

31.5.2016 - World No Tobacco Day

Get ready for plain packaging in the Nordic Countries.

In the Nordic Countries more than 37 000 people die each year from tobacco-related diseases.

Every year 37 800¹ people in the Nordic Countries die as a result of tobacco-related diseases, and globally six million people die. Many of these die from cancer. The Nordic Cancer societies therefore unite today at the World No Tobacco Day in a common goal to prevent tobacco use among children and young people. We – The secretaries Generals of the cancer societies in the Nordic countries - call for the introduction of plain packaging in all the Nordic Countries.

Why Plain Packaging?

Adolescents are the main targets of plain packaging, and international research shows clear connection between plain packaging and smoking prevalence. Plain packaging of tobacco products refers to measures that restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colors, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard color and font style. In December 2012, Australia became the first country to fully implement plain packaging. And they have proven that plain packaging works²

International studies show that Plain Packaging of tobacco-products:

- is rated as less attractive, especially among young people
- is perceived as having inferior quality and taste
- makes health warnings more visible
- makes tobacco products less visible in public settings
- prevents smoking initiation and contributes to some extent to quitting

Following the example of Australia, and more recently also countries like the UK, Ireland and France, we believe this will be the most effective new tool we have at our disposal in order to prevent young Nordic people from starting with tobacco.

Call for action

Guidelines to Articles 11 and 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) recommend that parties consider adoption of plain packaging. A number of countries are in advanced stages of considering adoption of plain packaging laws. We now call for plain packaging in all the Nordic Countries.

¹ Tobacco related Deaths in the Nordic countries: Norway 6600, Sweden 12 000, Denmark 13 900, Finland 5 000, Iceland 200, Faroe Island 110.

² <https://www.cancervic.org.au/plainfacts/>

Tobacco free Nordic Countries

Tobacco use is a main cause for cancer. Today more than Today 3.3 million³ in the Nordic countries smoke. The Cancer Societies in the Nordic Countries all work towards a tobacco-free society. In several of the Nordic Countries explicit statements have been made for a tobacco free society. If we are going to succeed in making tobacco use history, we need to look for new and effective initiatives.

We truly believe that plain packaging is an important demand reduction measure that will bring us closer to tobacco free Nordic Countries.

About the Nordic Cancer Union (NCU)

The Nordic Cancer Union is a collaborative body for cancer societies in the Nordic countries. For 60 years there has been a Nordic collaboration to advance the prevention and treatment of cancer.

³Number of smokers in the Nordic Countries: Norway 900 000, Sweden 860 000, Denmark 780 000, Finland 755 000, Iceland 55 000, Faroe Island