

*"We recommend continuance of a prohibition policy so long as this can be shown to be largely effective."*

• NZ's Blake-Palmer Commission, 1973

- Today, drug prohibition has created a lucrative black market that is fuelling organised crime and making our communities unsafe. Is this really the society you want?
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 is under review. Write to, ring or visit your MP and tell them the current law doesn't work. Be sure to quote these reports when you do.

*"Cannabis prohibition has not been successful in reducing the apparent number of cannabis users in New Zealand. We recommend that the Government review the appropriateness of existing policy on cannabis and its use and reconsider the legal status of cannabis."*

• NZ Health Select Committee Inquiry into the Mental Health Effects of Cannabis, 1998

*"The current prohibition regime is not effective in limiting cannabis use ... facilitates the black market, and potentially exposes cannabis users to harder drugs."*

• NZ Health Select Committee Inquiry into the public health strategies and legal status of cannabis, 2003

\* 46% 'ever used' 16-64 age group, Ministry of Health Survey, 2009

[www.NORML.org.nz](http://www.NORML.org.nz)

## WE NEED YOU! JOIN NORML AND HELP END CANNABIS PROHIBITION!

**OUR GOALS** ARE TO REFORM NEW ZEALAND'S MARIJUANA LAWS, TO CREATE A LEGALLY REGULATED, TAXED AND CONTROLLED CANNABIS MARKET. WE WILL:

- Engage in political action appropriate to our aims
- Provide neutral, unbiased information about cannabis
- Inform people of their rights
- Give advice and support to victims of prohibition

### YOU CAN HELP CHANGE THE LAW!

- Join NORML today!
- Read Norml News magazine. Inform yourself; then educate your friends and family.
- Write a short letter to the editor or call talkback the next time they mention cannabis.
- Enroll and vote for parties and candidates who support sensible drug policies.
- Write to, email, ring or visit your MP and tell them prohibition doesn't work. Their email format is firstname.lastname@parliament.govt.nz
- Stand up for your rights. If busted, plead not guilty.
- Donate some time or money. Become a member of NORML or help sponsor the CannaBus.

**NORML**

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**Yes, I want to join NORML and stop the war against cannabis users. Sign me up as a member!**

Membership includes a 4-issue quarterly subscription to Norml News

- \$100 = Exceptional Membership  
 \$50 = Sustaining Membership  
 \$20 = Regular Membership  
 \$10 = concession for students, unwaged, senior citizens  
 additional donation towards campaign materials: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/town: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  don't email me news and updates

Ideas/Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

NL09/10 OFFICE USE. RCV: \_\_\_\_\_ SNT: \_\_\_\_\_ ENT: \_\_\_\_\_

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11/2010

DRUG LAW DEBATE

# Almost half of all New Zealanders are criminals...



## ...that's how many have tried cannabis!\*

Here's why the current law isn't working and why its time for a new policy on all drugs, starting with cannabis.

[www.NORML.org.nz](http://www.NORML.org.nz)

# 7 reasons why prohibition has not worked

ALTERNATIVE POLICIES REDUCE HARM & ARE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH INCREASED USE

**1 Prohibition makes communities unsafe**  
Prohibition gives criminal organisations a lucrative source of untaxed income and control over drug sales in our neighbourhoods. Studies show tougher law enforcement of the illegal drug trade leads only to greater levels of violence. Regulating sales would mean cannabis consumers would not be offered other drugs.

**2 It's easy for young people to buy drugs**  
We all agree that it's imperative to restrict access to harmful drugs by children and other vulnerable individuals. Drugs in schools is a growing problem because 'tinny shops' are often located near schools and they don't ID customers. Restricting access to adults would most effectively reduce use by minors.

**3 Prohibition undermines drug education**  
We need effective education about drugs so that people – young people especially – can make responsible and informed choices. Ending the guilt and persecution would allow more open and honest communication.

**4 Enforcement of prohibition is racist**  
Though cannabis is widely used by New Zealanders in general, enforcement of drug laws impacts much harder on Maori, who are five times more likely to be arrested. Reforming our drug laws will reduce oppression of Maori.

