



*online*  
Cannabis  
Education

---

# Cannabis Around The World

---

Cannabis Laws and Programs

In 47 Countries

Updated April 20, 2021

# Table of Contents

1	Argentina.....	4
2	Australia .....	4
3	Belgium.....	5
4	Belize .....	5
5	Brazil.....	6
6	Cambodia .....	6
7	Chile.....	6
8	Columbia .....	7
9	Costa Rica .....	7
10	Croatia.....	8
11	Cyprus.....	8
12	Czech Republic .....	9
13	Denmark.....	9
14	Ecuador .....	9
15	Egypt.....	10
16	Estonia.....	10
17	Finland.....	11
18	France.....	11
19	Germany.....	12
20	Greece .....	12
21	India.....	13
22	Israel.....	13
23	Italy.....	13
24	Jamaica .....	14
25	Laos .....	14
26	Luxembourg .....	14
27	Malaysia .....	15
28	Malta .....	15
29	Mexico.....	16
30	Netherlands.....	16
31	North Korea.....	17

32	North Macedonia .....	17
33	Norway .....	18
34	Peru .....	18
35	Philippines .....	19
36	Poland .....	19
37	Portugal .....	20
38	Romania .....	20
39	Russia .....	21
40	South Africa .....	21
41	South Korea .....	21
42	Spain .....	22
43	Switzerland .....	22
44	Thailand .....	23
45	Turkey .....	23
46	Ukraine .....	24
47	Uruguay .....	24

In the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the United Nations (UN) listed cannabis as a Schedule IV controlled narcotic drug. Schedule IV drugs are considered particularly likely to be abused and to produce ill effects. UN member nations are allowed to prohibit or limit manufacture import of Schedule IV drugs.

However, cannabis laws are changing throughout the world. In 2020, at the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) removed cannabis from its Schedule IV list. Although cannabis remains on the UN's list of Schedule I drugs, which are considered to be "liable to significant abuse and to produce ill effects, but have potential therapeutic uses," this move is a positive step on the road to international legalization.

Cannabis regulations are changing quickly in North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. While more than 30 countries have created medical cannabis programs for their citizens, many countries, such as China, still punish cannabis possession with capital punishment. Meanwhile, countries like Canada and Uruguay have implemented nation-wide recreational cannabis programs and others, such as the Netherlands, have decriminalized cannabis possession.

This ebook covers some of the cannabis programs in countries other than Canada and the United States.

## 1 Argentina

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Argentina's Ministry of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

In Argentina, access to medical CBD cannabis oil has been lawful since 2017, when the Argentine Congress passed laws allowing the use of CBD oil for medical purposes. Citizens who obtain a recommendation from a licensed Argentine physician may lawfully access CBD oil (and its derivatives) to aid in the treatment of a medical condition or symptom. Patients must register with the Health Ministry to access medical cannabis. Home cultivation is allowed.

Cannabis remains unlawful for recreational use. Anyone who unlawfully cultivates, sells, or possesses cannabis faces criminal charges. However, possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use is decriminalized if it does not impose danger or harm to others. The specific amount is not specified.

## 2 Australia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. For the most current information on Australia's medical cannabis program, refer to the [Australian Department of Health website](#).***

Under Australian law, medical cannabis has been accessible to citizens since 2016. Patients with chronic or painful medical conditions or symptoms may use cannabis to aid in their treatment. To access medical cannabis, a citizen must receive a recommendation from a general practitioner that supports the patient's use of medical cannabis. Smokable cannabis products are not allowed.

Under the current policy, patients must file a formal import permit granting them access to import their medical cannabis from elsewhere. The Australian Health Minister is working towards getting patients easier access to medical cannabis.

According to Australian federal law, personal and recreational possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis remains unlawful throughout Australia, resulting in criminal charges. The laws in Australia vary by state. Some states have reduced the criminal sanctions, including decriminalization of personal use or possession.

## 3 Belgium

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Belgium's cannabis FAQs](#) for the most current policies.***

Medical cannabis is lawful for qualifying citizens of Belgium. Citizens may receive a recommendation from a registered doctor granting the use of medical cannabis to aid in treatment of their chronic medical condition or symptom. Access to medical cannabis for patients is mostly unregulated, with most patients choosing to cultivate cannabis on their own or purchase cannabis from a social club operating lawfully in the country.

Although possession and cultivation of small, personal amounts of cannabis (up to 3 grams or 1 plant) is decriminalized in Belgium, distribution is strictly prohibited. Anyone involved in the unlawful sale of cannabis faces criminal charges, criminal punishments, and civil fines. Any adult who possesses or cultivates larger amounts of cannabis also faces criminal punishment and civil fines.

## 4 Belize

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Belize Misuse of Drugs Act Amendment, 2017](#) for the most current policies.***

There is no distinction between medical and recreational cannabis in Belize. Cannabis was decriminalized in Belize in 2017 under the updated Misuse of Drugs Act.

CBD oil is legal in Belize if it is extracted from the industrial hemp plant.

In Belize, a person may possess up to 10 grams of cannabis or cannabis resin with no legal penalty. However, it is illegal to grow, buy, or transport cannabis in Belize. Police may issue a warning the first time a person is found in possession of small amounts of cannabis and may issue a violation ticket on subsequent occasions. Depending on the amount of cannabis a person has in their possession, they may be charged with a felony and be subject to strict penalties.

