

transcript

level 1

Try not to look at this until you've done all the exercises that go with the listening.

Up in smoke

- Richard: For this week's podcastsineenglish we're talking about smoking, or rather, not smoking. It's World No Tobacco Day on 31 May, so Jackie what's that all about?
- Jackie: World No Tobacco Day it's um... it's a day organised by the World Health Organisation, the WHO, and they say that um... that tobacco is one of the main causes of death in the world, and it's one of the main causes that you can stop. It says that um... about 5 million people die every year because of smoking.
- Richard: Ok, now England is going to ban smoking in public places soon, isn't that right?
- Jackie: Yes, in fact very soon. On 1 July um... the British government says that it's going to ban smoking in all enclosed public places and this includes offices, where people work, factories, pubs and bars but not outdoors or in private homes.
- Richard: Ok, now I know in the British Isles Ireland and Scotland already ban smoking in public places but these aren't the first countries, are they?
- Jackie: No, in fact um... the United Kingdom is England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in fact England is the last of all those countries to intro... introduce a non-smoking ban. But the very first country to do this was the Irish Republic, they actually banned smoking three years ago now - March 2004, they were the very first country to ban smoking in public places and then they were followed a few months later by Norway.
- Richard: So Ireland have banned smoking in public places since 2004...?
- Jackie: 2004, yes.
- Richard: ...so, has it been a success?
- Jackie: Yes, it has. It's interesting because at the time a lot of people really, really hated the idea of the ban. And I think especially in places like Ireland, which has a very strong pub culture, people like going to the pub and a lot of people smoke there and before the ban bars, pubs and restaurants the people there said that they would lose business, they were really worried about losing money. They said that people would stop going out. However, this is not true, in fact the opposite is true.

There are more non-smokers now who go out and the number of smokers stays the same so in fact businesses have improved.

Richard: Oh, right.

Jackie: And... and going to non-smoking places this is considered normal now, so it's not, it's not a problem any more in Ireland. But I do... I do have one funny story - there is a pub in Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the man bought, the owner of the pub, the landlord, he bought a double-decker bus and he parked the double-decker bus outside the pub and so whenever anybody wanted to have a cigarette they could go outside the pub and go into the double-decker bus and have a cigarette.

Richard: So the double-decker bus is not a public place?

Jackie: No, er... none of his staff are allowed to go on the bus, he's the only one who's allowed to go in the bus and to clean it.

Richard: [laughs] Ok, so that's Britain, and Ireland, what about other countries around the world with smoking bans?

Jackie: Yes, in fact many countries have some kind of restriction on where people can smoke, or a restriction on the advertising of cigarettes. Um... did you know that smoking was banned um... on Bondi Beach in Australia, for example?

Richard: Bondi Beach you mean.

Jackie: Is it Bondi Beach?

Richard: [laughs] Yes

Jackie: They banned it on the... on the beach!

Richard: Yes, I er... remember that because people were putting the ends of their cigarettes, their butts...

Jackie: The cigarette... the cigarette butts

Richard: ... in the sand, so they stopped that.

Jackie: Wow, and that's outside!

Richard: Yes

Jackie: Um... Bhutan, the Kingdom of Bhutan in the Himalayas, they've actually banned the sale of tobacco products, and in fact I think they're the only country in the world where you can't buy tobacco.

- Richard: Good for them!
- Jackie: Mm-mmm. Cuba er... Cuba has banned smoking on public transport, in shops and other closed spaces as well.
- Richard: But what about um... Fidel Castro? He's a huge cigar smoker, isn't he?
- Jackie: He was a huge cigar smoker, in fact he um... he gave up smoking in 1986 for health reasons.
- Richard: That long ago? 1986?
- Jackie: Yeah
- Richard: Wow
- Jackie: France has recently um... introduced no-smoking in work places and other public buildings as well, this year.
- Richard: Ok, what about Italy? Weren't they one of the first in Europe?
- Jackie: Yes, Italy banned smoking in all enclosed public places in January 2005 and that includes um... bars, restaurants and offices.
- Richard: Ok
- Jackie: Um... but also places like Iran, Kenya, Singapore, Tanzania- they all have some restrictions on... on smoking.
- Richard: Great. So Jackie, all these countries are trying to stop people from smoking... [mmmm] ...um but I think one of the biggest things is the prices they charge for cigarettes. Can you tell us something about that?
- Jackie: Well, I do know that in the UK um... the price of a packet of fags is one of the most expensive in the world. It costs over five pounds for a packet of cigarettes in the UK.
- Richard: Wow, so that's what? That's about 10 US dollars.
- Jackie: It's over 10 dollars for a packet for cigarettes, so people who smoke twenty-a-day they could be saving 10 dollars a day by not smoking. So a pie membership is only one and a half packets of cigarettes. So that's a good reason to stop smoking!
- Richard: [laughs] Yes! All right Jackie, thanks very much for that. Bye-bye.
- Jackie: Bye!