

Finland to ban Point of Sale display by 2012 in plan to "end smoking"



04 October 2010

Tough new laws aimed at eventually eradicating the use of tobacco in Finland have come into effect as of 1 October, even as a report emerged from Russia that its government is also considering more stringent regulations. With the new laws, Finland has become the first country in the world to specifically introduce legislation that aims to end, and not just reduce, tobacco use.

The first phase will see people under the age of 18 being completely banned from possessing tobacco products, and it has become a criminal offence to buy or give minors tobacco, punishable by up to six months in prison. The rules also make it illegal to buy or sell tobacco products over the Internet, to use tobacco in places frequented by minors, or smoke in spectator stands for all outdoor events.

The next phase, due in 2012, will make it illegal to display tobacco products in stores, and in 2015 all cigarette vending machines will be banned.