## 5 Brazil

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. For the most current information on Brazil's medical cannabis program, refer to [Brazil's ANVISA website](#).***

In 2017, citizens of Brazil were given lawful access to medical cannabis. Citizens who obtain a recommendation from a licensed physician may purchase, possess, and use medical cannabis. Although patients are not criminally charged for these activities, no regulated system is currently available to acquire medical cannabis. Patients must seek approval to import medical cannabis from other countries.

Recreational use of cannabis is unlawful; however, possession of small amounts for personal use is decriminalized throughout the country. Home cultivation for small, personal amounts is also decriminalized. Although the cultivation of personal amounts does not lead to any criminal charges, possessing or cultivating larger amounts leads to both criminal charges and civil fines. Any distribution of cannabis is illegal and results in criminal punishment.

## 6 Cambodia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Kingdom of Cambodia's Law on Control of Drugs](#) for the most current policies.***

Cambodia's Law on Control of Drugs permits Cambodian citizens to cultivate and use cannabis for medical purposes with a Ministry of Health authorization. Cambodians can legally grow cannabis for their own culinary and medicinal use. Limited quantities of medical cannabis are allowed for research purposes, but its quantity, use, location, and destruction must be strictly logged by an authorized person for at least 10 years.

Although the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotics made cannabis illegal in Cambodia, it was not enforced. Since the United Nations made the drug illegal in 1992, it is still not enforced regularly. In 2009, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) noted that cannabis production and cultivation was no longer a major concern in Cambodia.

Commercial distribution and cultivation of cannabis in Cambodia is illegal and can result in strict penalties. Punishment for possession ranges from 5 years to life imprisonment.

## 7 Chile

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile \(BCN\)](#) for the most current policies.***

Although Chile decriminalized medical cannabis in 2005 with Law 20,000, the country reclassified it as a Schedule 1 drug in 2008. Cannabis remained on the Schedule 1 list until 2015, when it was moved to the

"soft drug" category (the same category as alcohol). This effectively decriminalized private consumption and possession of small amounts of cannabis.

Pharmacies in Chile have been selling medical cannabis lawfully since 2017 to patients with valid prescriptions. Citizens with qualifying medical conditions or symptoms and a doctor's prescription may purchase cannabis to aid in treatment.

Adults without prescriptions may be charged with civil fines and criminal punishment for possession and cultivation of larger amounts. Anyone who unlawfully distributes cannabis faces criminal charges.

## 8 Columbia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Colombia's Ministry and Social Health website](#) for the country's most current medical cannabis policies.***

Colombia decriminalized the possession of small amounts of cannabis in 2012. In 2015, Colombia legalized cannabis use for medical purposes.

Qualifying patients must receive a valid prescription from a licensed physician in Colombia. In order to qualify, patients must suffer from a medical condition that their physician recommends cannabis use to aid in the treatment. That said, there is no list of qualifying medical conditions; the decision to use medical cannabis is between the patient and physician.

In 2017, Colombia issued five resolutions to control the production of medical cannabis, including Resolution 2891, which established fees for manufacturers and Resolution 2892, which established technical standards. Now that production has been regulated, patients with physicians' recommendations may purchase medical cannabis from pharmacies located throughout the country.

Possession and cultivation of small amounts (up to 20 grams or 20 plants) of cannabis for personal use in a private residence is decriminalized. Although these activities are decriminalized, possession and consumption of cannabis in public may lead to monetary penalties.

## 9 Costa Rica

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Sistema Costarricense de Información Jurídica \(SCIJ\)](#) for the most current policies.***

Costa Rican citizens may access cannabis for medical purposes to aid in the treatment of a qualifying medical condition or symptom. Although possession and use of medical cannabis is lawful, no system is currently in place for patients to purchase medical cannabis. The country is currently establishing legislation to create a formal medical cannabis program, including a regulated cultivation and distribution industry.

Recreational use of cannabis remains unlawful; however, possession and cultivation for personal use is decriminalized. Although decriminalized, anyone who is caught cultivating or possessing cannabis may face civil fines. Possession or cultivation of larger amounts remains illegal and results in criminal charges. Anyone who distributes cannabis also faces criminal charges.

## 10 Croatia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Republic of Croatia Ministry of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

Since 2015, Croatia has allowed medical use of cannabis for its citizens. Patients diagnosed with qualifying conditions or symptoms may receive a prescription from a licensed pharmacy. Medical cannabis prescriptions are valid for up to 30 days, and purchase limits are set at 7.5 grams per patient per month. All cannabis is imported from Canada and must be purchased lawfully from a licensed pharmacy.

Recreational cannabis use remains illegal, although possession of personal amounts has been decriminalized since 2013. Although personal use is decriminalized, anyone in possession of personal use amounts faces civil fines and anyone who possesses larger amounts faces criminal punishments.

Distribution and trafficking of cannabis remains strictly prohibited, and results in various criminal charges. The law does not allow the cultivation of either medical or recreational cannabis, and anyone who cultivates cannabis faces criminal charges.

