

Compliance With Cigarette Advertising Ban at
Points of Sale Across 7 Mexican Cities

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Background

- In 2022, Mexico passed a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS)
 - Product displays—including loose cigarettes, which are prohibited in Mexico—are banned at points of sale (POS)
 - Marketing is limited to plain, text-only price lists without logos or branding
 - In response, tobacco companies filed thousands of legal challenges, leading to exceptions to the ban at certain POS
- POS in seven Mexican cities were assessed for compliance

Results

- Cigarettes were displayed at 42% of POS
 - Highest prevalences: La Paz (69%) and Monterey (66%)
 - Lowest prevalence: Guadalajara (26%)
- Price lists were most common in Mexico City (28%) and Guadalajara (15%), with 6% or less in the other cities
 - The vast majority were non-compliant: 91% included logos, typically accompanying product displays
- Overall advertising was low (<3%), with the highest levels in Cancún (25%) and La Paz (25%), primarily in printed forms integrated into product displays (e.g., backdrops, shelf liners)
- Loose cigarette availability was common in Guadalajara (58%), Monterey (54%), and Tuxtla (48%), despite being banned

Methods

- Data collection: observation between April 3–17, 2024
- Probabilistic two-stage sampling
 - 84 basic geostatistical areas (AGEB) in seven diverse cities (Cancún, Guadalajara, La Paz, Mexico City, Monterrey, Toluca, and Tuxtla Gutiérrez), stratified by socioeconomic level
 - Across AGEBs, 553 POS were sampled to represent: grocery stores, convenience stores, supermarkets, pharmacies, department stores, liquor stores, tobacco or vape shops
 - Weighted statistics are presented

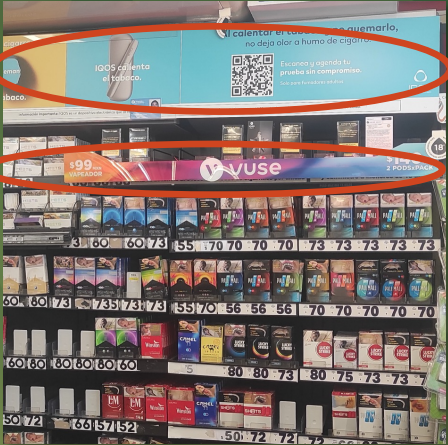
Conclusions

- Noncompliance with Mexico’s TAPS ban, particularly the display ban, was prevalent at POS, with variation across cities
- The widespread presence of cigarette displays, illegal loose cigarette sales, and noncompliant branded price lists indicate efforts by the tobacco industry and retailers to circumvent the law
- Legal challenges to the ban may have complicated enforcement, contributing to inconsistent compliance across POS
- Strengthening enforcement and addressing regional disparities in compliance, including by increasing subnational efforts at the state and municipal levels, are crucial to improving the effectiveness of the TAPS ban

Widespread **noncompliance**
with Mexico’s **tobacco product
display ban** highlights the need for
increased enforcement

Photographic Evidence

Data collectors documented observations of noncompliance including (clockwise from right) product displays, cigarettes positioned near candy, and advertisements like shelf topper signs and shelf liners.



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Competing Interests:

None.

