

Cracking down on tobacco

Greece and Australia implement tough new laws

From 1 July, a new smoking ban comes into effect in Greece – a country in which 42% of the population smoke (the highest proportion in Europe). It follows two earlier attempts to limit smoking (which were largely ignored), and includes a ban on smoking in hospitals, schools, vehicles and all public spaces, and bans tobacco advertising.

The Greek health minister claims that the new law will be 'applied strictly without yielding to any sort of pres-

sure', but already there are loopholes appearing – just last week, some last-minute exemptions were made, with companies with more than 50 employees now permitted to set up dedicated smoking areas on their premises, and cafes and bars with premises over 750 square feet will be allowed to have small, 'totally separate' smoking areas.

In New South Wales, Australia, much tougher laws are coming into force. From 1 July motorists who are caught smoking in their cars with passengers aged under 16 can be issued with an Aus\$250 on-the-spot fine. Cigarette vending machines are now restricted to licensed premises, retailers who sell tobacco to children may be prevented from selling tobacco in the future, and tobacco companies are banned from sponsoring sporting events. In addition, the law on tobacco display in shops is changing, to require retailers to keep all tobacco products out of sight. Shops with more than 50 employees now have six months to implement the ban on tobacco being displayed, and those who employ fewer than 50 people have a year in which to comply. Where shops generate 80 per cent of their turnover from tobacco-related sales, they have 12 months to register as a specialist business, and will then have a further three years to comply with the ban.

Sources: Sydney Morning Herald



Young adults clinging to nest longer

JUST when you thought it was safe to clear out the kids' bedrooms, fresh data shows young adults are staying at home longer than ever.

Almost one in four people aged between 20 and 34 were living in their family residence in 2006, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures reveal.

This compares to less than one in five two decades earlier.

But parents should not breathe too easy once their children move out because there is a high chance they will be back before their mid-30s.

More than 45 per cent of people who leave home for the first time return for an average length of between one and two years and 70 per cent will be back within three years of moving out.

But nearly all of them, 94 per cent, are out of home by the time they reach 28.

Names can be entered in Internet .eu domain in Greek language

The European Commission amended rules regarding the .eu domain on Friday to enable Internet users to record names of the .eu domain with the use of various alphabets, such as the Greek and Cyrillic ones.

Until now, recorded domain names in the high level .eu domain could only contain the letters from "a" to "z", the figures "0" to "9" and "-". The citizens and businesses of the European Union will now be able to record domain names in non-Latin writing, which is of great significance for such languages as Greek and Bulgarian. The new rules are expected to further improve the attractiveness of Europe's high level domain names. In order to record an .eu domain name, the users of the Global Web must be established in one of the EU's member-states.

All babies to have ears tested by 2010

EVERY newborn child will be tested for hearing impairments under a new plan unveiled by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. Mr Rudd says only 75 per cent of young children are currently routinely tested for hearing deficiencies, which he says can lead to further complications in later life.

Under the new policy, which could be in place by next year, every newborn child will be tested, and fitted with hearing aids or cochlear implants where necessary.

"Within 18 months we want every newborn child in Australia to be screened for hearing impairments," Mr Rudd told reporters in Sydney on Monday. "I'll be seeking the agreement of the states and territories on this and I hope to have this policy in place by the end of 2010."

Mr Rudd was speaking



Prime Minister Kevin Rudd with young Alexandros (grandson of Stratos and Sophia Zounis) and his parents Chris and Antigone Lada during his visit at a children's hearing centre, where he announced a plan to test every newborn child for hearing deficiencies.

during a visit to the Shepherd Centre for deaf and hearing impaired children. He was joined by Liberal backbencher Dr Brendan Nelson, who has been lobbying for greater health care provisions for deaf children.

"We want to live in a society where children are tested

for hearing impairments at a young age - as soon as is possible," Dr Nelson said.

"This will make us a leading nation for children's healthcare and it will give every child the ability to live in a hearing and speaking world."

Daily Advertiser (Wagga Wagga)



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