## 11 Cyprus

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to Cyprus's [Ministry of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

In February 2019, access to medical cannabis was legalized by the Cyprus government, following a vote on amendments to the Drugs and Psychotropic Substances law. This law will:

- Permit the importation of cannabis seeds and plants for cultivation.
- Allow licenses to be issued for the growth and use of cannabis for medical purposes.

Currently, three producers have been licensed and regulated in Cyprus to supply medical grade cannabis to state pharmacies.

Patients must receive a prescription to access medical cannabis. Qualifying conditions include chronic pain conditions associated with cancer, HIV/AIDS, degenerative diseases of motor skills, rheumatism, neuropathy, glaucoma, Tourette's syndrome, and Crohn's disease.

Possession, distribution, and cultivation of recreational cannabis remains unlawful in Cyprus and is subject to criminal sanctions. While possession of cannabis is unlawful, violators will not be prosecuted unless more than 3 cannabis plants or 30 grams of cannabis products are involved. Essentially, this

decriminalizes possession for personal use. The common practice is to give a warning for first-time offenders guilty of possessing cannabis.

## 12 Czech Republic

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Czech Republic's medical cannabis website](#) for the most current policies.***

The Czech Republic has had a regulated and legal medical cannabis system since 2013. Citizens with qualifying medical conditions or symptoms must receive a prescription or recommendation from a licensed physician before accessing medical cannabis. Patients may purchase cannabis from a licensed store and may cultivate at home if registered.

Recreational cannabis is illegal; however, possession for personal use is decriminalized. Anyone who possesses or uses personal amounts of cannabis (up to 5 grams of hash 15 grams of dried flower) or grows up to 5 cannabis plants faces a civil fine. Possession or cultivation of larger amounts and any distribution of cannabis is illegal. Offenders face criminal charges and civil fines.

## 13 Denmark

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to Denmark's [medical cannabis pilot program website](#) for the most current policies.***

Although lacking a regulated medical cannabis program, Denmark allows qualifying citizens to access cannabis-based medications to aid in the treatment of a qualifying medical condition or symptom. Patients must receive a prescription from a licensed physician before accessing cannabis-based medications such as Sativex, Nabilone, and Marinol. Medical trials and research for the use of cannabis flower has been authorized; however, until a regulated program is created through legislation, citizens are limited to cannabis-based medications only.

Recreational use of cannabis is not illegal under Denmark law; however, possession, cultivation, and distribution remain unlawful. Anyone who possesses or distributes smaller amounts faces civil fines. Possession or distribution of larger amounts or cultivation of any amount is illegal and results in various criminal charges and civil fines.

## 14 Ecuador

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Policia Nacional del Ecuador website](#) for the most current policies.***

Ecuador does not have a medical cannabis program for citizens suffering from medical conditions or symptoms. Lawmakers approved the medical use of cannabis containing less than 1% THC but the law isn't official yet.

The possession of personal amounts (up to 10 grams) of cannabis and cultivation for personal use is decriminalized in Ecuador. Anyone who possesses larger amounts of cannabis or who cultivates or distributes cannabis faces various criminal charges in addition to civil fines.

## 15 Egypt

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Egyptian Drug Authority website](#) for the most current policies.***

Egypt does not have a medical cannabis program. The possession, cultivation, and distribution of medical cannabis is strictly prohibited. Anyone involved in any cannabis activity faces criminal punishment.

Recreational cannabis use, regulated by Law No. 122 of 1989, is even more strictly prohibited. Anyone caught in possession of any amount of cannabis faces criminal charges with severe punishments. There is no drug reform, and penalties for cultivation and distribution are severe, including capital punishment.

## 16 Estonia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Act on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances](#) for the most current policies.***

Estonia's cannabis laws are governed by the Act on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Medical cannabis consumption is allowed with a prescription. Per the Ministry of Justice, patients can use cannabis-based prescription medications such as Marinol with special permission. To apply for other forms of medical cannabis, patients must work with their physicians to file a request with the State Agency of Medicines. The agency then confers with the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) to determine if real need exists.

In the European Union, of which Estonia is a member, the cultivation and supply of industrial hemp is legal as long as plants don't exceed 0.2% THC content.

Citizens of Estonia are allowed to possess a small amount of cannabis for personal use (7.5 grams or less). Any cannabis possession above that amount is illegal. The fine for possession of up to 10 average doses of cannabis is about EUR €80 (approximately USD \$88) or 30 days of administrative arrest. Penalties for possession, cultivation, intent to distribute, storage, or transportation of large amounts of cannabis range from three to 20 years.

## 17 Finland

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Search the [Finnish Medicines Agency website](#) for the most current medical policies.***

Citizens of Finland have had access to medical cannabis on a case-by-case basis since 2008. Patients seeking access must be approved for medical cannabis use. The approval process is very strict and limited. Most doctors in Finland disapprove of medical cannabis use and patients may have a difficult time receiving a valid prescription. Qualifying patients may also seek a prescription for cannabis-based medication, but this is also extremely limited. Patients may be given specific permission to cultivate medical cannabis at home upon approval of medical cannabis use, but this is even more limited.

Under Finland law, cannabis is regulated the same way as harder narcotics like heroin and methamphetamine. Possession, cultivation, and distribution is illegal in any amount, although possession for personal use is typically treated as a civil penalty. Any distribution or cultivation of cannabis is strictly prohibited, and results in criminal charges. In addition, cannabis use and public consumption result in criminal charges and civil fines.

