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Tobacco Industry Progress Report

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National News

International News

National News

(1) Authorities Report New Tobacco Seizures Across Romania

Last week, Romanian law enforcement authorities reported multiple enforcement actions targeting illicit tobacco flows across the country in recent days.

At the Giurgiu border, joint operations involving Romanian and Bulgarian officers led to the seizure of approximately **95,120 cigarettes** transported in vehicles registered in Bulgaria, Turkey and Germany, with some concealed in specially modified compartments; the goods, valued at around RON 142,680, were confiscated and criminal proceedings for smuggling were initiated.

In a separate case on the A1 motorway near Arad, police intercepted a truck carrying **7.8 million cigarettes suspected of being smuggled**, worth approximately RON 5.5 million, detaining the 36-year-old driver for 24 hours and seizing both the cargo and vehicle.

Additional controls at Henri Coandă International Airport uncovered **678 packs of cigarettes** and nearly **2 kg of loose tobacco** hidden in a passenger's luggage arriving from Vietnam.

Further inland, authorities in Călărași identified nearly **10 kg of cut tobacco** during a roadside check, while coordinated searches in Dolj and Olt counties, under JUPITER Operation, resulted in the seizure of over **211,000 cigarettes without fiscal markings**, alongside counterfeit goods, with investigations ongoing under prosecutorial supervision.

International News

Europe

(1) UK Tobacco and Vapes Bill becomes Law

The UK government has enacted the Tobacco and Vapes Act after it received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026, introducing a **phased ban on tobacco sales to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009** as part of a long-term strategy to create a “smoke-free generation.” The legislation, described by officials as a major public health reform, combines stricter controls on tobacco and vaping products with enhanced enforcement powers, including potential retail licensing schemes. It also maintains access to vaping products for adult smokers seeking to quit, while increasing funding for cessation services aimed at the UK’s 5.3 million smokers. Authorities say the law addresses smoking’s significant health and economic burden, while seeking to curb youth uptake of nicotine products and strengthen protections in public spaces.

(2) Germany Plans Tobacco Tax Increase

Germany’s federal government is preparing to raise tobacco taxes under a draft proposal from the Finance Ministry, with increases averaging nearly **13% from September 2026** and a **further rise in January 2027**. The plan would lift excise duty per cigarette from 12.28 to 12.90 cents, and then to 13.74 cents, alongside higher ad valorem taxes, pushing the average pack price from €7.76 to €8.90 and €9.48 in 2027, with premium brands exceeding €10. The measures would also raise taxes on roll-your-own and heated tobacco products, with fine-cut tobacco facing steeper hikes. Aimed at generating €2.8 billion to support energy-related relief, the proposal is expected to enter the legislative process in May, with a parliamentary vote scheduled for 12 June 2026 and final approval subject to the Bundesrat.

USA

No relevant updates.