

# Costa Rica



How many people die from smoking in Costa Rica each year?

**1,694**

What is the annual cost-of-illness attributable to smoking in Costa Rica each year?

**170,903,979,425**

Costa Rican colons

## Current Rates of Smoking and Tobacco Use in Costa Rica

Tobacco use continues to be an epidemic in Costa Rica. Government complacency in the face of the tobacco epidemic protects the tobacco industry in Costa Rica as the death toll grows each year. Proponents of healthier societies must push for the implementation of evidence-based best practices in tobacco control to create change and reduce the negative effects of tobacco use.

### Adult Smoking Prevalence in Costa Rica

15+ years old; 2025

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Men</b>   | <b>Women</b> |
| <b>8.00%</b> | <b>2.70%</b> |

Adult smoking prevalence in Costa Rica is 5.40%.

### Number of Adult Smokers in Costa Rica

15+ years old; 2022

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Men</b>     | <b>Women</b>  |
| <b>267,000</b> | <b>92,000</b> |

Number of adult smokers in Costa Rica is 359,000.

### Youth Smoking Prevalence in Costa Rica

10-14 years old; 2023

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Boys</b> | <b>Girls</b> |
| <b>3.5%</b> | <b>4.87%</b> |

Youth smoking prevalence in Costa Rica is 4.17%.

### Adult Smokeless Tobacco Use in Costa Rica

15+ years old; smokeless tobacco includes snus, chewing tobacco, gutkha, etc.; 2022

**Both Men and Women**  
**0.20%**

Adult smokeless tobacco use prevalence in Costa Rica is 0.20%.

## Deaths Caused by Tobacco in Costa Rica

% deaths attributable to tobacco use in 2023

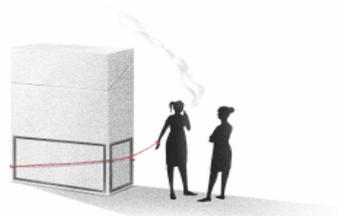


5.81% of all deaths in Costa Rica are caused by tobacco use.

Learn more about global **Prevalence**,  
**Youth Smoking and Deaths.**

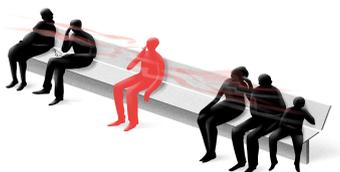
## Negative Effect of Tobacco Use in Costa Rica

Tobacco use harms both the public and fiscal health of Costa Rica, threatening efforts to improve equity, alleviate poverty, and protect the environment.



### Societal Harms

The annual cost-of-illness attributable to smoking in Costa Rica is 170,903,979,425 Costa Rican colons. This includes direct costs related to healthcare expenditures and indirect costs related to lost productivity caused by illness and premature death.



### Harms Development

Tobacco spending diverts funds from the resources that families need to rise out of poverty. On average in Costa Rica, a smoker must spend 2.6% of GDP per capita to buy 100 packs of the most popular cigarettes in a year.



### Environmental Harms

Cigarette butts are the most commonly discarded pieces of waste worldwide. It is estimated that 160 tons of butts wind up as toxic trash in Costa Rica each year, equal to 59 female African elephants.



### Harms Health Equity

The tobacco industry markets its products aggressively to lower-income populations and youth in Costa Rica.



### Harms NCDs

Not only is smoking a major risk factor for the 4 largest noncommunicable diseases (cancer, heart diseases, respiratory diseases, and diabetes), but people living with mental illness are nearly 2x as likely to smoke as other individuals.

Learn more about **Health Effects.**

## Impact of the Tobacco Supply Chain on Costa Rica

The tobacco industry profits significantly from producing and selling tobacco. At the same time, across the tobacco supply chain, there are significant negative health and economic repercussions for Costa Rica.



### Tobacco Production

There were more than 5,000,000,000,000 cigarettes produced in the world in 2019, or nearly 2 cigarettes per person per day.



### Tobacco Growing

There were 15 tons of tobacco produced in Costa Rica in 2023 on 8 hectares of quality agricultural land that could have been used to grow food.



### Tobacco Industry

The total revenue of the 6 largest tobacco companies in the world was USD 364 billion in 2023, about the same as Pakistan's Gross National Income (GNI), 5x Panama's GNI and 9x Paraguay's GNI.