## 18 France

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [National Agency for the Safety of Medicines and Health Products \(ANSM\)](#) website for the most current policies.***

In June 2013, French lawmakers made medical cannabis use legal. In 2014, France began to allow some use of cannabis-derived prescription medicines, and the French Health Association (ANSM) began to publicly support medicinal cannabis use for pain, epilepsy, cancer, and palliative care. Smoking cannabis is frowned upon by the ANSM, but cannabis teas are recommended. Cannabis shops have begun to open in France. National law dictates that cannabis may contain no more than 0.2% THC.

French law still severely limits who can and can't use cannabis-derived medication. The Ministry of Health has approved the use of Sativex, a 1:1 THC:CBD sublingual spray, for multiple sclerosis (MS) patients only. These patients must exhibit muscle spasms that were not alleviated with previous medication or treatment. Patients must also receive a prescription for medical cannabis from a licensed neurologist or multiple sclerosis specialist specially trained in prescribing cannabis. Sativex can be prescribed every six months with each prescription lasting one month.

In the European Union, of which France is a member, the cultivation and supply of industrial hemp is legal as long as the plants don't exceed 0.2% THC content.

In France, recreational cannabis is illegal, but the government revised its regulations in 2018 to make fines much smaller for people who are found in possession of personal-use amounts. Warnings are often given for first-time offenders. Fines can range from EUR €150 to 200 (approximately USD \$165-220, and

up to one year in prison for use and up to 10 years for distribution and sale. Cannabis production can be punished with up to 20 years in prison.

## 19 Germany

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Germany's Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices website](#) for the most current policies.***

Although medical cannabis is legal in Germany, it is very limited. Citizens must be severely ill and must go through a strict approval process to access medical cannabis. In addition, access to medical cannabis is limited, with no regulated production or distribution system in place. The German government is currently working on passing legislation for a regulated medical cannabis system.

Recreational cannabis possession, cultivation, and distribution is illegal. Anyone who possesses small, personal amounts faces a simple fine. Possession, cultivation, and distribution of larger amounts result in criminal punishment.

## 20 Greece

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Greece's Agricultural Ministry website](#) for the most current policies.***

Legal medical cannabis has been available to citizens of Greece since 2017. Greece both imports medical cannabis products from other countries and issues licenses for certified growers and producers to cultivate and manufacture cannabis products in Greece.

A physician may prescribe medical cannabis to any patient who has a condition that the physician believes medical cannabis will help. Patients with a proper prescription may lawfully possess and use cannabis, but patients may not cultivate or distribute cannabis.

The use of medical cannabis is regulated solely through physician prescriptions. Greece does not have a medical cannabis healthcare system that provides registration cards.

The possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis for recreational use is unlawful in Greece. Possession of cannabis without a prescription is a criminal offense. Any unlawful cannabis possession, distribution, or cultivation is punishable by a sentence determined by a Court. Typical punishments range from a 5-month to 8-year jail sentence and a fine up to \$100,000. Offenses are more severe for cultivation and distribution than possession.

## 21 India

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act \(NDPS\)](#) for India's cannabis policies.***

Although cannabis has been used for centuries in India, the country does not have a medical cannabis program. Medical cannabis products are strictly illegal in India. However, the country has been researching the medicinal benefits of cannabis and opened their first research-based medical cannabis clinic in February 2020.

Recreational cannabis is also illegal in India. However, possession of cannabis for specific traditional preparations, such as bhang, is legal. Any other possession or distribution of cannabis results in criminal charges and punishments.

## 22 Israel

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Israel's Ministry of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

Israel offers medical cannabis to qualifying citizens. Patients must suffer from a specific medical condition or symptom and must see a specialist for that illness who must recommend medical cannabis as a treatment. No recommendations from general or family practitioners are accepted.

When a patient receives a recommendation, they must submit an application to the Medical Cannabis Unit, who examines the specialist's recommendation and the patient's illness. The Medical Cannabis Unit then makes a final decision of approval or denial of a patient's application. If approved, the patient receives a permit for the medical use of cannabis.

Recreational cannabis remains illegal, although possession of personal amounts (under 15 grams), public consumption, and cultivation for personal use is decriminalized and results in only civil fines. Any unlawful cultivation or distribution results in criminal punishments. The Israeli government is working on cannabis law reforms for the future.

## 23 Italy

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Gazetta Ufficiale Della Repubblica Italiana](#) for the most current policies.***

Since 2013, medical cannabis and cannabis-based medications have been legal for citizens in Italy. Qualifying patients must receive a doctor's prescription recommending medical cannabis use (including CBD) to aid in the treatment of a qualifying medical condition.

Although legal since 2013, the cultivation of medical cannabis did not become popular in Italy until 2016. Now, patients have easier access to medical cannabis through pharmacies.

Although Italy has a regulated and functional medical cannabis program, recreational possession, cultivation, and distribution remains unlawful. Possession for personal use and consumption is decriminalized for first offenders and results in simple fines. However, anyone involved in any distribution or cultivation of cannabis faces criminal charges and punishments.

