Timor-Leste



How many people die from smoking in Timor-Leste each year?

1,117

What is the annual cost-of-illness attributable to smoking in Timor-Leste each year?

25,562,458

US dollars

Current Rates of Smoking and Tobacco Use in Timor-Leste

Tobacco use continues to be an epidemic in Timor-Leste. Government complacency in the face of the tobacco epidemic protects the tobacco industry in Timor-Leste 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 Timor-Leste

15+ years old; 2025

Men

39.30%

Women

2.70%

Adult smoking prevalence in Timor-Leste is 21.00%.

Number of Adult Smokers in Timor-Leste

15+ years old; 2022

Men

245,000

Women

19,000

Number of adult smokers in Timor-Leste is 264,000.

Youth Smoking Prevalence in Timor-Leste

10-14 years old; 2023

Boys

35.65%

Girls

9.76%

Youth smoking prevalence in Timor-Leste is 22.99%.

Adult Smokeless Tobacco Use in Timor-Leste

15+ years old; smokeless tobacco includes snus, chewing tobacco, gutkha, etc.; 2023

Both Men and Women

26.00%

Adult smokeless tobacco use prevalence in Timor-Leste is 26.00%.

Deaths Caused by Tobacco in Timor-Leste

% deaths attributable to tobacco use in 2023

Men

17.57%

Women

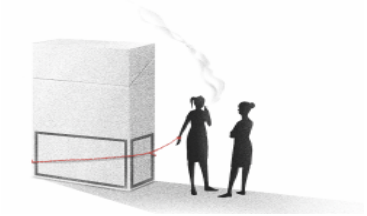
6.75%

12.28% of all deaths in Timor-Leste are caused by tobacco use.

Learn more about global Prevalence, Youth Smoking and Deaths.

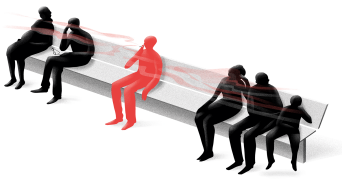
Negative Effect of Tobacco Use in Timor-Leste

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



Societal Harms

The annual cost-of-illness attributable to smoking in Timor-Leste is 25,562,458 US dollars. 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 Timor-Leste, a smoker must spend 10.32% 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 1,102,311 tons of butts wind up as toxic trash in the world each year, equal to 416,667 female African elephants.



Harms Health Equity

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



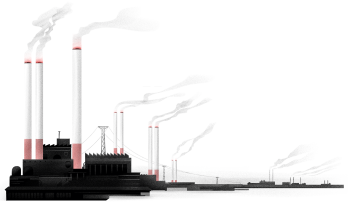
Harms NCDs

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 Timor-Leste

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 Timor-Leste.



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 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.



Tobacco Growing

Timor-Leste is not a major producer of tobacco, but globally there were 3.2 million hectares of arable land dedicated to tobacco growing in 2023 which was nearly as much as the land dedicated to the world's large orange crop.

Learn more about global Growing and Product Sales.

Ending the Tobacco Epidemic in Timor-Leste

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 Timor-Leste

Designated Smoke-Free Areas in Timor-Leste

Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	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 Timor-Leste

Quitting Resources

Nataional quite line, and NRT and/or some cessation services (at least one of which is cost-covered)

National Quit Line

Yes

Learn more about best practices in Cessation.

Tobacco Packaging Regulations in Timor-Leste

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

92.5%

Learn more about best practices in Counter Marketing.

Tobacco Control Mass Media Campaigns in Timor-Leste

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

Learn more about best practices in Mass Media.

Tobacco Tax Policies in Timor-Leste

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.

Overall Score

2.25

The overall score is an average of the four component scores.

Cigarette Price

1.00

Consumers respond to higher prices by decreasing consumption and some quit using tobacco.

Change in Affordability Over Time

0.00

In addition to price, change in affordability is critical. Cigarettes need to become less affordable for consumption to decline.

Tax Share of Price

4.00

Large tax shares of price are usually a good indicator that taxes are working.

Tax Structure

4.00

Best practices include relying more on uniform specific excise taxes that are adjusted regularly to outpace growth and inflation.

Learn more about the Scorecard in Timor-Leste.

Regulations on Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (TAPS) in Timor-Leste

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

National TV and radio	Yes
International TV and radio	Yes
International magazines and newspapers	Yes
International magazines and newspapers	Yes
Billboard and outdoor advertising	Yes
Advertising at point of sale	Yes
Advertising on internet	Yes

Indirect Bans

5 out of 10 indirect bans implemented

Free distribution in mail or through other means	Yes
Promotional discounts	Yes
Non-tobacco products identified with tobacco brand names	Yes
Brand name of non-tobacco products used for tobacco product	No
Appearance in TV and/or films: tobacco brands (product placement)	Yes
Appearance in TV and/or films: tobacco products	No
Prescribed anti-tobacco ads required for any visual entertainment media product that depicts tobacco products, use or images	No
Complete ban on sponsorship	No
Any form of contribution (financial or other support) to any event, activity or individual	No
Ban on the publicity of financial or other sponsorship or support by the tobacco industry of events, activities, individuals	Yes

Ad Ban Compliance

60%

Citation: Drope J, Hamill S, editors. 2025. Country profile: Timor-Leste. . In The Tobacco Atlas. New York: Vital Strategies and Economics for Health.