

Good example of essay on the legalization of marijuana: why the world can agree o...

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Marijuana is considered a soft type of drug, and many people around the world use it for recreational purposes, for its analgesic properties, or as part of their ancient religious rituals. The legalization of marijuana is a contemporary trend which tends to become more and more prominent throughout the world. While medical and religious uses of marijuana are accepted in many places as necessary or acceptable, recreational use of marijuana remains controversial. Many states in America, in Europe and South America have already legalized or decriminalized marijuana for personal use, and more are likely to follow their example. However, not all governments are convinced, and some do not even consider legalization but on the contrary, they punish its use or commercialization severely, such as much of the Muslim world, as well as some countries in Europe. In order to understand why there is so wide discrepancy between countries that legalized marijuana and countries that did not, this paper will compare and contrast them by taking into consideration three aspects, namely public support for legalization, religion and perceived benefits.

Among the countries where marijuana is legalized at least partially, or decriminalized, there is USA, where marijuana remains illegal at the federal level, but was legalized completely in 4 states , and for medical purposes in 23 states. Others include the Netherlands, with its notorious coffee shops, Uruguay, Columbia, Germany, Canada, Australia and Costa Rica, to name just a few. In many of these countries, public support for legalization and public pressure were the most important reasons why marijuana became legal. In the USA, polls show that many citizens support the legalization of marijuana to a large extend. Lopez argues that, “ according to surveys,

support for legalization rose from 12 percent in 1970 to 31 percent in 2000 to 51 percent in 2014". This shows that they younger generations do not consider any longer, that marijuana is dangerous. This also reflects the actual use of marijuana, which continues to grow globally. In addition, people feel that abusers should not be imprisoned, but rather, they should be helped to overcome their addiction. This reflects the perception of marijuana use as acceptable, rather than a crime that should be punished.

Furthermore, the religiosity of the people is also one of the reasons why in some countries, marijuana was legalized. In all the countries where marijuana is legal, religion is not a main aspect of culture. Finally, in many of the countries where marijuana was legalized, the costs of stopping the practice were higher than the costs of allowing it, or the traffic was so extensive that the country decided to make it legal and make former traffickers pay taxes for it (Inciardi 5). For this reason, many South-American countries where marijuana is extensively produced, marijuana was already legalized, an example of this respect being Uruguay.

In countries where marijuana is not legal, and there is no indication that this will happen in the near future, public support, religion and potential benefits also represent important aspect in the marijuana legalization debate. In most of the European Union countries, marijuana is not a major public issue, as it currently is in the USA. There is no pressure on the state, from the public's side, to legalize marijuana. On the other hand, as in the states where marijuana is legal, in many of the European Union countries, religion is not a major issue preventing legalization. As Caulkins and Kilmer (142) show, religious people are much more likely not to support the legalization of

marijuana. Consequently, it is no wonder that, in countries where religion is a major aspect of culture or of daily life, such as in many of the Islamic countries, the legalization of marijuana is taboo. So is the case in many Eastern Europe countries, which although secular, have a higher rate of practicing believers, than other parts of Europe. Finally, in many countries where marijuana abuse is not out of control, and in countries where it is not produced on large scale, authorities fear that legalizing it will lead to it being more accessible and therefore, easier to abuse (Lopez). Therefore, they find that it is more beneficial to maintain its use and production illegal.

There are many issues that determine the official state policy concerning soft drugs such as marijuana. However, as this paper tried to show, in determining why some countries are likely to legalize marijuana whereas others are not, three major aspects must be considered: public support, religion and potential benefits. One of other of these aspects predominates in many of these countries, and has a major power in deciding whether marijuana is legalized or not. For example, in countries where marijuana use is supported by the public and largely abused, it is more likely for this drug to be legalized. This possibility increases for countries where religion is not a major aspect of culture, whereas in countries where religion is very important, marijuana use is taboo, and it is unlikely to be legalized. Finally, in countries where marijuana traffic is intense, or where marijuana is massively produced, it is more likely that it will be legalized, regardless of religious concerns, because the state takes into consideration the potential financial benefits for legalizing it. On the contrary, where marijuana traffic, production or use is not a major issue, marijuana is not allowed, because it is likely that

legalization will increase abuse. Marijuana will continue represent a matter of debate at the global level, but as more and more people will consider it a safe recreational drug, more countries will be forced to allow it.

Works Cited

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