IOGT-NTO
Box 12825
SE-112 97 Stockholm
Sweden

IOGT-NTO's TRIS contribution regarding Draft Law on Cannabis for Limited Personal Use (2025/0415/SI)

IOGT-NTO
Stockholm the 26 of September 2025

Introduction

IOGT-NTO strongly objects to the proposed legalization of cannabis for personal use in Slovenia. In particular, the proposal raises concerns of non-compliance with EU- and international law in the way that it poses risks to public health and child protection, and simultaneously threatens to undermine the coherence of the EU's internal market.

Legal inconsistencies:

- **The Schengen Convention, article 71:** Allowing cultivation and possession of cannabis conflicts with Member States' obligation to prevent unauthorized distribution of narcotics.
- **The Council Framework Decision 2004/757/JHA:** Legalization of cannabis risks undermining EU-level harmonization of drug offences.
- **Internal market fragmentation:** Legalization of cannabis in one Member State risks creating cross-border inconsistencies, especially with neighbouring prohibitionist countries.

Public health and child protection:

- **Article 168 TFEU** requires a high level of public health protection. Evidence consistently shows that cannabis increases risks for mental illness, addiction, and traffic injuries, especially among youth.
- **Article 24 EU Charter and UN CRC Article 33:** Children must be protected from exposure to illicit substances. Legalizing home cultivation and possession of cannabis undermines this duty.

  In addition, The UN Convention on The Rights of the Child specifically addresses illicit drugs and the need for its prevention and protection. Through Article 33, the CRC Member States are obligated to protect children from the illicit use, production, and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychoactive substances. This makes implementation of the UN Drugs Conventions a human rights imperative and the failure to adhere is also a failure of child protection – making legalisation a human rights violation.

International obligations:

- **1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (Art. 4(c)):** Legalizing recreational cannabis directly contradicts treaty obligations. Slovenia has not justified how this aligns with international commitments.

IOGT-NTO
Box 12825
SE-112 97 Stockholm
Sweden

IOGT-NTO
Box 12825
SE-112 97 Stockholm
Sweden

Conclusion

IOGT-NTO urges the European Commission to take a firm stance against the Slovenian draft law. Legalizing recreational cannabis would not only breach binding EU and international obligations but also undermine coordinated efforts to protect public health and safeguard children from harmful substances. Allowing one Member State to unilaterally dismantle established drug control standards risks creating fragmentation across the Union, generating enforcement challenges, and sending a dangerous political signal that recreational drug use can be normalized.

At a time when scientific evidence clearly shows the severe risks of cannabis for mental health, addiction, and traffic safety, especially among youth, it is imperative that EU institutions act to uphold the principles of prevention, health protection, and legal certainty. The Commission must therefore reject Slovenia's proposal in its current form and instead call on the Slovenian authorities to strengthen, rather than weaken, their compliance with EU law, the UN conventions, and the Union's duty to protect citizens, especially children and young people, from the harms of drugs.

IOGT-NTO
Box 12825
SE-112 97 Stockholm
Sweden

References:

Manthey, Jakob, et al. “Prevalence of Use, Cannabis Potency, and Treatment Rates: European Trends, 2006-21.” The Lancet Regional Health – Europe, vol. 8, 2021, DOI:10.1016/j.lanepe.2021.100202.

Hoch, Elena, et al. “Cannabis Use in Europe: Effects on Public Health, Mental Health, and Traffic Safety.” PMC, 2025.

Gripe, I., et al. “Associations Between Cannabis Use and Mental Distress During Adolescence and Young Adulthood.” Journal of Adolescent Health, 2024.