



Changes in legislation on recreational cannabis in the American Continent. What is happening after the new laws?

Autores: Sixto-Costoya, A (1,2); Aleixandre-Benavent, R (1,3); Bueno-Cañigral, F (4); Castelló-Cogollos, L (1,5); Agulló-Calatayud, V (1,5); Valderrama-Zurián, JC (1,2).

1. UISYS (CSIC-Universitat de València); 2. Dep. de Historia de la Ciència i Documentació. Universitat de València; 3. Ingenio (CSIC- Universitat Politècnica de València); 4. Pla Municipal de Drogodependències-UPCCA València, Ajuntament de València; 5. Departament de Sociologia y Antropologia Social. Universitat de València.

Background.

Legislation on the recreational use of cannabis has undergone unprecedented changes in the last 6 years. The protagonists of these changes are being countries of the American Continent (AC), through the legislation of recreational consumption and its sale. This initiative was conducted first by Colorado and Washington and then followed by another 9 states. Furthermore, Uruguay and Canada (in 2013 and 2018 respectively) were the first countries that legalized entirely the cannabis consumption for recreational purposes. The aim is to know the scope of the legislative changes and the different nuances among the AC countries that have legalized consumption and discover which are being the earliest consequences of these changes.

Method.

Review the legalization of recreational cannabis literature to identify: 1) how much control the govern takes in the availability of the substance, 2) who is authorized to sell, 3) minimum age, 4) advertising permissions, 5) earliest impact on society.



Results.

| Places | | Government control | Who is authorized to sell | Minimum age | Advertising permissions | Earliest impact |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Uruguay | | Big state control | Own cultivation and pharmacies with state licenses to which the state supplies | 18 | It does not allow the advertising | A decrease in risk perception. An increase on the consumption at least in some age group (young, adults or both) |
| Canadá | | It tries to develop a mix model between the Uruguay and EEUU model | Depending on the regions. In some, by private initiative and others, the state is in charge | 18 - 19, it depends on the region | It is not recommended but it is not forbidden | An increase on the consumption at least in some age group (young, adults or both) |
| EEUU: Colorado Washington Oregon Alaska Vermont | California Massachusetts Maine Nevada | A structure similar to alcohol industry of free trade | Private initiative under license | 21 | Allowed | A decrease in risk perception and an increase on the consumption at least in some age group (young, adults or both) in Colorado and Washington |

Conclusions.

In spite of the general results shown by the early studies -increase of the consumption and the decrease in risk perception-, we must be careful. It is especially important to know what the influence of the law on these variables is. The studies are still very recent and the different nuances between places (advertising permissions, govern control, minimum age...) force us to be patient and study each place thoroughly.

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