



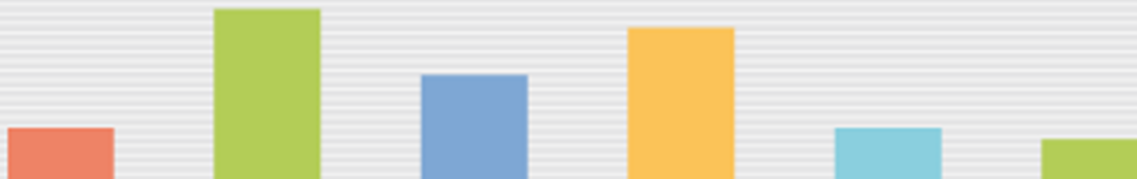
European Monitoring Centre  
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

# Policies to control cannabis use and supply – legal and illegal



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Presentation to GPS meeting  
Lisbon: 6 June 2017

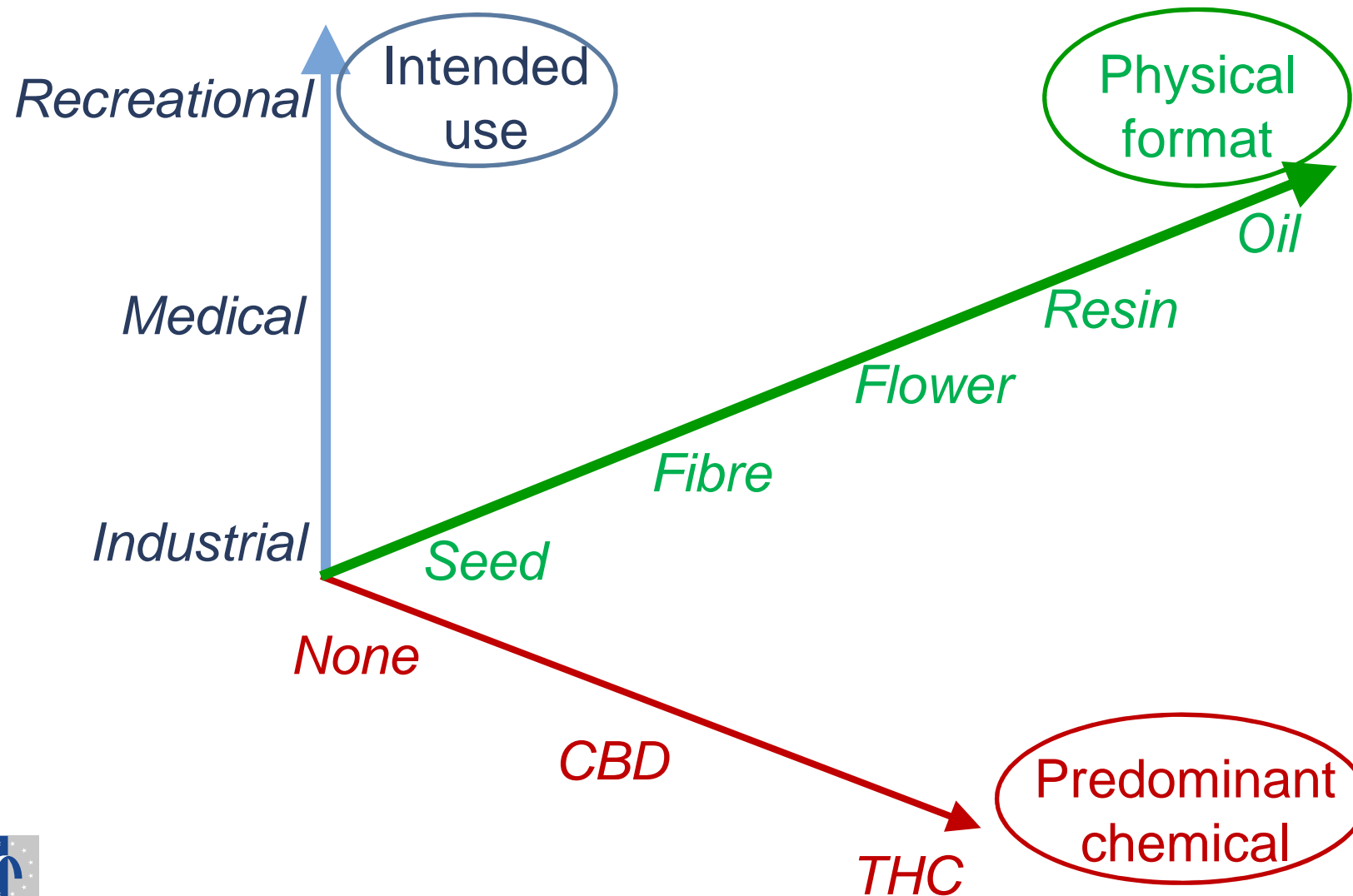




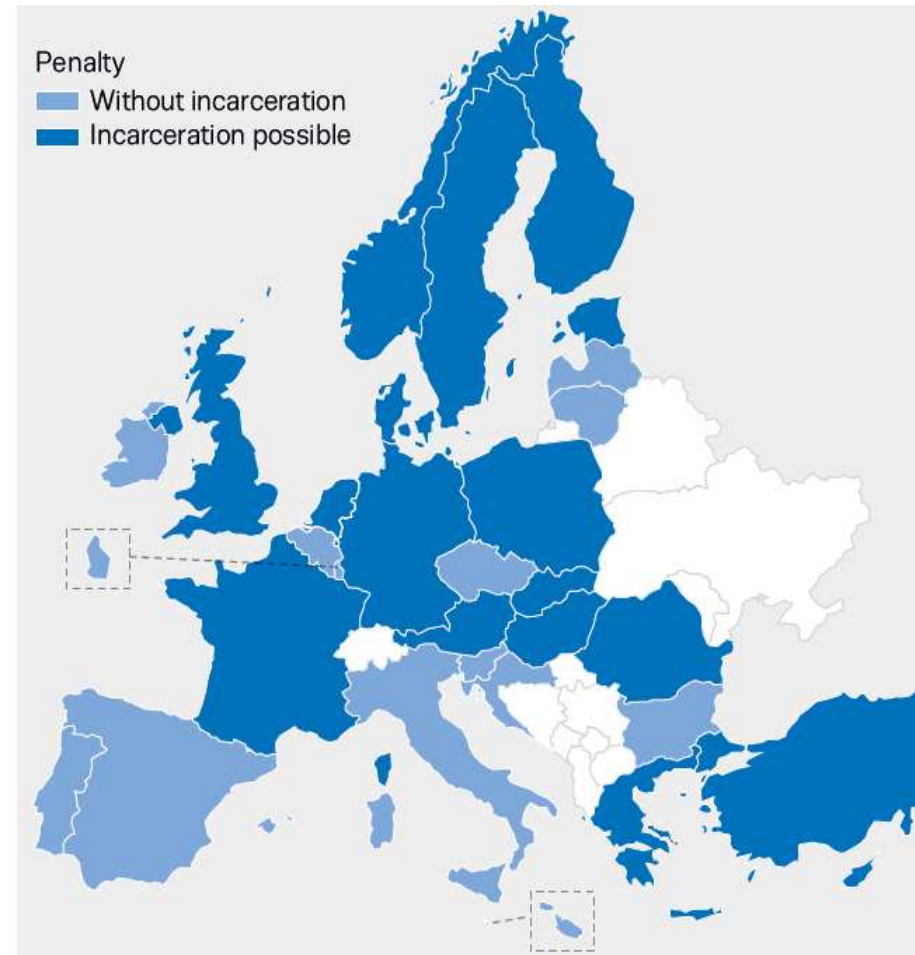
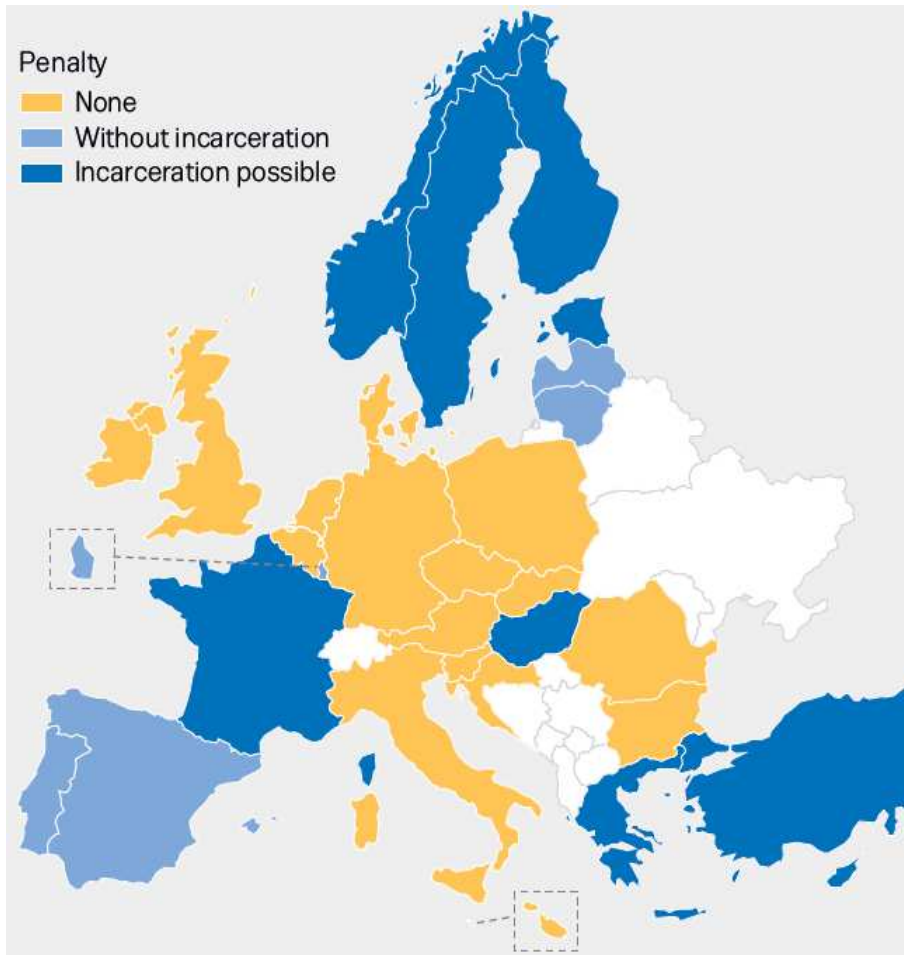
# WHAT IS CANNABIS?