Learn more about global **Growing** and **Product Sales**.

## Ending the Tobacco Epidemic in Costa Rica

Fortunately, there are evidence-based i.e. proven-solutions to the challenges posed by tobacco use. For several decades, governments around the world have been introducing a set of policies that address the demand for tobacco products, particularly among youth. These policies effectively reduce consumption and are cost-effective because they save governments enormous amounts of money in health care spending and increase economic productivity.

### Current Tobacco Control Policies in Costa Rica

#### Designated Smoke-Free Areas in Costa Rica

|                       |                        |              |                       |                |             |               |                  |                                |                       |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes                   | Yes                    | Yes          | Yes                   | Yes            | Yes         | Yes           | Yes              | NA                             | NA                    |
| Healthcare Facilities | Educational Facilities | Universities | Government Facilities | Indoor Offices | Restaurants | Pubs and Bars | Public Transport | All Other Indoor Public Places | Funds for Enforcement |

**Availability of Cessation Services in Costa Rica**

**Quitting Resources**  
 National quit line, and both NRT (Nicotine replacement therapy) and some cessation services cost-covered

**National Quit Line**  
**Yes**

Learn more about best practices in **Cessation**.

**Tobacco Packaging Regulations in Costa Rica**

**Quality of Tobacco Packaging Regulation**  
 None  
 Text warning label only  
 ✓ Text warning label with graphic warning label  
 Plain Packaging with text/graphic warning label

**% of Pack Covered**  
**50%**

Learn more about best practices in **Counter Marketing**.

**Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns in Costa Rica**

|                                                                        |                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Ran a National Anti-Tobacco Campaign</b>                            | Not applicable |
| <b>Part Of A Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program</b>                 | Not applicable |
| <b>Pre-Tested With The Target Audience</b>                             | Not applicable |
| <b>Target Audience Research Was Conducted</b>                          | Not applicable |
| <b>Aired On Television And/Or Radio</b>                                | Not applicable |
| <b>Utilized Media Planning</b>                                         | Not applicable |
| <b>Earned Media/Public Relations Were Used To Promote The Campaign</b> | Not applicable |
| <b>Process Evaluation Was Used To Assess Implementation</b>            | Not applicable |
| <b>Outcome Evaluation Was Used To Assess Effectiveness</b>             | Not applicable |

Learn more about best practices in **Mass Media**.

Tobacco Tax Policies in Costa Rica

Using evidence-based international recommendations/best practices, the Economics for Health Cigarette Tax Scorecard assesses four components of tax systems - price, change in affordability, tax share, and structure - on a scale of 0 to 5, where a higher score is preferred.



Learn more about the [Scorecard in Costa Rica](#).

Regulations on Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (TAPS) in Costa Rica

Marketing is the key avenue that tobacco companies use to reach consumers, new and old. Restricting or eliminating marketing is key to tobacco control success.

| Direct Bans                                | 7 out of 7 direct bans implemented | Indirect Bans                                                                                                                | 7 out of 10 indirect bans implemented |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| National TV and radio                      | Yes                                | Free distribution in mail or through other means                                                                             | No                                    |
| International TV and radio                 | Yes                                | Promotional discounts                                                                                                        | No                                    |
| International magazines and newspapers     | Yes                                | Non-tobacco products identified with tobacco brand names                                                                     | Yes                                   |
| International magazines and newspapers     | Yes                                | Brand name of non-tobacco products used for tobacco product                                                                  | Yes                                   |
| Billboard and outdoor advertising          | Yes                                | Appearance in TV and/or films: tobacco brands (product placement)                                                            | Yes                                   |
| Advertising at point of sale               | Yes                                | Appearance in TV and/or films: tobacco products                                                                              | Yes                                   |
| Advertising on internet                    | Yes                                | Prescribed anti-tobacco ads required for any visual entertainment media product that depicts tobacco products, use or images | NA                                    |
| <p><b>Ad Ban Compliance</b></p> <p>40%</p> |                                    | Complete ban on sponsorship                                                                                                  | Yes                                   |
|                                            |                                    | Any form of contribution (financial or other support) to any event, activity or individual                                   | Yes                                   |
|                                            |                                    | Ban on the publicity of financial or other sponsorship or support by the tobacco industry of events, activities, individuals | Yes                                   |