## 24 Jamaica

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Jamaica's Cannabis Licensing Authority](#) for the most current policies.***

Jamaica allows medical use of cannabis by citizens and tourists, with limited restrictions. Patients who have received a valid recommendation for medical cannabis use by any physician, Jamaican or not, may lawfully purchase, possess, and use medical cannabis. Those who do not have a physician recommendation may receive one from the physician on site.

Contrary to popular belief, recreational use of cannabis is decriminalized in Jamaica, but not legal. Possession of under two ounces is punishable with a small fine. Each household is allowed to grow up to 5 cannabis plants. Rastafarians are legally allowed to consume cannabis for religious purposes.

## 25 Laos

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Laos Ministry of Health](#) for the most current policies.***

In Laos, all use, possession, cultivation, and distribution of cannabis is illegal. Cannabis laws are randomly enforced across the country and offenders may be sentenced to up to 12 months in jail. A 2009 law established a mandatory death penalty for certain cases. Despite its illegality, cannabis is openly sold in Laos bars and restaurants.

## 26 Luxembourg

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Official Journal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg](#) for the most current policies.***

In June 2018, Luxembourg announced a two-year, experimental, medical cannabis pilot program for qualifying citizens. Patients who qualify are subject to strict regulations and must have a valid prescription from a licensed physician. The pilot program is highly regulated, and all prescriptions are heavily controlled by the government.

To receive a prescription for medical cannabis through the pilot program, patients must meet with an authorized physician who has been trained to prescribe medical cannabis. Qualifying medical conditions include Alzheimer's disease, cancer, multiple sclerosis, and other severe conditions with accompanying pain, muscle spasms, or seizures.

In addition to the pilot program, Luxembourg permits the use of cannabinoid-derived medications, such as Sativex, for qualifying medication conditions.

Currently, possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use is cited with a small fine. Cultivation and distribution of cannabis result in more severe punishments.

In November 2018, the Luxembourg government introduced a proposal to legalize the possession and use of recreational cannabis. If approved, this proposal would make recreational cannabis more accessible to citizens of neighboring European Union countries, including France, Belgium, and Germany.

## 27 Malaysia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Official Portal of the Pharmaceutical Services Program of the Ministry of Health](#) for the most current policies.***

Currently, Malaysia has no medical cannabis program in place. Malaysia's drug policy functions mainly under the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1952 (updated in 1980), which allows licensed pharmacists to manufacture cannabis tinctures "in the ordinary course of their retail business." Cannabis plants can be imported, exported, and possessed for medicinal purposes and research if approved by the Minister of Health. The Health Minister may also allow public officers to cultivate cannabis for research, educational, experimental, and medicinal purposes. Doctors, dental surgeons (not including dentists), veterinarians (for animal treatment only), and licensed pharmacists may sell cannabis.

Recreational cannabis in Malaysia is illegal, and anyone found in possession of 200 or more grams of cannabis is considered to be a drug trafficker, which, until recently, imposed a sentence of death. In December 2017, Malaysian parliament passed a law that allows courts to choose to impose life imprisonment instead of death. Possession of 50 to 200 grams of cannabis may be sentenced with up to 10 years in prison.

Malaysia is reconsidering its harsh cannabis penalties, but long-held stigma against cannabis and a mostly conservative population means that any change would come slowly.

## 28 Malta

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Parlament Ta Malta website](#) and search for "cannabis" for the most current policies.***

In Malta, family doctors and physicians who are properly registered under the Health Care Professions Act may prescribe medical cannabis to qualifying patients. Under the current legislation, only three conditions qualify for medical cannabis: chronic pain, muscle spasms associated with multiple sclerosis, and varying side effects associated with cancer and chemotherapy. Patients who qualify for medical cannabis and have a valid prescription may access any non-smokable form of cannabis at pharmacies.

Possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis for recreational purposes is unlawful, although minor possession for personal use is typically not punished with imprisonment. People charged with first-time, personal-use, possession usually face fines. Second-time offenders may be required to complete a drug dependency program. Offenders found guilty of cultivating one plant are charged with a fine but no jail time.

Although the laws are quite lenient on possession for personal use, those found guilty of unlawful distribution face criminal punishments.

## 29 Mexico

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Secretaría de Economía - Gobierno de México website](#) for the most current policies.***

Since 2017, the Mexican government has permitted lawful access to medical cannabis to aid in the treatment of qualifying medical conditions or symptoms. Although citizens have access to medical cannabis, Mexico's program is extremely limited. Patients who are approved to use medical cannabis may only use products that contain less than 1% THC.

Recreational cannabis remains unlawful in Mexico. However, in 2015, the Mexican Supreme Court ruled that laws criminalizing the possession, use, and cultivation of personal amounts of cannabis are a violation of the basic human rights of expression. Because of this, possession of personal use amounts is essentially decriminalized, resulting in fines. However, anyone involved in unlawful distribution or cultivation faces criminal charges and civil fines. Mexico is expected to pass cannabis reform by spring of 2021.

## 30 Netherlands

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the Netherlands' [Office of Medicinal Cannabis](#) for the most current policies.***

Citizens of the Netherlands may lawfully access medical cannabis to aid in the treatment of their medical conditions. People who wish to acquire medical cannabis formally through a pharmacy must have a prescription from a licensed physician.

