

Smoking in the workplace

In March this year, Ireland became the first country in Europe to ban smoking in the workplace. In June, Norway brought in new anti-smoking laws, banning smoking in restaurants and bars. Should the UK follow?

1 Which of the following are banned in your country?

cigarette advertising on TV / cinema	smoking in the workplace
smoking in airports	smoking in restaurants

2 Now read the two letters sent to the World Health Organization. Summarise each viewpoint.

(a) Dear Sir

I work in a paint factory and there are many more dangerous fumes than cigarette smoke. Many of our employees voluntarily smoke outside anyway. Government legislation is not the answer – it is much better for each company to choose themselves what to do at work. It is easy to introduce smoke free areas for example. We shouldn't forget that tobacco duties make a significant contribution to government revenues. I believe it is wrong to ban smoking in pubs and restaurants. People go there to socialise, to drink and to have a smoke. People should have freedom of choice – non-smokers can choose if they wish to go there or not.
Yours faithfully
David Marks

(b) Dear Sir or Madam

Congratulations for organising WNTD (World No Tobacco Day) last month. It helped remind us that tobacco is one of the world's biggest killers. I completely agree with the new laws in Norway and Ireland – smoking should be banned in pubs in order to protect people in the entertainment industry. Passive smoking is dangerous and non-smokers should not have to inhale the ill-effects of other people's smoking. Many smokers would give up if smoking was banned at work, which would be better for their health. This would also save the health service money. Although in New York, I believe people are now quite happy to smoke outside their office building!
Regards
Mary Kidd

3 Find words or expressions in the letters from the following definitions:

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|---|------------|
| (a) a law or a set of laws | (letter a) |
| (b) smoke or gas that has an unpleasant smell and may be harmful | (letter a) |
| (c) doing something you choose to, not because you have to | (letter a) |
| (d) income from tax | (letter a) |
| (e) the act of breathing other people's tobacco smoke into your lungs | (letter b) |
| (f) negative results of something | (letter b) |

Definitions from or based on *Macmillan Essential Dictionary*. Text © Bloomsbury Publishing Plc 2003

4 Complete the questionnaire and compare your answers in small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

Questionnaire

Should smoking be banned:

	Yes	No	Not sure
at the office or workplace?			
in pubs and clubs?			
in restaurants and cafes?			
in outdoor places, such as parks?			