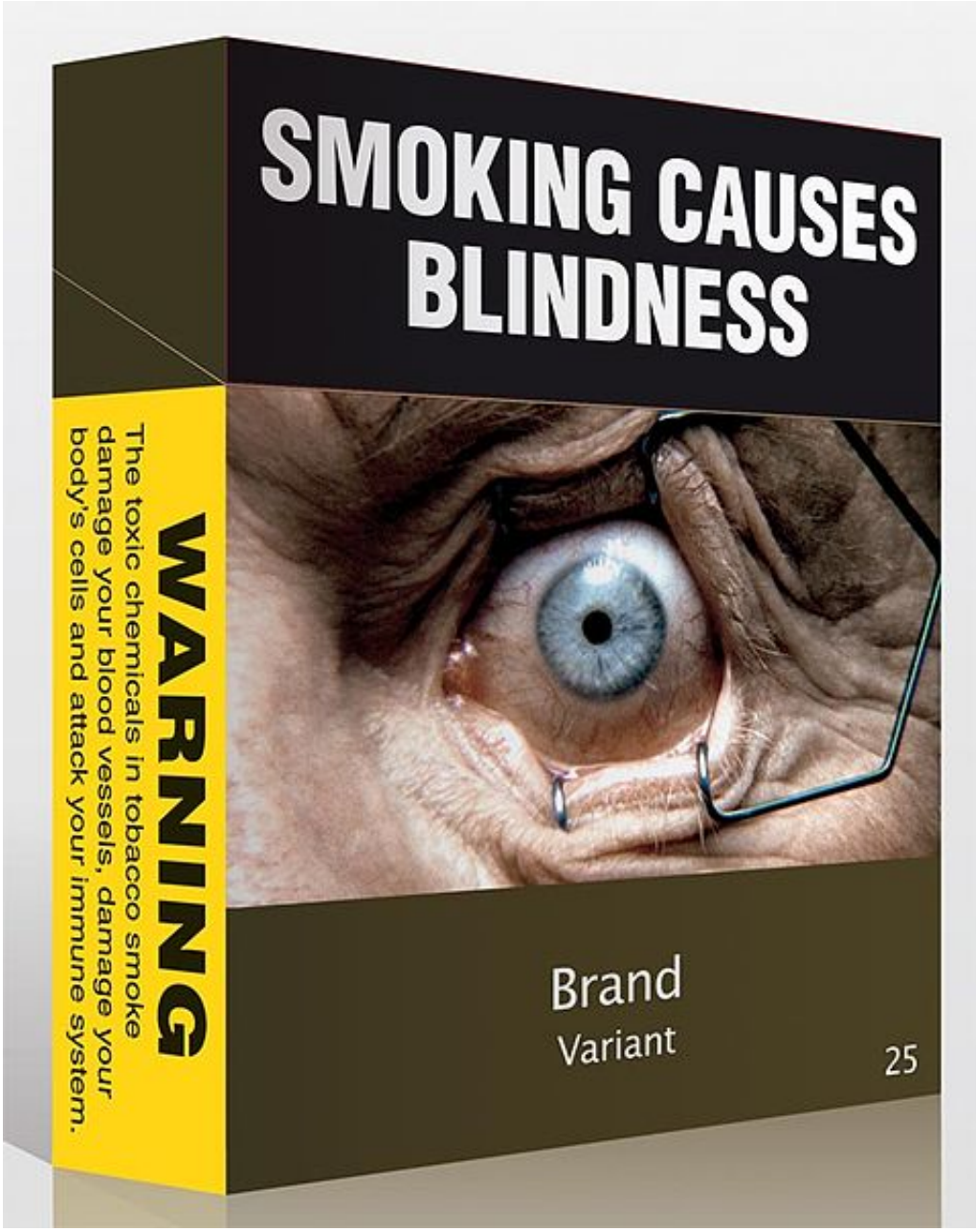
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News | 13.12.2013

Smoking and health

Getting tough on tobacco? The final round.

A long-awaited revision of EU rules on tobacco products could be agreed by the European Parliament and Council in trialogue negotiations on Monday (16 December). There has been massive controversy surrounding the legislation, with intense lobbying by the tobacco industry but there is still hope that tougher EU rules could be agreed. The Greens were unhappy with the outcome of the EP vote, which weakened the proposals made by the EU Commission, at the behest of the tobacco lobby. However, the final outcome should be known on Monday. Smoking is the number one killer in the EU and the Greens think the final legislation must reflect this. One crucial step to this end is packaging, with plenty of examples - like the one below from Australia - from countries that take smoking and its health consequences more seriously than the EU.



The Greens think the Commission's proposals on packaging should be the bare minimum. This means combined picture and health warnings 75% of the pack size and at the top edge of the pack. The group believes there is a need to ensure a ban on all characterising flavours, which aim to target young consumers. This extends to menthol - which Parliament voted to exempt - as this makes it easier to smoke (by reducing the cough reflex) and easier for young people to get addicted. There are also clear grounds for banning slim cigarettes, as the World Health Organisation has highlighted. These slims are misleadingly marketed as better for your health and designed to appeal to young women in particular.

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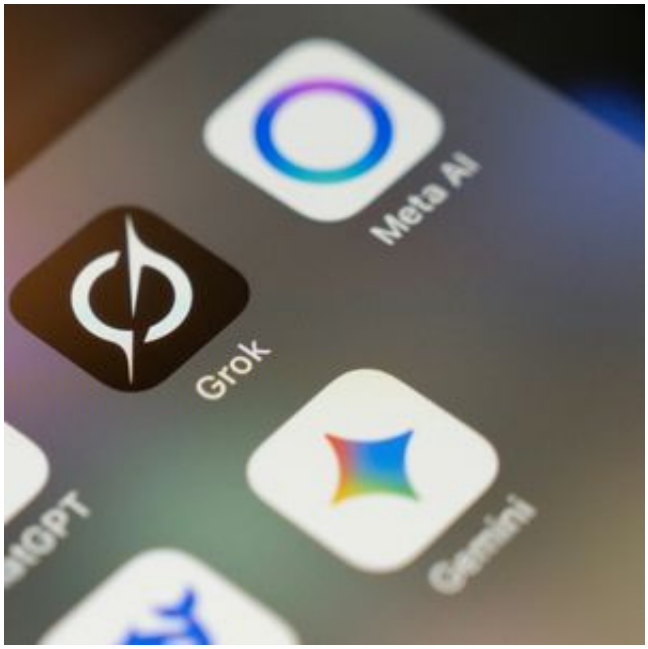


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