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*** National Tobacco Control News ***

AUSTRIA: Tobacconists succeed in obtaining compromise from Ministry of Finance
Tobacconists located along Austria's border regions to the Czech Republic and Slovenia have succeeded in obtaining a major compromise from the Ministry of Finance in the dispute surrounding duty-free tobacco quotas as of January 2008. The Finance Minister, Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP), stated that as of January 2008 a maximum of one carton of cigarettes will be permitted to be imported from the Czech Republic and from Slovenia. They also succeeded in obtaining several other concessions: i.e. they are to be permitted to diversify their product range, tobacco taxes will be frozen for a period of two years and the tobacconists' profit margin is to be increased.

Source: OE1, 23 November 2007

<http://oe1.orf.at/inforadio/83832.html>

BELGIUM: Belgians are smoking less

For the first time in five years the percentage of daily smokers in Belgium has decreased significantly. A survey conducted by IPSOS on behalf of the Belgian Foundation Against Cancer has revealed that in 2007 27% of the Belgian population were smokers, i.e. a decline of 2% over previous years. It is also significant that there has been a rise in the number of young people who have never smoked: 76% of 15 to 17-year-olds, 56% of 18 to 24-year-olds and 48% of over-25-year-olds. The surveys also confirm that the pictorial warnings which have been compulsory on Belgian cigarette packages since 31 May 2007 are having an effect, especially among young people, with 29% of smokers stating that the pictorial warnings are an additional incentive to quit. Furthermore, the smoking ban in the hospitality sector and price rises are further reasons to quit.

Source: RTBF, 22 November 2007

http://www.rtbef.be/info/societe/ARTICLE_136258

Foundation Against Cancer press release

http://www.cancer.be/index.cfm?fuseaction=Content.DisplayContent&Content_ID=62CB446B-E3E4-328D-02BEB31BB717A58E&Category_ID=D69FA24A-DEFD-6401-181BED06192D7AEA&lang=FR

DENMARK: New study finds that tobacco industry uses dangerous additives

A new study from the Danish Cancer Society claims that the tobacco industry knowingly adds at least 200 different chemicals to its products in order to make it easier for people to smoke. Per Kim Nielsen of the Danish Cancer Society said that some of the chemicals used also increase the addictive power of nicotine. He added that some of these chemicals are directly harmful to the body. He stated: "We know that smoking causes cancer. But some of these additives increase the risk of developing cancer."

Source: The Copenhagen Post, 26 November 2007

<http://www.cphpost.dk/get/104533.html>

SWITZERLAND: Two cantons vote in favour of smoking ban

The Swiss cantons of Appenzell-Ausserrhoden and Graubünden voted last weekend in favour of enforcing a smoking ban in public places. In Appenzell-Ausserrhoden the vote was carried with 8954 in favour over 7414 against; in Graubünden the vote was 35,035 in favour v. 11,766 against. In Appenzell-Ausserrhoden the new legislation will come into force at the beginning of 2008, in Graubünden as of March 2008. However, in both cantons smoking is to be permitted in separate smoking rooms in restaurants and bars.

Source: Swissinfo, 25 November 2007

http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/schweiz/detail/Ja_zum_Rauchverbot_in_Graubunden_und_Appezzell_Ausserrhoden.html?siteSect=113&sid=8462395&cKey=1195999566000&ty=ti&positionT=10

*** Institutional News ***

EC: Commission adopts report on the application of the Tobacco Products Directive

The European Commission adopted the Second Report on the application of the Tobacco Products Directive (2001/37/EC) on 27 November 2007. The report provides an assessment of the application of the Directive based on the information given by Member States and incorporates the views of stakeholders and of the European Parliament in the area of tobacco control. It outlines potential areas for changes to the Directive to allow for a discussion with Member States and the European Parliament, before the European Commission submits a full proposal for amendments. Some suggestions for further development of the Directive, such as the inclusion of tobacco leaves and other tobacco plant parts in the definition of ingredients, have not been discussed earlier. Others, such as further work on tobacco product ingredients or the mandatory use of pictorial warnings complement the ongoing work.

Source: Health and Consumer e-News, 27 November 2007

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dyna/enews/index.cfm

Second Report on the Application of the Tobacco Products Directive

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

EC: Report on Green Paper consultation published

The Green Paper consultation closed on 1 June 2007. The European Commission received more than 300 contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, including EU institutions, Member States' authorities, the health sector, tobacco-related organisations, the social partners and individuals. The report summarises the main findings of the Green Paper consultation. The outcome of the consultation will feed into the next stage of the preparation of future EU initiatives on the promotion of smoke-free environments in the EU.

Source: SANCO News, 27 November 2007

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

The individual contributions are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/smoke_free_consultation_en.htm

EC: RIP cigarettes get green light

EU safety experts are due to back plans on Thursday (29 November 2007) to make all cigarettes sold in the bloc self-extinguishing in an endeavour to combat thousands of fire-related deaths and injuries. Consumer Protection Commissioner Meglena Kuneva believes the RIP (reduced ignition propensity) cigarettes, which stop burning automatically after a few seconds if not puffed, due to small gaps in the cigarette paper which cuts the circulation of oxygen, can hugely reduce the number of deaths from fires in the EU. Data from 14 of the EU's 27 Member States shows that over 2000 deaths a year are caused by cigarette-related fires, with thousands more people injured and tens of millions of euros worth of damage caused.

Source: Reuters, 28 November 2007

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL28419940>

EP: Audiovisual Media Services without Frontiers Directive approved by EP

The European Parliament approved new EU rules on television advertising and product placement on 29 November 2007. The new directive on Audiovisual Media Services is a modernisation of the Television without Frontiers Directive and now also covers new media services such as web television and on-demand services. With the Parliament's approval, the rules would have to be implemented in the Member States by the end of 2009. The new rules update the 1997 Television without Frontiers Directive (now the Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in order to keep pace with developments in audiovisual technology and advertising. They will apply to "television-like services", such as web-streamed television programmes, but not to private web sites. Television programmes on-demand from the Internet e.g. will be covered by the qualitative rules concerning protection of minors and product placement, but not by the rules concerning the amount of time allowed for advertising. One innovation is the rules on product placement, whereby a specific product is placed in television programmes for commercial purposes. This would be allowed only in a limited range of programmes, and then only under strict rules. It would be prohibited in news and current affairs programmes, children's programmes, documentaries and programmes providing advice. Parliament has ensured that signals must appear when a programme containing product placement starts, when it ends and after commercial breaks. Member States can still choose to have a ban on product placement themselves.

Source: European Parliament Press Service, 29 November 2007

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/037-14053-332-11-48-906-20071128IPR14028-28-11-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Source: European Commission press release, 29 November 2007

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1809&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

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