

**ENSP**European Network
for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention

Netherlands

Tobacco Control Policies Implementation Level

In the Netherlands, tobacco control policies are mainly implemented through the Dutch Tobacco Act (Tabaks- en Rookwarenwet), which was first adopted in 1988 with new measures to be applied from 1 January 2022. More detailed rules can be found in lower regulations that build upon the Tobacco Act: The Tobacco Decree (Tabaks- en Rookwarenbesluit) and Tobacco Regulation (Tabaks- en Rookwarenregeling). Whereas back in the day the scope of the Tobacco Act was very limited, the scope of the Act has been widened over the years. The Act now includes a range of rules and measures, e.g., rules about packaging (including plain packaging for cigarettes and RYO tobacco), sales restrictions (e.g., a minimum age restriction for tobacco sales), a broad ban on advertisement and sponsorship, and a number smoking bans (for instance in government buildings, bars and restaurants, workplaces and on all school premises). Several rules in the Tobacco Act, e.g., the smoking bans and the ban on advertisement and sponsorship, also apply to e-cigarettes and heated tobacco.¹



In addition, the Netherlands, adopted Amending the Decree Implementing the Tobacco Act Relating to the Implementation of Directive 2014/40/EU on the Manufacture, Presentation and Sale of Tobacco and Related Products on 4 May 2016. On 19 September 2017, Amending the Tobacco and Smoking Products Decree was adopted.² In 2018, a National Prevention Agreement was concluded in The Netherlands, by civil society partners and the government. One of the goals in the agreement is to reach a Smoke-free Generation in 2040, which means less than 5% of Dutch adults and 0% of children (below 18 years old) and 0% of pregnant women smoke.

Additional details for The Netherlands show that:

- In 2020, 20,2% of Dutch adults (18+ years old) smoked. This amounts to about 2.8 million adults.³
- In 2019, 7,7% of Dutch youth (12 to 16 years old) smoked in the last month.⁴
- 28200 people still currently use smokeless tobacco, indicating an ongoing public health challenge, including heightened levels of oral cancers.⁵
- In 2019, 25,1% of Dutch students from 16 to 18 years old smoked in the last month.⁶
- The Netherlands provides a national quitline, and both NRT and some cessation services cost-covered.⁴
- About two-third of Dutch smokers started smoking before they turned 18 years old.⁷
- It is estimated that every week hundreds of Dutch kids get addicted to smoking.⁸
- In 2019, one in five deaths in the Netherlands can be attributed to tobacco consumption (including direct and second-hand smoking), which is higher than the EU average (21% compared to 17 %).⁹



WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) implementation level

Ratification: 27/01/2005

Entry into Force: 27/04/2006¹⁰

Policy	Status
Protection from tobacco smoke	
The comprehensiveness of protection in health-care facilities	Completed
The comprehensiveness of protection in educational facilities	Completed
Tobacco-related mortality	
Estimated total number of tobacco-related deaths	Almost 20.000 yearly
Taxation of tobacco products	
The proportion of the retail price consisting of taxes ¹¹	84,89%
Only specific tax levied	No
Only ad valorem tax levied	No
Combination of specific and ad valorem taxes levied	Yes
Supply of tobacco and tobacco products	
Tracking regime to further secure the distribution system developed	Yes
Sales of tobacco products to minors prohibited	Yes, legal age: 18
Sale of tobacco products from vending machines prohibited	Yes
Sale of cigarettes individually or in small packets prohibited	Yes
Tobacco growing	
Viable alternatives for tobacco growers promoted	Not applicable
The number of workers	Not applicable
General obligations	
Comprehensive multisectoral national tobacco control strategy	Yes
Focal point for tobacco control	Yes
National coordinating mechanism for tobacco control	Yes
Packaging and labelling of tobacco products	
Health warnings occupying 50% or more	Yes
Health warnings in the form of pictures or pictograms	Yes
Liability	
Criminal and/or civil liability action launched by any person	Yes
Education, communication, training, and public awareness	
Implemented educational programs targeted to adults	Yes
Implemented educational programs targeted to children and youth	Yes
Tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship	
Comprehensive ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship	Yes
Ban on display of tobacco products at points of sales	Yes
Ban covering tobacco sponsorship	Yes
Ban covering cross-border advertising originating from the country	Yes
Demand reduction measures concerning tobacco dependence and cessation	
Evidence-based comprehensive and integrated guidelines developed	Yes
Implemented media campaigns to promote tobacco cessation	Yes
Implemented telephone quit lines	Yes
Primary health care providing programs on diagnosis and treatment	Yes
Nicotine replacement therapy available	Yes
Surveillance	
National system for surveillance of patterns of tobacco consumption established	Yes
National system for surveillance of consequences of tobacco consumption established	Yes

National Action Points:

• Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies:

The central government has an online register in which all contacts with the tobacco industry are (or should be) registered. This could be developed into a more comprehensive system of tobacco industry monitoring.

