

LATEST NEWS ON TOBACCO CONTROL!

More and more countries adopt

tobacco plain packaging legislation



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An international report released by the Canadian Cancer Society shows that there is tremendous international momentum for tobacco plain packaging. There are now 25 countries and territories moving forward with plain packaging, with 9 having adopted the measure and 16 working on it.

The number of countries requiring plain packaging is expected to accelerate further because of the World Trade Organization (WTO) decision on June 28, 2018 that Australia's plain packaging requirements are consistent with WTO's international trade agreements. The WTO Panel dismissed the claims that Australia's tobacco plain packaging laws unjustifiably infringe intellectual property protections and are unnecessarily trade restrictive.

The Canadian Cancer Society report – *Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report* – documents global progress on plain packaging, ranks 206 countries and territories on the size of their health warnings on cigarette packages, and lists countries and territories that require graphic picture warnings.



"There is an unstoppable worldwide trend for countries to use graphic pictures on cigarette packages to show the deadly health effects of smoking, and to require plain packaging," says Rob Cunningham, senior policy analyst, Canadian Cancer Society. "For plain packaging, Australia was the first country to implement the measure, in 2012, and now the dominoes are falling."



Guidelines under the international tobacco treaty, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), recommend that countries consider implementing plain packaging. Plain packaging includes health warnings on packages, but prohibits tobacco company branding, such as colours, logos and design elements, and requires the brand portion of each package to be the same colour, such as an unattractive brown. The brand name would still appear in a standard font size, style and location. The package format is standardized. Plain packaging puts an end to packaging being used for product promotion, increases the effectiveness of package warnings, curbs package deception, and decreases tobacco use.

Plain packaging has been implemented in Australia (2012), France (2016), the United Kingdom (2016), Norway (2017), Ireland (2017), New Zealand (2018) and Hungary (2018), will be implemented in Uruguay (2019) and Slovenia (2020), and is in process or under consideration in Canada, Belgium, Thailand, Georgia, Singapore, Nepal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Romania, Jersey, Guernsey, Taiwan, Chile, Finland, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia.