

New Zealand will phase in a near-total tobacco ban from next year, prohibiting anyone born after 2008 from ever purchasing cigarettes and reducing the amount of nicotine in products sold in the meantime. Under legislation passed by parliament yesterday, cigarettes will be much weaker, more difficult to buy and permanently unavailable to anyone currently under 14 years old. The legislation effectively raises the smoking age every year, and is designed to almost immediately reduce the number of people using tobacco products. As well as a steadily increasing age limit, the new law will slash the number of retailers able to sell tobacco products to a maximum of just 600 nationwide, a massive drop from the current figure of 6,000. It will also reduce the amount of nicotine in tobacco products.

Researchers in the strip unveiled in September Byzantine mosaics dating from the 5th to 7th centuries, and in April a 4,500-year-old stone statuette depicting the face of an ancient goddess.