

Health Bureau responds to enquiries regarding ban on flavoured conventional smoking products

In response to media enquiries regarding the rationale behind the Health Bureau's proposal to ban flavoured conventional smoking products under the new phase of tobacco control measures, the Health Bureau gave the following response today (May 14):

Tobacco companies have been adding various flavourings, such as menthol, fruit and confectionary flavourings, into conventional smoking products to disguise the harshness of tobacco smoke, making it easier for non-smokers to initiate and maintain smoking habit. Research showed that banning flavoured conventional cigarettes can reduce the chances of young people using tobacco.

The Health Bureau has already clearly stated in the Consultation Document on Tobacco Control Strategies in 2023 and subsequent relevant Legislative Council documents that around 50 countries and regions worldwide, including 27 European Union member states, Canada and the United Kingdom, have banned the sale of flavoured cigarettes. China's Taiwan region also announced last year the prohibition of the use of specified flavour additives in tobacco products.

The Health Bureau reiterates that banning flavoured conventional smoking products is not unique to Hong Kong, nor is it "over the top". Contrarily, Hong Kong needs to align itself with international tobacco control policies through this legislative work.