

# Inventory of worldwide availability of flavour accessories

## Do-it-yourself flavour addition to increase tobacco products attractiveness

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### Background

Flavours increase tobacco product appeal and contribute to initiation of use, particularly among youth. Therefore, many jurisdictions have restricted or prohibited the use of flavours in these products. Yet, the effect of flavour regulations seems to have been weakened by recent market innovations, such as flavour accessories.

### Methods

The availability and marketing of flavour accessories in web shops accessible from 8 markets globally (Brazil, India, Italy, Singapore, South-Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States) was assessed using a uniform search protocol. Data previously collected from the Netherlands were also analysed.

### Results

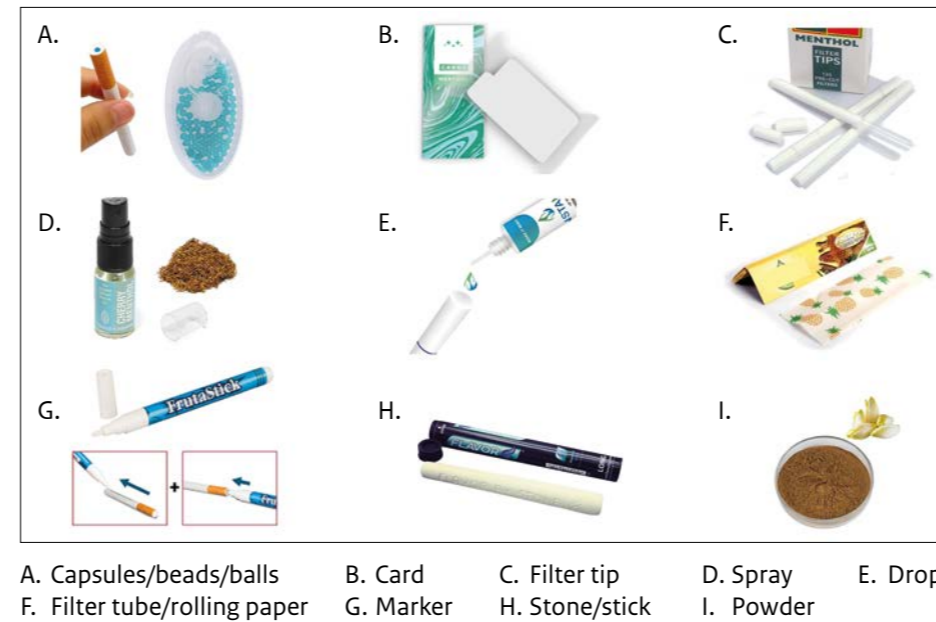
Flavour accessories were reported in all participating countries in a wide variety of types (figure 1). Of the 121 unique flavours reported, most were fruity, sweet, alcoholic and minty flavours (figure 2). Reported flavours also differ between countries (table 1).

For almost two thirds of the products, smokers or menthol smokers were mentioned as target groups on the web shops. In many cases, local researchers evaluated the web shop to be particularly attractive to youth. Reasons were the use of colours and images, professional and sleek website design, social media links, and the wide range of flavours and products available.

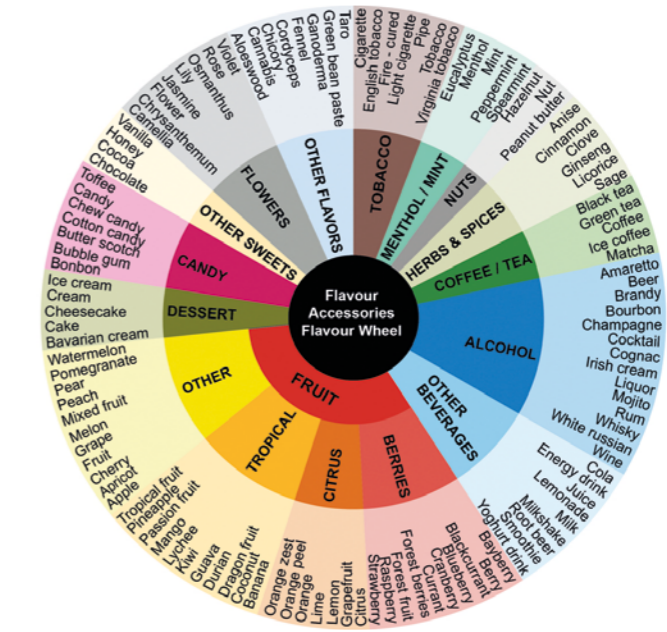
### Conclusions

The wide availability and variety of flavour accessories is concerning. They have attractive flavours and seem to be marketed to youth, and thus circumvent the regulatory aim of flavour bans. Therefore, policy makers should consider restricting or banning these products to complement existing tobacco control measures. Moreover, their marketing and points of sales should be strictly regulated.

**Figure 1.** Types of flavour accessories identified



**Figure 2.** Flavour wheel showing the 121 unique flavours found (outer ring) classified into 13 main categories (inner ring)



**Table 1.** Flavours reported in the nine countries

	Characterizing flavours banned				No flavour ban implemented				
	Italy	United Kingdom	Netherlands	United States	Brazil	India	Singapore	South-Africa	Switzerland
Tobacco	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Menthol/mint	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fruit-citrus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fruit-berries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Fruit-tropical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fruit-other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dessert	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Candy	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Other sweet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Herbs & spices	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Coffee/tea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Alcohol	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Other beverages	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Nuts	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Flowers	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗

Colored bars represent the relative availability of flavours in each of the main categories of the flavour wheel, per country. The longer the bar, the more frequently this type of flavour was reported.