Patients may also access cannabis through the recreational route. Although not legal, cannabis use is tolerated in the Netherlands if it occurs in lawful "coffeeshops." Adults 18 and over may lawfully purchase and use cannabis from these coffeeshops. However, anyone involved in unlawful distribution or cultivation of cannabis faces civil fines and possible criminal charges. Possession of small, personal amounts is essentially decriminalized, with no serious punishments.

Industrial hemp production is only legal for fiber and seed in the Netherlands. Only hemp-derived CBD processed outside the Netherlands with under 0.05% THC is legal for sale.

## 31 North Korea

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the world wide web for the most current policies.***

In North Korea the state of cannabis legality is not clear. The Internet does not exist outside a closed domestic network. Without direct access to the law on the books, the official policy on cannabis is unknown. Most of what we know about cannabis inside North Korea comes from reports by outside agencies, as official North Korean government reports are also unreliable.

Based on outside reports, both medical and recreational cannabis is illegal in North Korea. However, there are rumors that cannabis is openly grown and consumed widely.

## 32 North Macedonia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Republic of Macedonia Criminal Code](#) for the most current policies.***

Medical cannabis is legal in North Macedonia via an amendment of the Law on Control of Opioid Drugs and Psychotropic Substances policy in 2016. Cannabis cultivation and export of cannabis oils are allowed.

Doctors in North Macedonia can prescribe medical cannabis for some cancers, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, HIV, malignant diseases, and other medical issues if they believe the patient may benefit. Prescribed medical cannabis can be purchased at pharmacies. No medical cannabis card is required. Cannabis products that contain 0.2% THC or less can be sold without a prescription.

Businesses that want to cultivate medical cannabis in North Macedonia must apply for a license with the Balkan Cannabis Corporation. If they are accepted, they must submit a request to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Economy. Cultivators must employ at least four employees including both an agriculturalist with a degree in agronomy and a pharmacist. The pharmacist and agriculturalist must each have a minimum of three years of experience in their fields.

North Macedonia is on the list to join the European Union (EU) but is not currently a part of it. Since EU laws do not apply, industrial cultivation and exportation is currently legal in North Macedonia.

Cultivation, sale, and possession of recreational cannabis is illegal in North Macedonia. It can result in up to 10 years in prison and fines over EUR €2,700 (approximately USD \$3,000). The North Macedonia government is considering legalizing adult-use cannabis in cafes, hospitality places, and other tourist destinations with strict regulations.

## 33 Norway

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Statens legemiddelverk i Norge](#) for the most current policies.***

Norway offers a limited legal medical cannabis program to its citizens who have intractable conditions. Only patients with a medical necessity may seek access to medical cannabis. To qualify, patients must receive a valid prescription from a properly registered and licensed physician. Physicians must gain approval from the Norwegian Ministry of Health to prescribe cannabis products with THC levels above 1%. Qualified patients may access medical cannabis only from an authorized prescriber. Anyone who acquires or uses medical cannabis outside of authorized channels faces legal punishment.

Possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis for recreational purposes is unlawful in Norway. However, Norway has passed new legislation that allows courts to focus on treatment rather than punishment for those found guilty of possession. This new legislation is expected to become effective in 2021.

Until this new law becomes effective, people found guilty of possession for personal use face fines for a first offense. Offenders with prior convictions are required to participate in a drug rehabilitation program as well. Offenders found guilty of distribution or cultivation face greater punishments, including imprisonment.

## 34 Peru

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Peru's Ministry of Health](#) website for the most current policies.***

Peru's medical cannabis law (Law N 30681) regulates the medicinal and therapeutic use of cannabis and its derivatives. It was approved in November of 2017, and regulations were published in February of 2019.

Medical patients in Peru must register with the Ministry of Health and be certified by their physicians. Both the Ministry and the physician must keep records of diseases, treatment regimens, and dosage information for medical cannabis patients. Peru did not create an official list of qualifying conditions for patients, but conditions commonly approved include chronic neuropathic pain, chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, spasticity from multiple sclerosis, and pediatric refractory epilepsy. The Executive Power in Peru may grant cultivation licenses to universities and agricultural or health research institutions. The Executive Power may also grant licenses for importing and commercialization of cannabis.

Recreational cannabis is still illegal in Peru, but citizens may possess up to eight grams of cannabis with no legal penalties. However, if a person has two or more drugs in their possession at one time, it is considered illegal.

Public institutions and pharmaceutical laboratories in Peru may legally research, produce, import, and commercialize hemp or “non-psychoactive” cannabis.

## 35 Philippines

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Republic of the Philippines' Department of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

Although medical cannabis use is technically permitted, the Republic of the Philippines has no regulated and operational medical cannabis program. A bill to legalize and regulate medical cannabis was approved; however, the bill is not yet law. When the bill becomes a law, qualified patients may apply for medical cannabis and access it through the Medical Cannabis Compassionate Centers.

Although medical cannabis is lawful in the Philippines, the recreational use of cannabis remains illegal. Anyone involved in possession, cultivation, or distribution of cannabis faces criminal charges. The punishment for unlawful cannabis activity is severe and can be punished by lifetime imprisonment or death. The current policy may change as the Philippine government investigates the possibility of drug reform.

## 36 Poland

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to Poland's [Parlamentarny Zespół ds. marihuany medycznej website](#) for the most current policies.***

Poland passed legislation permitting lawful access to medical cannabis in 2017. Sale of medical cannabis began in early 2019.

