

Not on Display! Low Availability of E-cigarettes and HTPs Across 7 Mexican Cities

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Background

Challenges to bans on e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs) in Mexico resulted in injunctions allowing selected sellers to sell HTPs and Philip Morris Mexico to import HTPs.

The 2023 Global Adult Tobacco Survey reports current use of e-cigarettes at 2.1% and HTPs at 0.2%; current use is higher among those between 15-24 years old (4.1% and 0.5%, respectively).

This study describes the availability of these products across seven Mexican cities.

Methods

- Data collected in April 2024 in Cancún, Guadalajara, La Paz, Mexico City, Monterrey, Toluca, and Tuxtla Gutiérrez
- 12 areas per city
- Representative sample of 553 points of sale (i.e., grocery stores, convenience stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, liquor stores, department stores, tobacco/vape shops)
- Recording of e-cigarette/HTP display and advertising/promotion
- Weighted statistics reported

Results

E-cigarettes and HTPs were rarely observed, but we found variations across cities and POS types: e-cigarettes (1%;  $p=0.538$ ,  $p<0.0001$ , respectively) and HTPs (3%;  $p=0.736$ ,  $p<0.001$ , respectively).

Cities where these products were observed:

- **E-cigarettes:** Guadalajara (4%) and Mexico City (1%)
- **HTPs:** Guadalajara (5%), Mexico City (4%), and Cancun (1%)

POS types where these products were observed:

- **E-cigarettes:** tobacco (50%), convenience (11%), drug (4%), department (2%), and liquor stores (1%)
- **HTPs:** tobacco (50%), convenience (32%), and drug stores (7%)

No promotion observed; HTP ads seen only within product displays.

Conclusions

E-cigarettes and HTPs are concentrated in specific POS types and in certain Mexican cities.

Where legal exceptions exist, enforcing the bans will remain challenging. Nevertheless, even with the exceptions, displaying these products is prohibited and should be strictly enforced to limit their accessibility (and potentially hinder experimentation and initiation, especially among adolescents and young adults).

Considering the differences found across the cities, special attention should be given to state- and municipal-level enforcement.

Legal exceptions to Mexico’s tobacco control bans hinder enforcement efforts and sustain consumer exposure to tobacco products and advertising

Product Availability Across 7 Cities in Mexico

In the cities where HTPs and/or e-cigarettes were observed, they were primarily seen near cashiers and only in high socioeconomic areas.



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Competing Interests:

None.

