



National Council Against Smoking NPC

Banning Vending Machines is an Effective Tobacco Control Policy

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in Article 16 and 13 provides that parties should adopt and implement effective measures to prohibit the sales of tobacco products to persons under the age of 18. This includes ensuring that Vending machines are banned because these constitute a means of advertising or promotion of tobacco products.

WHY IS THE TOBACCO BILL CORRECT IN BANNING VENDING MACHINES?

Vending machines should be banned entirely because they constitute a means of advertising and promotion of tobacco products.

1. A ban does away with challenges in controlling under-age access to tobacco Products
2. A ban denormalizes smoking by taking the products away from easy access
3. A ban creates a quit-friendly or enabling environment
4. A ban undermines advertising effects as Vending machines constitutes advertising and promotion.
5. A ban makes tobacco products less accessible to under-age children

In Portugal vending machines' age control systems were easily unlocked by asking for an ID card from an older friend, Adolescents reported that vendors rarely ask for the ID card to confirm the buyers' age.ⁱ In Germany and Japan under-age children manages to circumvent Age verification lock systems and studies have suggested that a total ban of tobacco vending machines be used to prevent access.ⁱⁱ

HOW ARE VENDING MACHINES CURRENTLY REGULATED IN SOUTH AFRICA?

Currently, the law only allows vending machines in designated smoking areas. The problem with this is that amongst children this allows them access to tobacco products. Children can use an older persons ID, and there is great possibility that the age of vending machine users is never verified. Enforcing restrictions is difficultⁱⁱⁱ and vending machines are often unsupervised. Amongst adults this makes tobacco products easily accessible, it promotes impulse buying and also makes it harder for smokers trying to quit.

Like any other form of advertisement, vending machines drives demand and makes tobacco products easily accessible. Research shows that entire bans are an effective yet underutilised tobacco control strategy.^{iv}

WHICH COUNTRIES BAN VENDING MACHINE?

Togo, England, Uganda, Kenya and Mauritius all ban vending machines.^v

i [Teresa Leã et al](#) Adolescents' smoking environment under weak tobacco control: A mixed methods study for Portugal *Volume 204*, 1 November 2019, 107566 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2019.107566>

ii Kanda H, Osaki Y, Ohida T, et al Age verification cards fail to fully prevent minors from accessing tobacco products *Tobacco Control* 2011;20:163-165.

iii Schneider S, Meyer C, Yamamoto S, *et al* Implementation of electronic locking devices for adolescents at German tobacco vending machines: intended and unintended changes of supply and demand *Tobacco Control* 2009;18:294-301.

iv Mike Vuolo, Brian C. Kelly, Joy Kadowaki, Impact of Total Vending Machine Restrictions on US Young Adult Smoking, *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, Volume 18, Issue 11, November 2016, Pages 2092–2099, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ntr/ntw150>

v Tobacco Control Laws accessed through <https://www.tobaccocontrolaws.org/legislation>