Patients who are approved to use medical cannabis may purchase it from a licensed pharmacy. Poland does not issue a list of qualifying conditions. Instead, this is determined by each patient's medical doctor. Patients suffering from qualifying medical conditions or symptoms must receive both authorization for medical cannabis use by a licensed physician and permission to use medical cannabis from a pharmaceutical inspector.

Since Poland prohibits domestic cannabis cultivation, patient access is often limited by the cost of importation. This is not the case for hemp-derived products, however, since Poland has no limitations on hemp cultivation. Poland allows its residents unlimited access to hemp-derived CBD products as long as they contain less than 0.2% THC.

Recreational use of cannabis remains illegal in Poland. Anyone involved in possession, cultivation, or distribution of cannabis faces criminal charges and punishments, in addition to monetary penalties. In 2011, however, Poland adopted a tolerance policy on possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use.

## 37 Portugal

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to Portugal's [Infarmed Autoridade Nacional do Medicamento e Produtos de Saude website](#) for the most current policies.***

In 2018, legislation was signed into law in Portugal that permits the use of cannabis-based medications for intractable conditions. Patients with qualifying medical conditions or symptoms must receive a prescription for the use of cannabis-based medication. Patients who are approved may access the medication from any licensed pharmacy.

Although Portugal has no medical cannabis program, the country decriminalized the use of all drugs, including cannabis, in 2001. Small amounts of cannabis for personal use is permitted. Although possession of larger amounts, cultivation, and distribution are illegal, punishment for these activities ranges from fines to a required rehabilitation program.

Industrial hemp production is legal in Portugal as long as the plants contain less than 0.2% THC.

## 38 Romania

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Romaina's Ministry of Health website](#) for the most current policies.***

In Romania, medical cannabis is treated as a pharmaceutical drug. To qualify for cannabis medicine, patients must receive a valid prescription from a licensed physician and have a valid medical condition that warrants the use of medical cannabis. Physicians commonly prescribe cannabis to patients suffering from chronic pain, seizures, multiple sclerosis, and cancer.

Patients with a valid prescription must purchase all medical cannabis products from a licensed pharmacy. Patients who purchase medical cannabis elsewhere face severe penalties.

Romania imposes a 0.2% THC limit on all medical cannabis products. Most of the available products are capsules or oils that are high in CBD.

Possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis for recreational purposes is strictly unlawful in Romania. Anyone caught possessing, distributing, or cultivating cannabis without a valid license faces criminal sanctions and fines. Punishment for unlawful cannabis activities range from large fines to up to 17 years in jail. Patients with medical cannabis prescriptions who are guilty of purchasing, distributing, or cultivating cannabis unlawfully are charged in accordance with these laws.

## 39 Russia

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Russia's eLibrary](#) and search for "законы о каннабисе" for the most current policies.***

The use, possession, cultivation, and distribution of medical cannabis is illegal in Russia. Anyone involved in medical cannabis activities is subject to criminal charges and punishments.

Recreational cannabis use is also unlawful in Russia. Possession of small, personal amounts (up to 6 grams) is decriminalized, resulting in a simple fine. Any cultivation or distribution of cannabis is strictly prohibited and results in criminal charges.

## 40 South Africa

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Republic of South Africa government website](#) for the most current policies.***

Although South Africa has no operational medical cannabis program, in 2018 the Supreme Court decriminalized cannabis use within the privacy of one's home. Since then, possession and cultivation of cannabis for personal use on private property is permitted, subject to the possibility of monetary fines.

These rules apply only to private property. Possession, cultivation, and distribution of cannabis that occurs in public remains unlawful and is subject to criminal charges.

South Africa rescheduled CBD and THC allowing CBD with under 0.2% THC for plants or 0.001% for processed food or fiber products. Lawmakers are currently attempting to pass a bill to regulate adult-use cannabis.

## 41 South Korea

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Korea Health Industry Development Institute website](#) for the most current policies.***

In 2018, South Korea passed legislation allowing the use of medical cannabis, in the form of CBD oil, to aid in the treatment of qualifying medical conditions. The use of CBD oil is strictly regulated and controlled by the Korea Orphan and Essential Drug Center (KODC). Patients who qualify must receive a letter from their physician recommending the use of CBD oil. Patients must also receive approval from the KODC before using CBD oil. Engaging in any medical cannabis activities involving THC results in criminal charges and punishments.

In 2019, South Korea passed legislation revising its narcotics bill to allow the use of imported cannabis-derived prescription medicines that were approved in the U.S. and Europe to aid in the self-treatment of rare diseases. This is only allowed if Korea has no substitute medicine already available. To be eligible,

patients must submit an application to the KODC, receive a letter of approval from their physician that states they have a rare and incurable disease, and receive approval from the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS). The MFDS lists epilepsy, Dravet syndrome, Lennox-Gastaut syndrome, multiple sclerosis, and symptoms of HIV/AIDS and cancer-related treatments as qualifying conditions. Approved medications, including Sativex and Epidolex, can be obtained from the KODC.

