



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Brussels
HOME.D.5/

Representatives of the European
cannabis industry and associations

publicaffairs@cansativa.de

Subject: Your Open Letter to the European Commission

Dear Ms Freise,

I refer to the open letter to the European Commission, which you send to myself and Director General Ana Gallego and was registered on 16 November 2022.

In your letter, sent on behalf of over 20 representatives from the industry and associations in the cannabis industry, you call for a timely, in-depth evaluation of the capacities of European drug policy under the global drug control treaties and you refer to the key issues paper released by the German Federal Government on 26 October 2022.

The European Commission is aware and is following the developments in EU Member States in relation to cannabis policy. In general, please note that the European Commission does not comment on political declarations. This is the case also regarding the initiative of Germany on cannabis policy.

The Union's drug policies are framed by the EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025¹ and the corresponding EU Drugs Action Plan 2021-2025², that set out the strategic framework and priorities for drug policy in the EU. With this Strategy, the EU and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to an approach which is based on evidence, comprehensive and balanced between demand and supply reduction of drugs, with the preservation of human rights at its core. The Strategy aims to ensure a high level of health promotion, social stability and security, and to contribute to awareness raising. In the context of this Strategy, the EU complements and supports the Member States' action.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021XG0324%2801%29&qid=1642156419440>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021XG0708%2801%29&qid=1642156822994>

The implementation of the Strategy and of the Action Plan will be subject to an evaluation at the end of the period to form the basis for the definition of the future development of EU drug policy.

The EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025 builds on the lessons learned from the implementation of previous EU drugs strategies and action plans, including the findings from external evaluation, and the EU's achievements in this area. It also takes into account the EU Security Union Strategy for 2020-2025, the Health and Food Safety strategic plan for 2016-2020, and other relevant policy developments and actions at EU and international level in the field of drugs. In addition, the Strategy is informed by an ongoing assessment of the current drug situation, in particular as provided by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions and Europol.

Cannabis policy is specifically addressed in the Strategy and the Action Plan. In particular, Action 37 calls to *“Extend the evidence base on cannabis-related problems, including those related to synthetic cannabinoids, and improve understanding of both treatment needs and what constitutes effective interventions when responding to these substances.”* Moreover, Action 72 requires action to *“Improve EU resilience by increasing the capacity to predict and respond to potential threats, trends and developments by: [...] ii) encouraging regular horizon-scanning activities and networking relating to demand and supply, where links with drug problems and opportunities exist or may emerge in the future, including policy developments with respect to internationally controlled narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including information on cannabis developments”*.

The European Commission considers that these actions are still valid and timely. I would like to underline that the impact of the differing cannabis policies is not sufficiently clear for the moment and therefore we consider that it is too early to draw conclusions in this regard. We estimate that further research is needed and thus we invited the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction to carry out additional work in this regard.

Yours faithfully,

Monique PARIAT