

## **EUROPEAN NEWS BULLETIN 217: 28 September – 4 October 2007**

Produced by the European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP)

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

ENGLAND: Smoking ban dramatically reduces bar workers' exposure to second-hand smoke

FRANCE: Minimum price for cigarettes raised on 1 October 2007

SWITZERLAND: National Council dilutes protection of non-smokers

UK: Revised Highway Code includes smoking as a driving distraction

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

EC: Commissioner Kyprianou supports World Heart Day 2007

EC: September 2007 edition of *Health & Consumer Voice* published

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ENGLAND: Smoking ban dramatically reduces bar workers' exposure to second-hand smoke  
Exposure to second-hand smoke for people working in bars and clubs has dropped by 95% since the smoking ban came into force in England on 1 July 2007. In the first study to examine the health and business impacts of the smoking ban, researchers also found that the effect on trade had been minimal, despite predictions by some representatives of the hospitality industry. This research was led by scientists at the Tobacco Control Collaborating Centre in Warwick, who found that non-smoking workers in the hospitality industry had only a quarter of the cotinine in their saliva in August compared with what they had in June. They also noted that workers' exposure prior to the ban was equivalent to 190 cigarettes a year, dropping to the equivalent of 44 cigarettes afterwards.

Source: Guardian Unlimited, 1 October 2007

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/health/news/0,,2180983,00.html>

FRANCE: Minimum price for cigarettes raised on 1 October 2007

In accordance with a ministerial decree, France raised its minimum retail price for cigarettes on 1 October 2007 by € 0.30 from € 4.49 to € 4.79. The European Commission had decided to take France to the European Court of Justice for practicing minimum prices, judging this practice to be contrary to Community rules.

Source: La Croix, 30 September 2007

<http://www.la-croix.com/afp.static/pages/070930095252.p9r2kluh.htm>

SWITZERLAND: National Council dilutes protection of non-smokers

The National Council of Switzerland has voted the law on protection of non-smokers (111 for, 64 against), but has granted far-reaching exemptions for the hospitality sector. Separate smoking rooms are to be permitted. According to the original draft, service was not to be allowed in smoking rooms, but this clause has been abandoned. In addition, hospitality venues and night clubs will be able to apply for a permit to be designated "entirely smoking venues". Permits will be granted if separation of the smoking and non-smoking rooms is not possible or is "unreasonable". Opponents of a relaxation for the hospitality sector have stressed that protection of workers is indivisible: if passive smoking is dangerous, which is an uncontested fact, then service personnel should not be allowed to work in smoking rooms or in smoking venues. Concerns were also raised about the vagueness of such exemptions. Basically, smoking is to be banned in all enclosed rooms accessible to the public, i.e. public administration buildings, hospitals, educational and sports facilities, museums, theatres and cinemas – and also in restaurants, in so far as they do not fall under the exemptions. Smoking is also to be banned in workplaces, with the exception of individual offices and dedicated smoking rooms. The phrasing of exemptions for smoking venues used by the National Council is that submitted by Gastrosuisse (the national hospitality industry federation) for a former legislative proposal. Contraventions of the new law are to be subject to a fine of up to

CHF 1000 (approx. € 600). Restaurants and night clubs have been granted a period of transition of two years.

Source: Tages-Anzeiger, 4 October 2007

<http://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/dyn/news/schweiz/798480.html>

Source: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 4 October 2007

[http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/schweiz/aktuell/nationalrat\\_schutz\\_nichtraucher\\_rauchern\\_1.564712.html](http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/schweiz/aktuell/nationalrat_schutz_nichtraucher_rauchern_1.564712.html)

UK: Revised Highway Code includes smoking as a driving distraction

Under the revised Highway Code, which came into force on 28 September 2007, having a cigarette while driving is a breach of the rules of the road and classed as a "distraction". This means that if a driver crashes his/her car while smoking, the driver could be charged with driving without due care and attention, carrying a fine of up to GBP 2500 (approximately € 3600), three to nine penalty points on a driving licence or could even result in a ban from driving. This move is technically regarded as "best practice".

Source: Telegraph, 28 September 2007

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/09/28/nsmoke128.xml>

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

EC: Commissioner Kyprianou supports World Heart Day 2007

In a statement made on 30 September 2007, World Heart Day, Commissioner Kyprianou acknowledged the need to improve heart health in the European Union through improved diet, more physical activity and no smoking. This year's theme, Team up for Healthy Hearts, demonstrates what can be done to achieve these goals with the help of businesses, governments, non governmental organisations and citizens.

Source: SANCO News, 1 October 2007

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health\\_consumer/dyna/enews/enews.cfm?al\\_id=601](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/enews/enews.cfm?al_id=601)

EC: September 2007 edition of *Health & Consumer Voice* published

The latest edition of DG SANCO *Health & Consumer Voice* has appeared online.

Source: SANCO News, 2 October 2007

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health\\_consumer/consumervoice/cv\\_92007\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/consumervoice/cv_92007_en.pdf)

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