



NEW PUBLICATION

EU drugs agency publishes its first report on the medical use of cannabis

What is the evidence base for the medical use of cannabis and cannabinoids? What is the difference between cannabis preparations and medicinal products and why is this important? How is this issue regulated in the EU?

These and other questions are explored in a new report to be published on 4 December by the EU drugs agency (EMCDDA): ***Medical use of cannabis and cannabinoids: questions and answers for policymaking***. The report responds to growing interest in this topic as more European countries develop policies and practice in this area. It describes how approaches vary widely between nations, both in terms of the products permitted and the regulatory frameworks governing their provision.

The medical use of cannabis and cannabinoids can refer to a wide variety of products and preparations that may contain different active ingredients and use different routes of administration. By clarifying some of the complex issues in this area, the report hopes to support a more informed policy debate in the EU.

The publication provides a state-of-the-art overview of evidence for the medical use of cannabis and cannabinoids. In addition to exploring current practice in the EU regarding the provision of these substances for medical purposes, it also presents international case studies illustrating the diverse approaches to the issue adopted by countries outside the EU.

The report highlights the challenges of decision-making in this area and summarises the multiple issues that may be considered as part of any process for making cannabis or cannabinoid-containing products or preparations available for medical use.

Cannabis, controversies and challenges

The publication is the second in a new series of reports, introduced under the umbrella 'Cannabis, controversies and challenges'. In this set of papers, the EMCDDA explores, in an objective and neutral manner, some of the complex issues that exist in the cannabis policy field today.

Cannabis is the drug about which both public attitudes and the political debate are most polarised. Interest in this area is rapidly growing, prompted by international developments in the ways in which countries are now regulating this substance. For Europe, this means that questions on what constitutes an appropriate policy response to cannabis have become both topical and important. The agency's aim in this series is to provide an overview of evidence and current practice for those with an interest in this area as well as to inform debate, without advocating for any particular policy perspective.

Through this new series, the EMCDDA also responds to Objective 14 of the EU Action Plan on Drugs 2017–2020, where it is asked to monitor and report on cannabis legislation at national level and in third countries.

