



**Draft**

**Title:** **Green and science-based approach to cannabis law in Europe**

**Tabled by:** Partia Zieloni (Poland), Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Germany), déi gréng (Luxembourg)

### **Draft text**

1 Cannabis is the most widely used drug worldwide. According to UNODC estimates  
2 more than 4% of the adult population (aged 18 - 64) have used Cannabis in 2020.  
3 In 2021, 22.2 million adult citizens of the European Union consumed cannabis.  
4 According to the report by Hanway 55% of Europeans support legalising  
5 recreational cannabis, while almost 30% of respondents are interested in trying  
6 it. Yet, in the 21st century we still find ourselves in Europe which puts a lot  
7 of stigma around users of all kinds of narcotics, including cannabis. The World  
8 Health Organization (WHO) has been highlighting time and again that users should  
9 not be punished.

10 As Greens, we rely on science and demand policies that put more importance on  
11 fighting drug addiction than fighting personal and recreational use of drugs.

12 Luxembourg has announced its intention of legalising recreative cannabis use in  
13 the 2018 governmental program. As a first step, a draft legislation has been  
14 tabled in 2022 to allow homegrowing for personal use. A strategy for the  
15 implementation of a national recreative cannabis sector, covering every step  
16 from production to sales, is in development and expected to be presented in  
17 spring 2023. Germany is also in the process of legalising cannabis, going as far  
18 as the current restrictive EU legislation allows. The proposed draft intends, in  
19 a first step, to decriminalise possession and homegrowing for personal use and  
20 enables the establishments of Cannabis social clubs, through which members can  
21 attain cannabis legally. In a second step, the commercial production,

22 distribution and sale is tested in model projects.

23 Thanks to the continuous work of scientists, we already know that cannabis not  
24 only should be decriminalised but also destigmatised. Citizens deserve reliable  
25 and accessible information on the positive effects of cannabis, as well as on  
26 the side effects that might be experienced.

27 Hemp, which can be used for the production of textiles, clothes, insulation, and  
28 can even be a substitute for plastic, makes it an invaluable resource in  
29 striving for more ecological production. But due to the stigma and extremely  
30 strict regulations the use of hemp in production has been stifled, as the  
31 products differ only in the psychoactive component. This means that when growing  
32 hemp a simple omission, or mistake can lead to a lengthy trial, or in worst  
33 cases a prison sentence.

## 34 **MEDICAL USE**

35 The positive effect of using cannabis for medical purposes is indisputable. It  
36 has been scientifically proven that medical marijuana relieves all kinds of  
37 pain, from post-traumatic to oncological pain. Marijuana plays an important role  
38 in the treatment of neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis, epilepsy,  
39 Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's diseases. Studies suggest that medicinal marijuana  
40 helps reducing the symptoms of cancer and its treatment. These studies have also  
41 shown very positive results in replacing opioid pain treatments with medical  
42 marijuana.

43 Even though the majority of European countries have legalised medical marijuana,  
44 access remains limited and inconsistent. For instance, on the Croatian medical  
45 market, there is just one cannabis medical product registered to contain  
46 cannabidiol. If legal, medical cannabis remains inaccessible. And even  
47 prescribed this medicine is often not refunded and can only be obtained in the  
48 pharmacy as a full-pay medicine, which is the case in Poland, for example.

## 49 **DRUG TRAFFICKING**

50 It has been proven that introducing bans does not lead to improving the issue of  
51 addiction. Legislative prohibition is supporting only the so-called "black  
52 market". Drug trafficking must continue to be sanctioned and drug dealers must  
53 be brought to justice. While crime organisations are gaining lucrative earnings,

54 there are no complex and structural prevention measures. Where illegal, there is  
55 no control over the market, no control over the quality, no content of the drug  
56 neither the age of the buyer. Additionally, young people who cannot access  
57 cannabis legally will often be exposed to a criminal environment. There is no  
58 control over its production, which means that any substances can be added or  
59 mixed with the cannabis to create addiction or additives, to increase the volume  
60 of the drug, and the health risks related to that are unknown.

61 According to Europol estimation Europeans spend approximately 9 billion euro  
62 each year to purchase marihuana. This, obviously, creates an enormous black  
63 market. The regulation and implementation of regulatory control of the entire  
64 cannabis supply chain is a pillar of a successful legalisation. It would also be  
65 an important step to drain down the existing black market.

66 The use of cannabis was also speculated to serve as a “gateway”, claiming that  
67 it increases the likelihood  
68 of users engaging in subsequent use of harder and more harmful substances. This  
69 hypothesis, however, has been disproven by recent studies.

## 70 **DECRIMINALISATION**

71 Freeing up police assets from pursuing drug use crimes in support of  
72 investigating drug sales crimes will give a boost to investigating sales crimes  
73 and thus will help combat drug sales and organised crime more effectively.  
74 Police resources should be used for more alarming and urgent matters, rather  
75 than chasing everyday users and enforcing a ban that is not going to stop the  
76 use of cannabis.

77 If we put an end to the persecution of drug use, taxpayers’ money could be used  
78 to finance addiction prevention measures and open up centers specialising in  
79 spreading the knowledge on substance abuse.

80 The cannabis market, if legal, can create new jobs and will be a new source of  
81 tax revenues.

82 Ultimately, controlled and legalised production, trade, and licensed retailers  
83 would improve public health while protecting children.

## 84 **SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

85 Prohibition is not a solution for tackling addiction successfully. Therefore, we  
86 should push for rehabilitation and treatment as the best ways to support people

87 that experience substance abuse. Services aiming at addiction treatment must be  
88 public and accessible. It cannot and should not mean long waiting time or a  
89 privilege for the rich. In place of expensive persecution we need structurally  
90 designed drug abuse prevention programmes, addiction consultation, and  
91 withdrawal programmes that are accessible to everyone.

92 Greens are committed to politically and structurally supporting high standard  
93 drug policies that focus on regulating the market in a way that it is supporting  
94 citizens in legally accessing cannabis, as well as providing them with fully  
95 reimbursable medical products and decriminalising personal use in all European  
96 countries.

97 The EGP calls on the national governments and the EU Commission to:

- 98 • decriminalise the recreational use of marijuana
- 99 • legalise medical marijuana cultivation
- 100 • ease regulations around hemp production
- 101 • make medical marijuana reimbursable in the health insurance system
- 102 • fund accessible substance abuse centers, additional consultation as well  
103 as withdrawal programmes aimed at supporting citizens in need
- 104 • advocate for changing the relevant international and European legal  
105 requirements, like the 2004 EU Council Framework Decision on illicit  
106 trafficking in drugs and precursors or the 1990 Implementing Convention  
107 for the Schengen Protocol