollaws.org
Tobacco Labelling Resource Centre
www.tobaccolabels.ca
Institute for Global Tobacco Control,
Tobacco Pack Surveillance System
http://globaltobaccocontrol.org/tpackss/
FCTC Guidelines for Article 11 (packaging and labelling)
WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
http://www.who.int/fctc
1. New Zealand: Rotation of two sets of 7 warnings every 12 months for both 2008 and 2018 rounds.

2. India: For the rounds in 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, only one picture warning appearing at a time.

3. Australia: Rotation of two sets of 7 warnings every 12 months, for both 2006 and 2012 rounds. In addition to the 90% warning on the package back, Australia also requires a message "Australian fire risk standard compliant. Use care in disposal.", which appears on the bottom 10% of the package back.

4. Cook Islands: Warnings are to either comply with the Australian or New Zealand requirements (which include pictures), or to require 50% text warnings with specified messages in English and in Cook Islands Maori. In practice, packages have depicted pictures as required in New Zealand (or perhaps previously Australia).

5. Niue: Picture warnings to be 90% front and 90% back, or to comply with warning requirements from specified countries as notified by Health Minister in Niue Island Gazette. Though Gazette notification had not been obtained at press time, cigarette packages in Niue are from Australia.

6. Sri Lanka: Regulations require a partial change every six months to the set of warnings required to appear on packages. However, this change has not been occurring.

7. Ethiopia: Size is 70% plus a 1 mm border surrounding the warning, with 78% size based on available packs.


9. Myanmar: For 2016-2021 inclusive, only one picture warning appeared at a time, changed every 12 months. Starting in 2022, a series of warnings to appear concurrently.


11. Mauritania: Implementation date of Nov. 6, 2020, pursuant to Order No. 64/MS on the Packaging and Labelling of Tobacco Products, was extended into 2021.

12. Guernsey, Jersey: Guernsey and Jersey are Crown dependencies located in the English Channel that are neither part of the UK nor part of the EU. The Guernsey 2011 round and the Jersey 2012 round implemented the EU 2001 Directive.

13. Hungary: For the first round (2012), 42 picture warnings were to be rotated over 3 years, with the difference between the most and least frequently appearing warnings not allowed to be more than 10%.

14. Northern Ireland: Effective Jan. 1, 2021, Northern Ireland maintained EU 65% picture warning content requirements following the UK’s leaving the EU, while the remainder of the UK implemented new 65% picture warning content requirements.

15. Turkmenistan: There are unconfirmed reports of second and third rounds of picture warnings in 2018 and 2021.

16. Mexico: Two warnings to be displayed for 6 months beginning Dec. 1, 2017, and two sets of 4 warnings to be displayed for 12 months each beginning June 1, 2018 and June 1, 2019. In prior years, warnings changed every 3 months, every 4 months or every 6 months. For June 2020 to Nov. 2020 there was a separate round. Subsequent rounds are from Dec. 2020 to Feb. 28, 2022, and Mar. 1, 2022, to Feb. 8, 2023.

17. Burkina Faso: Joint Administrative Decree No. 2015- No. 366, approved April 7, 2015, requires 60% picture warnings effective 12 months after coming into force, but following implementation delays picture warnings were implemented in 2019. For the 2019 round, one warning was to appear for 12 months beginning in 2019 followed by a second in 2020. For the 2021 round, one warning was to appear in 2021, and one in 2022.

18. Jamaica: Rotation of two sets of 8 warnings every 12 months.

19. Namibia: 50% front, 60% back, plus a border of unspecified size. Size estimated based on available packages.

20. Liechtenstein: Rotation of one of three sets of 14 warnings every 24 months. Liechtenstein is in a customs union with Switzerland. Liechtenstein law requires that tobacco packages depict Switzerland's health warnings.

21. Switzerland: Rotation of one of three sets of 14 warnings every 24 months.

22. Chile: From 2006 to 2012 inclusive, Chile required only one picture warning to appear at a time on all packages, with the warning changed every 12 months. Effective 2013, Chile required a series of warnings to appear concurrently.

23. Honduras: The information on earlier rounds of picture warnings is based on best available information.

24. Japan: 50% plus 1 mm line separating warning and rest of package, though government mock-up and packs obtained show line somewhat wider.

25. Madagascar: A 2017 Interministerial Administrative Order contains requirements for 2017 and 2018 requiring warnings all of which were included in the 2015 and 2016 rounds.

26. Nigeria: Size to increase to 60% in 2024.

27. Saint Lucia: Rotation of two sets of 8 warnings every 12 months.

28. Trinidad and Tobago: Rotation of two sets of 8 warnings every 12 months. The Tobacco Control Regulations, 2013, published January 10, 2014, required 50% picture warnings 12 months after publication, but these were never implemented. Through The Tobacco Control (Amendment) Regulations, 2019, with parliamentary approval Feb. 12, 2021, 50% picture warnings will come into effect in 2022.

29. Turks and Caicos (UK): Imported products must have 50% picture warnings, but warning content not specified. Warning content for 50% picture warnings specified for domestic manufacturers.

30. United States: Rule for 50% picture warnings adopted Mar. 18, 2020, to come into force June 18, 2021. The implementation date has been delayed several times by court orders, with the date modified to Oct. 11, 2022.

31. Lebanon: Size is 40% plus a border, with size estimated based on available packs. The Decree provides for a maximum border width of 3mm, provides no minimum, and provides a mockup with a 3mm width.

32. Jordan: Size is 40% plus a border as illustrated in the national standard.

33. Bosnia and Herzegovina: Implemented through separate requirements of two subnational governments: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Republika Srpska.

