

EUROPEAN NEWS BULLETIN 214: 31 August – 13 September 2007

Produced by the European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP)

*** Weekly summary of this week's European headlines ***

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AUSTRIA: Austrian trains went smoke-free on 1 September 2007

As of 1 September 2007 all trains belonging to the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) became entirely smoke-free. Some six hundred smoking carriages are to be cleaned before being put back into service as non-smoking carriages. ÖBB had noted that seats in its smoking carriages had been reserved less and less and is thus following in the footsteps of a European trend – smoking has been banned in trains in Switzerland and Italy for years. Nevertheless, ÖBB will continue to provide specially designated smoking zones in its stations.

Source: ÖBB press release, 31 August 2007

http://www.oebb.at/vip8/oebb/de/Pressecorner/Presseinformationen/OeBB-Zuege_ab_1_September_rauchfrei/index.jsp

Source: Der Standard, 31 August 2007

http://derstandard.at/?url=/?id=2888681%26_seite=16%26sap=2

AUSTRIA: Physicians call for resignation of Health Minister

The draft revision of the tobacco laws has produced very diverging reactions. The Austrian Council on Smoking and Health has heavily criticised Health Minister Kdolsky stating that the draft revision of the law serves only industry interests and does nothing for public health damaging Austria's international reputation and harming the population. The Austrian Council on Smoking and Health therefore demanded her resignation or amendment of the draft revision bringing it in line with models in Italy, Northern and Western Europe.

Source: NetworkWorld, 10 September 2007

<http://www.networkworld.at/index.html?/articles/0736/10/182929.shtml>

By way of information for our German-speaking readers, please refer to the following links:

Legal text: <http://www.aerzteinitiative.at/TabGes0709.pdf>

Explanations: <http://www.aerzteinitiative.at/TabGes0709Erl.pdf>

Provisions governing ventilation: <http://www.aerzteinitiative.at/TabGes0709Lueftg.pdf>

Comparative texts: <http://www.aerzteinitiative.at/TabGes0709TxtGg%FC.pdf>

Comments of Austrian Council on Smoking and Health:

http://www.aerzteinitiative.at/Aktuelles_1.htm

BELGIUM: Belgians are among Europe's top smokers

In 2006 Belgian smokers smoked no fewer than 1449 cigarettes per capita – which makes them among Europe's top smokers (after the Dutch). In 2006 the number of heavy smokers (i.e. more than 21 cigarettes per day) decreased over the previous year's figure, while this figure increased considerably in Flanders.

Source: e-santé, 4 September 2007

http://www.e-sante.be/be/magazine_sante/magazine/belges_figurent_parmi_gros_fumeurs_europe-7160-251-art.htm

LUXEMBOURG: Major decline in smoking prevalence since introduction of smoking ban
According to a survey commissioned by the *Fondation Luxembourgeoise Contre le Cancer*, smoking prevalence in Luxembourg is currently at 23%, an unprecedented level considering that the number of smokers was 33% in 2003. This is due not just to the implementation of Luxembourg's new smoke-free legislation, but it is clear that the legislation has contributed greatly to this decline. In addition, the Luxembourg government has assessed the smoking ban as positive one year on, noting that it has been well accepted by the population, helping many smokers in their quitting attempts.

Source: FLCC information release, 4 September 2007

http://www.cancer.lu/fr/news_sept07.htm

Source: Ministry of Health press release, 5 September 2007

http://www.gouvernement.lu/salle_presse/communiques/2007/09/05tabac/

SCOTLAND: Smoking ban reduces incidence of heart attacks

A detailed study into the impact of the impact of the smoking ban has revealed that the number of people being taken to hospital with heart attacks in Scotland has fallen significantly since the ban was introduced. Researchers found a 17% drop in the number of people admitted for heart attacks in the year since the ban came into force, compared with an average 3% reduction a year over the previous decade. The reduction was most marked among non-smokers, with a 20% fall, compared with a 14% drop among smokers. These findings were revealed at the two-day conference, *Towards a Smoke-free Society*, in Edinburgh.

Source: Guardian Unlimited, 11 September 2007

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/medicine/story/0,,2166560,00.html>

STUDY: Lung disease is on the rise

A study across twelve countries suggests that rates of incurable lung disease are higher than previously thought. Tests on almost 9500 adults aged over 40 found that one in ten had chronic obstructive respiratory disease (COPD). COPD is currently the fifth leading cause of death worldwide, but is set to become the third leading cause by 2020. Smoking is a major factor in developing the disease and explains much of the difference between rates in men and women. But the researchers also found that there was a fairly high prevalence of COPD in individuals who had never smoked, which they said raises questions about genetic susceptibility.

Source: BBC News, 30 August 2007

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/6970190.stm>

*** Our news from the EU/WHO ***

EC: Practical guide on cigarette yield measurement published

The European Commission has published a practical guide on *Cigarette yield measurement and some basic steps for laboratory approval*. The document is available on the DG SANCO website.

Source: DG SANCO information release, 11 September 2007

Document available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/Documents/best_practices_en.pdf

EC: Health-EU Newsletter, September 2007, published

The first issue of the Health-EU Newsletter (September 2007) has been published by DG SANCO.

Source: SANCO News, 13 September 2007

http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/newsletter/1/newsletter_en.htm

EP: MEPs call for unrestricted smoking ban

On 12 September 2007 the European Parliament's Committee on Health and the Environment asked the Commission to propose an unrestricted smoking ban in all enclosed workplaces, including catering establishments, public buildings and transport in the EU by 2008. While welcoming the European Commission's Green Paper to create a Europe free from tobacco smoke as "a good starting point", they nevertheless asked for far more stringent and tougher measures to protect citizens from the dangers of passive smoking.

Source: Euractiv, 12 September 2007

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/health/meps-call-unrestricted-smoking-ban-europe/article-166674>

Source: European Parliament Press Service, 12 September 2007

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/064-10236-254-09-37-911-20070910IPR10220-11-09-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

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