
European Commission Preparing an EU Wide Smoking Ban



In an interview with the German daily Die Welt, John Dalli, the EU Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, announced that he is looking to introduce legislation in 2011, banning smoking in all public places across Europe.

The majority of EU countries have already introduced smoking bans of varying severity including: Ireland; Italy; France; Belgium; Malta; the Netherlands; Norway; Scotland; Spain; Sweden and the UK, with Poland due to introduce its ban in November 2010, however, loopholes in the legislation allow smoking in some areas and often the legislation has not been fully enforced. The new legislation, if adopted, will not tolerate exceptions and will commit the Member States to enforcing the ban.

The Health Commissioner proposes not only a complete ban in all public places, transport and workplaces across Europe, but also wants shops and supermarkets to stop displaying smoking paraphenelia or products. The EU bill may also attempt to reduce the amount of nicotine and other toxic substances contained in the product.

The Commissioner estimated that 650,000 Europeans die each year from smoking related illnesses and costs millions of Euros in health care expenses across Europe.

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