

Hungary's Health Minister Says Smoking Ban Is a Top Priority 14/01/2008

Jan. 9 (Bloomberg) — Hungary, which tops the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's list for deaths from lung cancer, plans to join the group of countries that forbid smoking in closed public places.

The Health Ministry is drafting a smoking ban similar to clampdowns in Ireland and France, Health Minister Agnes Horvath said at a press conference in Budapest today.

Hungary has 60.5 deaths from lung cancer per 100,000 citizens, compared with an OECD average of 37.4, according to an index compiled by Bloomberg using OECD data. More than 30 percent of the population uses tobacco, higher than any OECD country except for Greece, Turkey and the Netherlands, the data shows.

"We plan to join the list of European countries where you can't smoke in closed public places under any circumstances," Horvath said. "We want to promote self-care and individual responsibility."

The minister announced the plan at a press conference outlining the year's top priorities for the Free Democrats' Alliance, the junior partner in Hungary's governing coalition. The party's popularity among all voters stood at 3 percent, according to an opinion survey published last month by the Szonda Ipsos polling agency.

Source:

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