34. Paraguay: Two sets of 2 warnings, changed every 12 months.

35. Eritrea: The Proclamation to Provide for Tobacco Control provides that warnings shall be 30% or more, and should be 50% or more, of the package front and back.

36. Sudan & Khartoum state: Sudan nationally and the Sudan state of Khartoum each have their own requirements for the same 30% picture warnings effective in 2016.

37. Tanzania: Zanzibar, a subnational region of Tanzania, adopted Tobacco Control Regulations, 2016 requiring 70% text warnings, but this has not been implemented.

38. Cuba: Warnings may appear on either 30% of both the front and back, or 60% of one of the front or back. Packages obtained depict warnings on 60% of the back.

39. South Africa: 15% front, 25% back plus a border of unspecified width.

40. Cayman Islands (UK): Regulations require picture health warning to appear on either front or back. The size shall be at least 30%, and no less than the size required by the country of origin.

41. Morocco: Size estimated based on available packs. Legislation requires a warning on the back, but does not specify a minimum size.

42. Zambia: Size estimated based on available packs. Legislation requires a warning on the front and back, but does not specify a minimum size.
43. **Andorra**: In practice, packages tend to depict picture warnings from France or Spain.

44. **Barbados**: The **Health Services (Packaging and Labelling of Tobacco Products) Regulations, 2017** require 60% picture warnings effective in 2018, but there have been implementation delays.

45. **Bhutan**, in 2010, banned tobacco product sales, but allowed importation by individuals of limited quantities for personal consumption provided certain conditions are met, including that the package contains a health warning (no minimum warning size specified). In Aug. 2020, during COVID-19 circumstances, Bhutan reversed the sales ban for an unspecified temporary period.

46. **Gabon**: **Decree No. 0284/PR/MSPPSN Concerning the Packaging of Tobacco Products in the Republic of Gabon** requires text warnings on front 60% and back 65% in 2016, but there have been implementation delays.

47. **Monaco**: In practice, packs follow France requirements. **The Convention of Neighbours of May 18, 1963**, an agreement between France and Monaco, provides that Monaco will purchase tobacco products for consumption in Monaco from the Service d’Exploitation Industrielle des Tabacs et Allumettes (SEITA) of France.

48. **Niger**: **The Technical Requirements Relating to Administrative Order No. 442/MS/DPG/DHPEES**, adopted Nov. 5, 2019, specify the picture warning content and a 70% size, but implementation has been delayed.

49. **San Marino**: No national regulation. Most cigarettes are imported from Italy and follow Italian package warning requirements. There is now a domestic brand that has depicted voluntary text warnings of less than 30%.

50. **North Korea (D.P.R. Korea)**: The **Tobacco Control Law of DPR Korea**, Decree No.1176 of June 24, 2016 (revised and consolidated), provides that a warning is to be required on packages, but does not specify the size, location or content. At least some packages depict a 30% text warning on the package front and back.

51. **EU**: Tobacco Products Directive, 2014/40/EU provides that the 27 EU member countries must require 65% picture warnings at the manufacturer level effective May 20, 2016. Three sets of 14 picture warnings are to be changed every 12 months. The following 5 EU countries did not implement the new requirements until 2017: Croatia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Spain.

52. **EU**: The following non-EU countries/jurisdictions have continued to implement the 2001 EU Directive, and have done so properly in terms of the border surrounding the warning, which increases the overall size of the warning area: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland. (The overall size including the border may vary depending on the package format, e.g. the overall size increases on smaller packages, and on superslims “purse” packages.)

53. **EU**: The following non-EU countries/jurisdictions have continued to implement the 2001 EU Directive, but are not compliant in terms of the border: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia.

54. **EU**: Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Liechtenstein are non-EU countries that continue to require trilingual warnings with EU size requirements pursuant to the 2001 Directive, though Bosnia and Herzegovina is non-compliant with border requirements. The 2001 EU Directive had different size requirements depending if unilingual, bilingual or trilingual health warnings were required.

55. **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**.

56. **World Health Organization**, **WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic 2021**.

57. See Tobacco Labelling Resource Centre, [www.tobaccolabels.ca](http://www.tobaccolabels.ca)

58. **Guidelines for implementation of Article 11 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (Packaging and labelling of tobacco products)**.

59. **Guidelines for implementation of Article 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship)**.

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**Notes for Plain Packaging**


65. **Finland**: draft Decree of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health amending the Decree of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on the warning marking of retail packaging of tobacco and related products, Notification 2021/618/FIN to EU, Sept. 24, 2021.

66. **Georgia**: Law No. 4059-RS on Tobacco Control (2010), as amended by Law No. 859-TIC of May 17, 2017 (signed by President May 30, 2017), Article 4, subparagraph 2(c).

67. **Iran**: Islamic Republic of Iran 2020 FCTC Report, pp. 34, 51.


69. **Mauritius**: Draft Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) Regulations 2020 notified to WTO, G/TBT/N/MUS/13, Dec. 16, 2020.

70. **Mexico**: Mexico 2020 FCTC Report, p. 63.


73. **South Korea**: Republic of Korea 2020 FCTC Report, pp. 26, 38, 58.


77. **Timor-Leste**: Ministerial Statutory Order N° 10/2018 of May 9, Regulations for Labelling of Tobacco Products.
Suggested Citation

Acknowledgement
The collaboration of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids in the preparation of this report is much appreciated. The information in this report has primarily been compiled by the Canadian Cancer Society, with further contributions from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the World Health Organization Tobacco Free Initiative, and the Framework Convention Alliance. Individuals from around the world gave their time to provide information and assistance, which is gratefully acknowledged.