

# More countries adding graphic warnings to smokes

June 27 2014, by Margie Mason

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In this June 24, 2014 file photo, new packs of cigarettes displaying pictorial health warnings are arranged on the counter by a shop attendant for photographers at a convenience store in Jakarta, Indonesia. Tobacco companies on Tuesday largely snubbed an Indonesian law requiring them to put graphic photo warnings on all cigarette packs being sold, marking another setback in a country that's home to the world's highest rate of men smokers and a wild, wild west of advertising. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana, File)

Indonesia became the newest country to mandate graphic photo warnings

on cigarette packs on Tuesday, joining more than 40 other nations or territories that have adopted similar regulations in recent years.

The warnings, which showcase gruesome close-up images ranging from rotting teeth and cancerous lungs to open tracheotomy holes and corpses, are an effort to highlight the risks of health problems related to smoking. Research suggests these images have prompted people to quit, but the World Health Organization estimates nearly 6 million people continue to die globally each year from smoking-related causes. The [tobacco industry](#) has fought government efforts to introduce or increase the size of graphic warnings in some countries. Here are a few places where pictorial [health warnings](#) have made headlines:

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#### INDONESIA:

**THE LAW:** 40 percent of pack covered by graphic photos.

**TIMING:** Deadline to be on shelves was June 24.

**BACKGROUND:** Many tobacco companies missed Tuesday's deadline to comply with the new [law](#) requiring all [cigarette packs](#) in stores to carry graphic warning photos. Indonesia, a country of around 240 million, has the world's highest rate of male smokers at 67 percent and the second-highest rate overall. Its government is among the few that has yet to sign a World Health Organization treaty on tobacco control.

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#### THAILAND:

**THE LAW:** Portion of cigarette packs that must be covered with graphic

health warnings rising from 55 percent to 85 percent.

**TIMING:** Change will take effect in September.



In this Aug. 27, 2013 file photo, cigarette packages are displayed for sale at a shop in Bangkok. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lalit, File)

**BACKGROUND:** Last year, the Public Health Ministry issued a regulation increasing the level of coverage to 85 percent. Tobacco giant Philip Morris and more than 1,400 Thai retailers sued, and a court temporarily suspended the order. On Thursday, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that the regulation can take effect before a lower court reaches a final verdict in the lawsuit.



In this Nov. 15, 2010 file photo, a man holds a cigarette and a pack with a picture of a cancer patient printed on it at a street in Montevideo, Uruguay. (AP Photo/Matilde Campodonico, File)

## AUSTRALIA:

**THE LAW:** No cigarette brand logos permitted; graphic health warnings required on 75 percent of front and 90 percent of back.

**TIMING:** Plain packaging law went into effect in 2012.

**BACKGROUND:** Australia became the first country in the world to mandate plain cigarette packs with no brand logo or colors permitted. Instead, the packs are solid brown and covered in large graphic warnings. Tobacco companies fought the law, saying it violated intellectual property rights and devalued their trademarks, but the country's highest

court upheld it. Figures released this month by the country's Bureau of Statistics found that cigarette consumption fell about 5 percent from March 2013 to the same period this year. The World Trade Organization has agreed to hear complaints filed by several tobacco-growing countries, but other governments have expressed interest in passing similar laws. Smokers make up 17 percent of Australia's population.

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In this June 26, 2013 file photo, the warning signs are printed on the cigarette packets on sale in Bangkok. (AP Photo/Apichart Weerawong, File)

UNITED STATES:

THE LAW: No graphic pictures on packs.



**TIMING:** The government stepped away from a legal battle with [tobacco companies](#) in March 2013.

**BACKGROUND:** There are currently no pictorial warnings on cigarette packs in the U.S. After the tobacco industry sued, a Food and Drug Administration order to include the graphic labels was blocked last year by an appeals court, which ruled that the photos violated First Amendment free speech protections. The government opted not to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, but will instead develop new warnings. About 18 percent of adult Americans smoke.

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In this Nov. 19, 2010 file photo, a man shows his cigarette package covered by a warning that reads in Spanish "Smoking, you stink," top, and "Smoking causes bad breath" in Montevideo, Uruguay. (AP Photo/Matilde Campodonico, File)

## PHILIPPINES:

**THE LAW:** Graphic warning legislation approved this month requires 50 percent of bottom of the pack to be covered by graphic warnings.

**TIMING:** Legislation awaits president's signature.

**BACKGROUND:** The Philippines is expected to join a handful of other countries that put graphic warnings at the bottom of their packs, meaning they are not visible when displayed on store shelves. Anti-smoking advocates say labels on the bottom of the packs are less effective, and have denounced tobacco industry involvement in the implementation process. Health officials said around 17 million people in the country of 96 million, or 18 percent, smoked in 2012.



In this Nov. 30, 2012 file photo, the Surgeon General's Warning appears on a pack of Camel cigarettes purchased at a Chicago area news stand. (AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast, File)

URUGUAY:

THE LAW: Graphic warnings cover 80 percent of packs.

TIMING: Regulations implemented in 2010.



This combination photo made from file images provided by the U.S. Food and



Drug Administration shows two of nine cigarette warning labels from the FDA. A judge on Wednesday, Feb. 29, 2012 blocked the federal requirement that would have begun forcing U.S. tobacco companies to put large graphic images on their cigarette packages later this year to show the dangers of smoking and encouraging smokers to quit lighting up. (AP Photo/U.S. Food and Drug Administration, File)

**BACKGROUND:** Uruguay, a leader in strict tobacco controls, mandated what were the largest [graphic warnings](#) ever in 2010. Eighty percent of packs must be covered by the labels, including one depicting a person smoking a battery to show that cigarettes contain the toxic metal cadmium. Uruguay has backed Australia at the WTO, telling the trade body that smoking is "the most serious pandemic confronting humanity." Philip Morris International sued Uruguay over the law; the case is still pending.

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