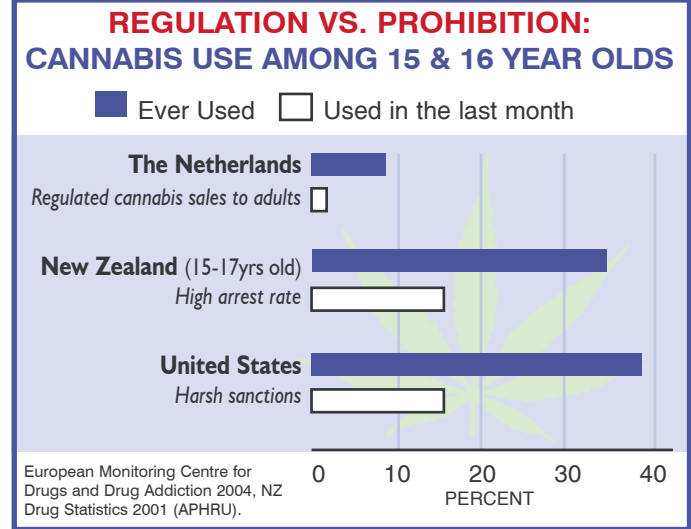
**5 Prohibition erodes respect for the law**  
Almost half of all adult New Zealanders have used cannabis, and very few abuse it. Criminalising more than ten thousand people every year serves no legitimate purpose, and causes enormous harm to their lives, careers and families. Ending prohibition will help restore respect for the law, and give police better things to do.

**6 Patients deserve safe access to medicinal marijuana**  
Cannabis is proven to be an effective and safe medicine for many conditions including cancer, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, HIV wasting syndrome, glaucoma, chronic pain, paraplegia, and epilepsy. Doctors and patients should decide what treatment is best, not politicians or police.

**7 Prohibition is a waste of money**  
New Zealand Police have the highest cannabis arrest rate in the world, and it's very expensive! Yet new research for WHO shows people are not deterred by tough law enforcement, and countries that have reformed their drug laws do not have higher rates of use. Legalising and regulating cannabis would best control the way cannabis is sold and used, allow sales taxes to be collected as well as save heaps of money.

*The table below shows the outcomes of each approach.*

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES to our failed War on Drugs	OUTCOMES						EXAMPLES of countries that have implemented alternatives to cannabis prohibition
	Safe access for medicinal users	Doesn't criminalise responsible people	Age limits to restrict teenage use	Separates cannabis from other drugs	Consumer protection and safety standards	Regulate & tax cannabis sales	
<b>CRIMINAL PROHIBITION</b> Illegal; imprisonment ("War on Drugs")	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	NEW ZEALAND, Sweden, USA (Fed. Law & most States), Death penalty: Singapore, Indonesia, China & others
<b>PROHIBITION WITH MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS</b> Illegal; supply for medical use allowed	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	Canada and 14 US States
<b>DECRIMINALISATION</b> Illegal; fines or other civil penalties	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	S. Australia, W. Australia, ACT, NT, Czech, Russia and 10 US states
<b>LIMITED ENFORCEMENT</b> De facto legal; not enforced subject to certain rules	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Mexico, Columbia, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru.
<b>REGULATED SALES</b> Legal; regulated like alcohol & tobacco	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Netherlands, California (medical clubs)



## There is a better way...

**1. MINIMISE HARM:** policies should discourage irresponsible use, including use by adolescents. Prevention is most effective where cannabis is viewed from a public health perspective, instead of a criminal justice perspective.

**2. STOP ARRESTING CANNABIS USERS:** the Government should immediately declare a moratorium on arresting those who choose to use cannabis. Allow medicinal use - let doctors decide, not police and politicians.

**3. DECRIMINALISE USE:** remove all penalties for the use, possession and growing of cannabis by adults and the non-profit transfer of small amounts. The draconian search powers of the Misuse of Drugs Act should be

removed and criminal records for cannabis offences wiped.

**4. LEGAL CONTROLS:** as with alcohol, cannabis use should be limited to adults. Driving while impaired should remain prohibited, and marketing restricted.

**5. REGULATE SALES:** a commercial market for marijuana will always exist. It is better to regulate that market than leave it to organised crime. Overseas experience shows cannabis law changes have not been associated with increased use.

400,000 New Zealanders currently use cannabis. Opinion polls show 40% to 80% of all Kiwis support changes to the law, depending on the question asked. We support the introduction of Dutch-style cannabis cafes. What do you think?