[PL] New anti-smoking law

IRIS 1996-8:1/20

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After heated parliamentary discussion, an Act to protect health against the effects of using tobacco and tobacco products was passed on 9 November 1995. The Act, which came into force on 1 May 1996, marks the start of more vigorous action to curb smoking in Poland.

In addition to preventing dependence on tobacco and tobacco products and protecting health against the effects of using them, the act is intended to protect the right of non-smokers to a tobacco smoke-free environment. It obliges government and local authorities to take all the action needed for this purpose.

The Act imposes numerous prohibitions which are backed by penalties, some of them applying to the media. For example, tobacco products may not be advertised on radio or television, in cinemas or in periodicals intended for children or young people. Smoking and advertising are also banned in health, cultural, educational, sports and recreational facilities. Tobacco may not be sold to people below the age of eighteen or in public facilities. There are also regulations on visibility and legibility of the health warnings which must appear on the packaging of tobacco products and in tobacco advertising.

Offences are punishable by fines of up to 25,000 zloty or imprisonment.

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Act on the protection of health against the effects of using tobacco and tobacco products of 9 November 1995, published in Dziennik Ustaw No. 10 of 30 January 1996.

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