• Protect people from tobacco smoke:

In the Netherlands, there is a large societal movement towards a Smoke-free Generation and as a result, many environments (e.g., sports clubs, kindergartens, amusement parks, train stations) are becoming smoke-free voluntarily. Next to this, there are smoke-free laws for multiple environments, e.g., government buildings, the hospitality sector, and school premises. Since 2022, there's also a complete ban on indoor smoking rooms. However, there is room for improvement in this area as well, as many environments (parks, beaches, terraces, cars) are not smoke-free yet.¹²

• **Offer help to quit tobacco use:** National quitline, and both NRT and some cessation services cost-covered by Dutch Government.¹³

• **Warn about the dangers of tobacco:** Cigarette pack health warnings are required to cover 65% of each the front and rear side of the tobacco product.

• Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship:

National TV and radio, International TV and radio, Local magazines and newspapers, Billboard and outdoor advertising, Advertising on the internet have been banned directly. Free distribution in the mail or through other means, Promotional discounts, non-tobacco products identified with tobacco brand names, Brand name of non-tobacco products used for tobacco product, Appearance in TV and/or films: tobacco brands (product placement), Any form of contribution (financial or other support) to any event, activity or individual, Publicity of financial or other sponsorship or support by the tobacco industry of events, activities, individuals have been banned indirectly.

• **Raise taxes on tobacco:** In 2020, a substantial increase in excise duties was introduced, directly impacting retail prices. As a result, A pack of cigarettes costs 8,20 since 1 April 2020. On average, prices per pack are slightly below 8 euros. Additional increases have been announced for 2023 and 2024, resulting in a price of about €10 per pack of 20 cigarettes.¹⁴

References:

- 1 Tobacco Control Laws: <https://www.tobaccocontrolaws.org/legislation/country/netherlands/laws>
- 2 Nationaal Expertisecentrum Tabaksontmoediging (2021), Kerncijfers roken 2020, <https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/fb5ba599-d9d5-4732-9b37-d8002cfe959d.pdf>
- 3 Trimbo-instituut (2020). Jeugd en riskant gedrag 2019, Kernegevens uit het Peilstationsonderzoek Scholieren, <https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/29856421-c89c-47f8-ac04-c7ce1cabad4b.pdf>
- 4 Tobacco Atlas Netherlands: <https://tobaccoatlas.org/country/netherlands/>
- 5 Trimbo-instituut (2020), Middelengebruik onder studenten van 16-18 jaar op het MBO en HBO 2019, <https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/b9a089b6-75bb-4864-9274-1ffc29ce1c79.pdf>
- 6 Calculations based on two reports: Trimbo-instituut (2020), Jeugd en riskant gedrag 2019. Kernegevens uit het Peilstationsonderzoek Scholieren
- 7 Trimbo-instituut (2017) Kinderen en Roken: een aantal feiten op een rij. <https://www.trimbos.nl/docs/cd97d930-6f39-41ca-9923-c02a6e17982e.pdf>
- 8 OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (2021), Netherlands: Country Health Profile 2021, State of Health in the EU, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/fd18ea00-en>
- 9 WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control: https://www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party_reports/nld/en/
- 10 Tobacco Atlas Netherlands: <https://tobaccoatlas.org/country/netherlands/>
- 11 European Commission: Excise Duty Tables (2021)
- 12 For more information: <https://rookvrijegeneratie.nl/op-de-kaart/>
- 13 Tobacco Atlas Netherlands: <https://tobaccoatlas.org/country/netherlands/>
- 14 For more information - Coalitieakkoord government Rutte IV, "Omzien naar elkaar, vooruitkijken naar de toekomst: <https://www.kabinetformatie2021.nl/documenten/publicaties/2021/12/15/coalitieakkoord-omzien-naar-elkaar-vooruitkijken-naar-de-toekomst>

