



International Union Against
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
Health solutions for the poor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ireland Cigarette Bill Would Protect People's Health

(13 June 2014) – The government of Ireland took an important step toward protecting public health in the country, with yesterday's publishing of the Public Health (Standardised Packaging of Tobacco) Bill 2014. If passed into law, the bill will require tobacco cigarettes to be sold in generic packaging free of designs, logos, trademarks, colors and graphics, eliminating a key marketing tool that the tobacco industry uses to attract people to smoking. The bill aims to reduce tobacco consumption and, ultimately, deaths caused by tobacco.

"Some of their customers are dying every day, so tobacco companies constantly need to find new people to addict in order to stay in business. They use attractive and deceptive marketing to lure and then addict customers," said José Luis Castro, Executive Director of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease. "This new bill would promote public health by eliminating one of the key marketing tools that tobacco companies use to attract customers."

With the bill's publication, Ireland becomes the first European country to put legislation into motion to require generic packaging of tobacco cigarettes. The bill is expected to be introduced to parliament in the next week or two.

"This bill would especially benefit Ireland's youth," said Dr. Ehsan Latif, Director of Tobacco Control for The Union. "Marketing is a key factor in convincing young people to pick up smoking, and people start smoking at a younger age in Ireland than in any other EU country. Requiring cigarettes to be sold in plain packages will reduce the tobacco industry's influence over young people, which I think everyone can agree is a positive thing."

Research has consistently shown that generic packaging reduces the appeal of cigarettes and smoking. When people are exposed to cigarette packs that are designed and branded, they associate the packaging with higher quality and better taste, and they have more positive perceptions of smoking. When designs and branding are removed from cigarette packaging, people perceive cigarettes as being lower in quality, having poorer taste, and they have more negative perceptions of smoking.

Smoking is the largest single cause of avoidable sickness and death in much of the world, responsible for approximately five million deaths a year. Generic cigarette packaging is part of a standard set of public health measures, called MPOWER, endorsed by the World Health Organization for protecting public health from the effects of tobacco use.

About The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union)

The mission of The Union is to bring innovation, expertise, solutions and support to address health challenges in low- and middle-income populations. With nearly 15,000 members and subscribers from 150 countries, The Union has its headquarters in Paris and offices in the Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, North America and South-East Asia regions. Its scientific departments focus on tuberculosis and HIV, lung health and non-communicable diseases, tobacco control and research. [For more information, please visit www.theunion.org](http://www.theunion.org)

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