

Pot Politics: Slovenia Voters Decide on Cannabis Legalization

Voters in Slovenia are set to weigh in on medical and adult-use cannabis laws when they go to the polls this weekend. The two questions on the ballot focus on whether medical marijuana patients should be able to cultivate the plant for personal use and whether adults more broadly should be able to legally grow and possess marijuana.

Current Legal Status

While the sale and use of medical cannabis are already legal in Slovenia, cultivation remains prohibited. These marijuana questions will appear alongside other referendum topics, including medically assisted dying and a proposed change to the country's general elections process.

Ballot Questions

The first question asks, "Should the Republic of Slovenia allow the cultivation and processing of cannabis for medical purposes on its territory?" The second question asks, "Should the Republic of Slovenia allow the cultivation and possession of cannabis for limited personal use on its territory?"

Impact and Opinions

Although the outcomes of these referenda are not binding on lawmakers, they could influence future legislation and contribute to the growing push for reform in the country. The National Assembly approved the questions in April, and the vote will be held on Sunday, June 9. However, the National Institute of Public Health of Slovenia has opposed the cannabis proposals.

European Context

This vote is part of a broader trend of marijuana reform expanding across Europe. The referenda in Slovenia come about two months after Germany began implementing a cannabis legalization law. In neighboring Italy, voters were deprived of the opportunity to decide on marijuana and psychedelics policy reform in 2022, but support has been building for a cannabis-only measure.

Malta became the first European country to enact marijuana legalization, with the president signing a reform bill in 2021. An international survey released in 2022 found majority support for legalization in several key European countries, though Slovenia was not included in that poll.

UN Stance

Meanwhile, the United Nations' drug control body recently reiterated that it considers legalizing marijuana for non-medical or scientific purposes a violation of international treaties. However, it also noted Germany's

scaled-back cannabis plan ahead of its recent vote.

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