Recreational use of cannabis is strictly prohibited in South Korea. Anyone who possesses or smokes any amount of cannabis faces criminal charges and punishments, in addition to fines. South Korea's strict drug policies include criminal punishments for having THC present in blood. The consumption, cultivation, and distribution of cannabis is strictly illegal and results in criminal charges. Punishment is up to five years in prison or a fine of up to 50 million won (approximately USD \$44,000). Hemp oils, cannabis extracts, and edibles are also not allowed in South Korea.

## 42 Spain

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Agencia Española de Medicamentos y Productos Sanitarios \(AEMPS\) website](#) for the most current policies.***

Spain does not have any specific medical cannabis laws. As a country of decentralized regions, each region can further regulate cannabis possession, sale, and cultivation laws. The use and production of CBD is legal as long as it has under 0.2% THC.

Although recreational cannabis is illegal in Spain, the law has many grey areas that ultimately permit recreational cannabis use. Cannabis clubs that provide cannabis to adult members operate within this grey area. People can generally gain access to these clubs by contacting them, making an appointment, and paying a fee. Although these cannabis clubs may sell cannabis to their members, in general, the distribution of cannabis is unlawful and results in criminal charges and punishments. Any possession or public consumption results in fines and possible criminal punishments.

Cannabis cultivation at home for personal use is decriminalized as long as it's away from public view. Cultivation of cannabis for sale or distribution is unlawful throughout Spain, resulting in criminal charges and punishments.

## 43 Switzerland

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Switzerland's Bundesamt für Gesundheit \(BAG\)](#), search the terms "cannabis" and "marihuana", then click the [Dokumente](#) tab for the most current policies.***

Although Switzerland has no medical cannabis program, the country does permit the use of cannabis-based medications and CBD oil containing less than 1% THC to aid in the treatment of qualifying conditions. Patients who qualify must receive a prescription to use the oil. Patients may also cultivate the plants that have less than 1% THC at home.

Although recreational cannabis is prohibited, possession of small personal amounts (up to 10 grams) is decriminalized with no penalty. Possession of larger amounts results in fines. Distribution and cultivation of cannabis are prohibited and result in criminal charges. Switzerland does allow the possession, distribution, and cultivation of cannabis plants and products that contain less than 1% THC.

## 44 Thailand

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Thailand's Food and Drug Administration website](#) for the most current policies.***

Medical cannabis became legal in Thailand through changes in the Narcotics Act that were passed on December 25, 2018. Medical cannabis is regulated by Thailand's Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In order to obtain a license to use cannabis for medical purposes, patients must obtain a prescription from their physician, fill out an application, and then bring all documents and an ID card into an office of the FDA.

Producers and researchers must get a license from the FDA to handle the plants. A wide variety of unspecified government organizations, bureaus, and ministries have qualified to supply medical cannabis. Medical cannabis is sold in hospitals across the country. Lawmakers are planning on allowing patients to cultivate up to 6 cannabis plants at home.

Hemp is legal in Thailand. According to the rules and regulations, only hemp extracts that contain a ratio of cannabidiol (CBD) to tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) not exceeding 1% by weight can be used in drugs and herbal products.

Recreational cannabis is illegal in Thailand. Possession, cultivation, and transport of up to 10 kg (22 lb.) of cannabis may result in a maximum sentence of five years in prison and/or a fine. Possession, cultivation, and transport of more than 10 kg (22 lb.) is punishable by 2 to 15 years in prison and/or a fine. Possession of larger quantities and trafficking of the plants carries a death sentence.

## 45 Turkey

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Search "esrar" in [Turkey's Official Newspaper](#) for the most current policies.***

A limited medical cannabis program is in place in Turkey. Patients with a valid prescription may acquire and use cannabis-based medications. Patients must qualify with a medical condition or symptom and must have a prescription from a licensed physician before using any cannabis-based medication.

Recreational use of cannabis is strictly prohibited. Anyone in possession of even a small amount of cannabis is subject to criminal charges and punishments. The distribution and cultivation of cannabis is also strictly illegal, and results in criminal charges.

## 46 Ukraine

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to the [Legislation of Ukraine](#) for the most current policies.***

Although the Ukrainian Parliament is currently considering a medical cannabis bill, medical and recreational cannabis is currently illegal in the Ukraine. That said, no criminal liability is given for possession of up to 5 grams of cannabis.

According to Code of Administrative Offences Ukraine, cultivation of up to 10 cannabis plants without intent to sell qualifies as an administrative violation, with a fine of 18 to 100 non-taxable income units and the seizure of plants.

Hemp is legal in the Ukraine.

## 47 Uruguay

***Disclaimer: Although we do our best to keep country-specific content up to date, cannabis laws and regulations can change daily. Refer to [Uruguay's Junta Nacional de Drogas](#) website and search for "cannabis" and "marihuana" for the most current policies.***

Since 2017, Uruguay has permitted the sale of cannabis by pharmacies. Adult residents and citizens over 18 years of age may purchase cannabis (up to 15% THC) with or without a prescription. Adults must sign up and register with the national registry of cannabis users, allowing them to purchase 40 gm over a 30-day supply. In addition, citizens may cultivate up to 6 plants of cannabis at home for personal use without criminal punishment.

In addition to the ability to purchase cannabis lawfully and cultivate at home, residents and citizens may join a cannabis club to possess and consume cannabis lawfully. This is similar to the policy in Spain.