



17 December 2018 – The Saudi Food and Drug Authority has informed manufacturers and importers of tobacco products to get ready for applying plain packaging on all forms of tobacco products. This step was done in close collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, and in line with WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and its guidelines, which Saudi Arabia is Party to.

A “plain” tobacco package is one that displays brand names and product names in a standard colour and font style, without using logos, colours, brand images or promotional information (inside and/or outside the packaging). This is a groundbreaking step for tobacco control because plain packaging is one of the most effective public health interventions for reducing the demand for tobacco. It also:

influences the intention of smokers to quit

reduces the attractiveness of tobacco products

restricts use of tobacco packaging as a form of tobacco advertising and promotion

limits misleading packaging and labelling

increases the effectiveness of health warnings.

Saudi Arabia is one of the first few countries around the world to implement plain packaging

and, is the only country in this region to do so.

When will plain packaging take effect in Saudi Arabia?

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority has given manufacturers and importers of tobacco products a grace period until 1 May 2019. Failure to comply on this date will subject them to legal action. In preparation for this, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority has issued a “model plain package” to all manufacturers and importers of these products to guide the preparation of plain packaging for cigarette and waterpipe products, as well as all other products, smoked and smokeless. This “model” provides specifics on the standard colour and font style to be used, and also includes sample health warnings to be incorporated onto the packs. It is hoped that this revolutionary step will contribute to Saudi Arabia’s tobacco control agenda, which is aligned with its 2030 vision for the promotion of public health.

[Learn more about plain packaging](#)

[Look at the latest tobacco-related statistics from Saudi Arabia](#)

[Look at the latest tobacco control legislation from Saudi Arabia](#)

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