

Bilge Saltan

Advertising Board Bans Electric Cigarettes

Millions of people in the world today are addicted to smoking. Many countries want to introduce regulations to ban smoking, but it is questionable whether it is possible to create an entirely smoke-free society. In Turkey, many people smoke, including teenagers as young as 14 years old. It is hoped that with the entry into force of a new regulation prohibiting smoking in public areas, smoking habits will change.

The new regulation was not well received by a large number of smokers who do not want to give up smoking. However, manufacturers of the electric cigarette greatly appreciated the new legislation as it has created an opportunity to sell their product, which is used to help people quit or cut down on their smoking and can be used in public areas.

There had been previous discussions about the negative effects of electric cigarettes, as they were accused of increasing addiction by encouraging habituation. However, with the enactment of the new regulation, the electric cigarette manufacturers have been given the chance to expand their market share by launching new advertising campaigns.

However, advertising electric cigarettes is prohibited in Turkey and thus the efforts of the electric cigarette manufacturers have come up against Advertising Board sanctions. The board has already banned one such advertisement. In its decision the board first considered the product type of an electric cigarette - is it a medical product or an alternative to cigarettes? In this respect, the board sought the opinions of the Ministry of Health and the Tobacco, Tobacco Products and Alcoholic Beverages Market Regulatory Authority. The board decided that if the electric cigarette were considered a medical product, its advertising would not be permitted, as this would breach the Regulation on the Advertising of Medical Products. If the electric cigarette were considered an alternative to cigarettes, its advertising should be evaluated under the Tobacco, Tobacco Products and Alcoholic Beverages Regulation. According to this regulation, advertising tobacco, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages is not permitted. Consequently, the board fined the company, ruling that the electric cigarette should not be advertised to encourage people using them.