



Should France legalize the use of soft drugs such as Cannabis?

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Introduction

- Cannabis remains illegal in France but is widely consumed.
- Around 11% of French adults are regular users, one of the highest rates in Europe.

The Legal Paradox

- France maintains a strict prohibitionist policy.
- Meanwhile, Canada, Uruguay, and several U.S. states have opted for regulated legalization.

The Key Question :

➔ Should France legalize soft drugs?



The economic arguments in favor of legalization



Creating a New Source of Revenue for the State

A "Cannabis Tax" as Effective as Tobacco and Alcohol

If France were to adopt a similar model, it could tax cannabis just like:

Tobacco (generates over **€13 billion** in tax revenue per year)

Alcohol (brings in over **€4 billion** annually)

- A study estimates that cannabis legalization in France could generate **between €2 and €3 billion** per year in tax revenue.

● ● ● Example:

In **California**, cannabis generates over **\$1 billion in annual tax revenue**, which is **more than alcohol taxation**

Dynamisation of the local and national economy

27000 - 80000 : creation of jobs

3 main sectors :

- Agriculture
- Transformation and distribution
- Tertiary sector

Stimulation of private investment and innovation

Regulation and control of the market

- Fight against black market
 - Generate between 250M and 740M euros of social contributions
 - Regulate the products and the distribution
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REDUCTION OF CRIME AND JUSTICE CONGESTION



Weakening of Illegal Trafficking Networks

Profits generated by cannabis allow criminal organisation to extend their illicit activities:

- Arms trafficking
- Human trafficking
- Hard drug trafficking
- Terrorism

● ● ● Example:

Since legalisation of cannabis in Canada (2018), 70% of consumers now purchase their cannabis from legal sources.

→ Reducing the market share of illegal networks.

→ Decreasing violent confrontations related to trafficking

Reducing pressure on the Judicial and Prison Systems

Every year, criminalization of cannabis leads to thousands of judicial proceedings and incarcerations in France:

→ Between 2016 - 2020: 180 000 each year.

What could be the benefits of the legalisation?

- reduce the costs associated with imprisonment
 - Invest money in more serious crimes
 - Reducing prison overcrowding
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INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

CANADA: An economic success story

- The **federal government and provinces** have collected over **4.5 billion Canadian dollars** in taxes since legalization.
- More than **98,000 jobs** have been created in the cannabis industry, from cultivation to distribution.

Impact on the Black Market:

- Legal sales have **gradually replaced illegal sales**, accounting for **approximately 70% of the total market** by 2023.

NETHERLANDS: Economic Tolerance

- Coffee shops generate significant tourism revenue, with Amsterdam welcoming **over 1.5 million foreign visitors** annually just for cannabis.
- The sector generates **hundreds of millions of euros per year in taxes**, even though the market remains **semi-legal**



HEALTH RISKS

Why Are Young People More Vulnerable?

- Their brain is still developing until around the age of 25.
 - Regular cannabis use can impair **memory, concentration, and intelligence quotient (IQ)**.
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Negative Effects on Mental Health

Numerous studies have established a link between regular cannabis consumption and the onset of psychological disorders such as:

- **Depression**
- **Anxiety**
- **Schizophrenia and psychosis**



DRUG NORMALIZATION

- “We are no longer able to control it”
 - Much more people will be able to get it
 - Gateway drug effect : *“use of a psychoactive substance is coupled to an increased probability of the use of further substances.”*
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COMPLEXITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

- Difficulties in **regulating the market**, in particular to control points of sale and avoid a parallel black market.
- **Cultural and moral opposition** in a part of the French population.



COST TO THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Increase of public health expenditures:

- Increase of consumption, particularly young people / vulnerable populations
- Additional healthcare costs:
- Addictions
 - Psychological disorders (anxiety, depression, schizophrenia)
 - Accidents linked to consumption (car accident)

Risk of Downplaying Health Risks:

Although cannabis is considered as “soft drug”, increase consumption could exacerbate public health problems.

It can be very costly because of:

- Prevention campaigns
- Awareness efforts
- Treatment programs



Conclusion

Key Takeaways:

- Economic Impact: Potential tax revenue and regulation benefits.
- Crime & Trafficking: Could reduce illegal market influence.
- Health Concerns: Risks of increased consumption and public health effects.
- Balanced Approach: A gradual legalization strategy, such as regional trials, may help evaluate outcomes before a nationwide decision.

