

Legalising cannabis fails to address health risks: UN drugs control board.

The United Nations International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) warns in its most recent annual report, that cannabis legalisation causes “negative health effects and psychotic disorders” among some recreational users. It also warned legalisation contravenes the UN 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

“In all jurisdictions where cannabis has been legalised, data show that cannabis-related health problems have increased,” the INCB said. It pointed out that between 2000 and 2018, “global medical admissions related to cannabis dependence and withdrawal increased 800%. Admissions for cannabis-related psychotic disorders have increased 400% worldwide.” Statistical evidence from Colorado (United States) shows that fatal traffic accidents with drivers under the influence of cannabis nearly doubled from 2013 to 2020.

Regarding the recreational use of cannabis, the UN panel expressed concern that the “growing” industry was fuelling the shift to even greater use of the drug, by advertising their products “particularly to young people, in ways that lower the perception of risk”.

In the United States, it has been shown that adolescents and young adults consume significantly more cannabis in federal states where cannabis has been legalised compared to other states where recreational use remains illegal.

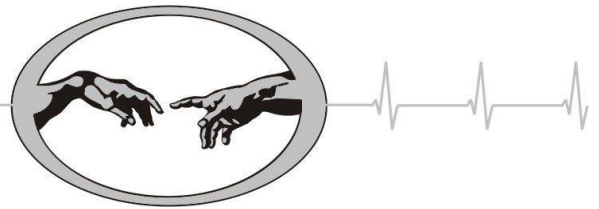
New cannabis-based products, including “edibles”, or vaping products marketed in eye-catching packaging have increased the trend, the report’s authors continued, warning that these tactics have contributed to a “trivialisation” of the impacts of cannabis use in the public eye, especially among a younger demographic. “This is a major cause for concern, because the harms associated with using high-potency cannabis products are being played down,” said INCB President Jagjit Pavadia.

The main objective stated by Governments for legalising cannabis has been to reduce criminal activities and increase public health and safety. In its report, the INCB highlights that this objective has not been achieved.

Generating tax income has been listed as another important goal by Governments which promoted legalizing cannabis. The INCB finds that, although tax income from cannabis sales has increased year over year in Canada and the United States, tax revenue has been lower than expected, making up only 1 per cent of the budget in legalising states.

Doctors For Life

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



Doctors for Life International notes that these tax benefits are further nullified when considering the added burden and expenses on the health sector e.g., mental health care, traffic accidents.

The President of the INCB, Jagjit Pavadia said: “Evidence suggests that cannabis legalization has not been successful in dissuading young people from using cannabis, and illicit markets persist.” Data show that illegal cannabis supply continues at high levels in all legalising jurisdictions, reaching 40 per cent in Canada, nearly 50 per cent in Uruguay and even 75 per cent in California.