# “Cannabis” might differ by:

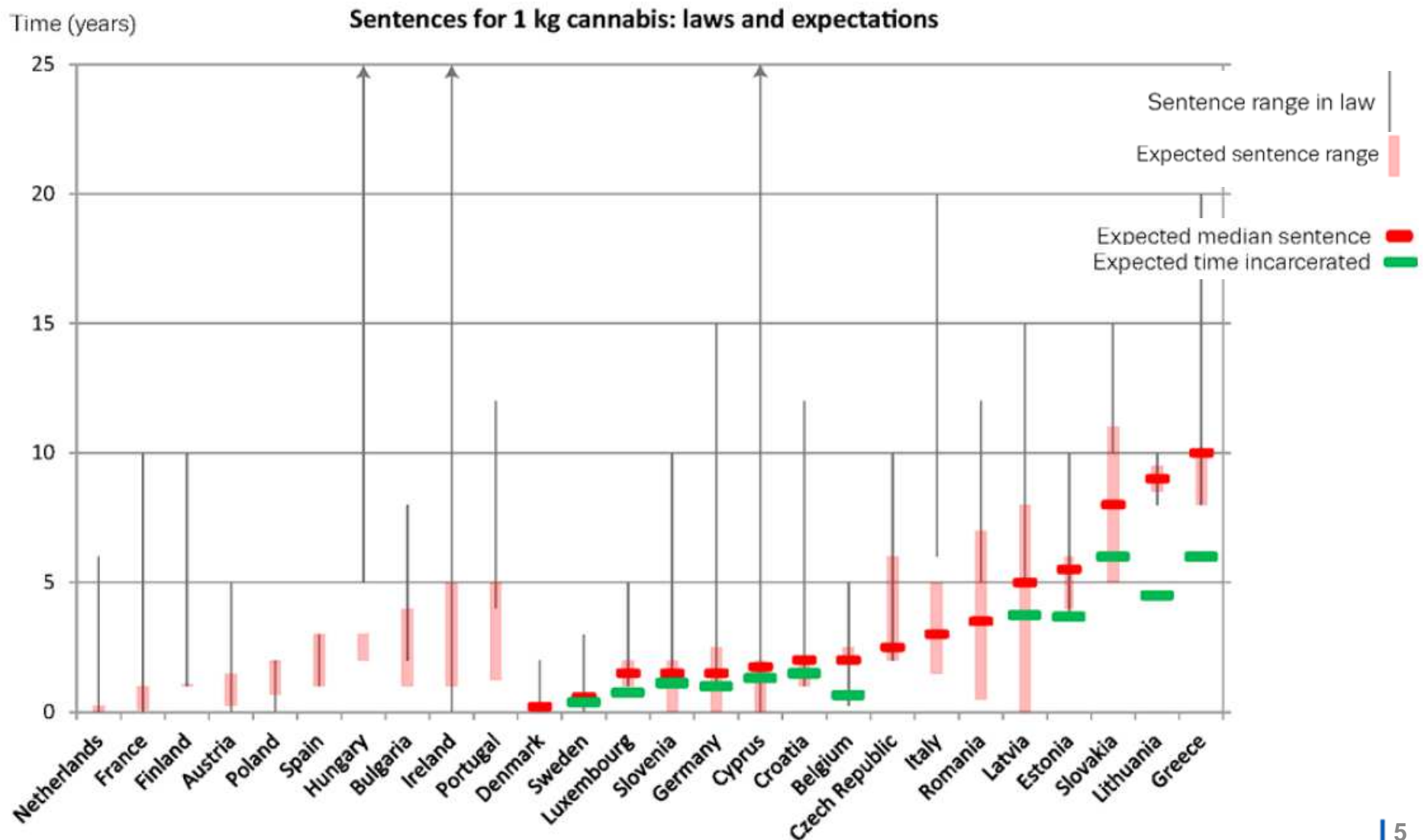


# Incarceration for minor consumption / personal possession ?

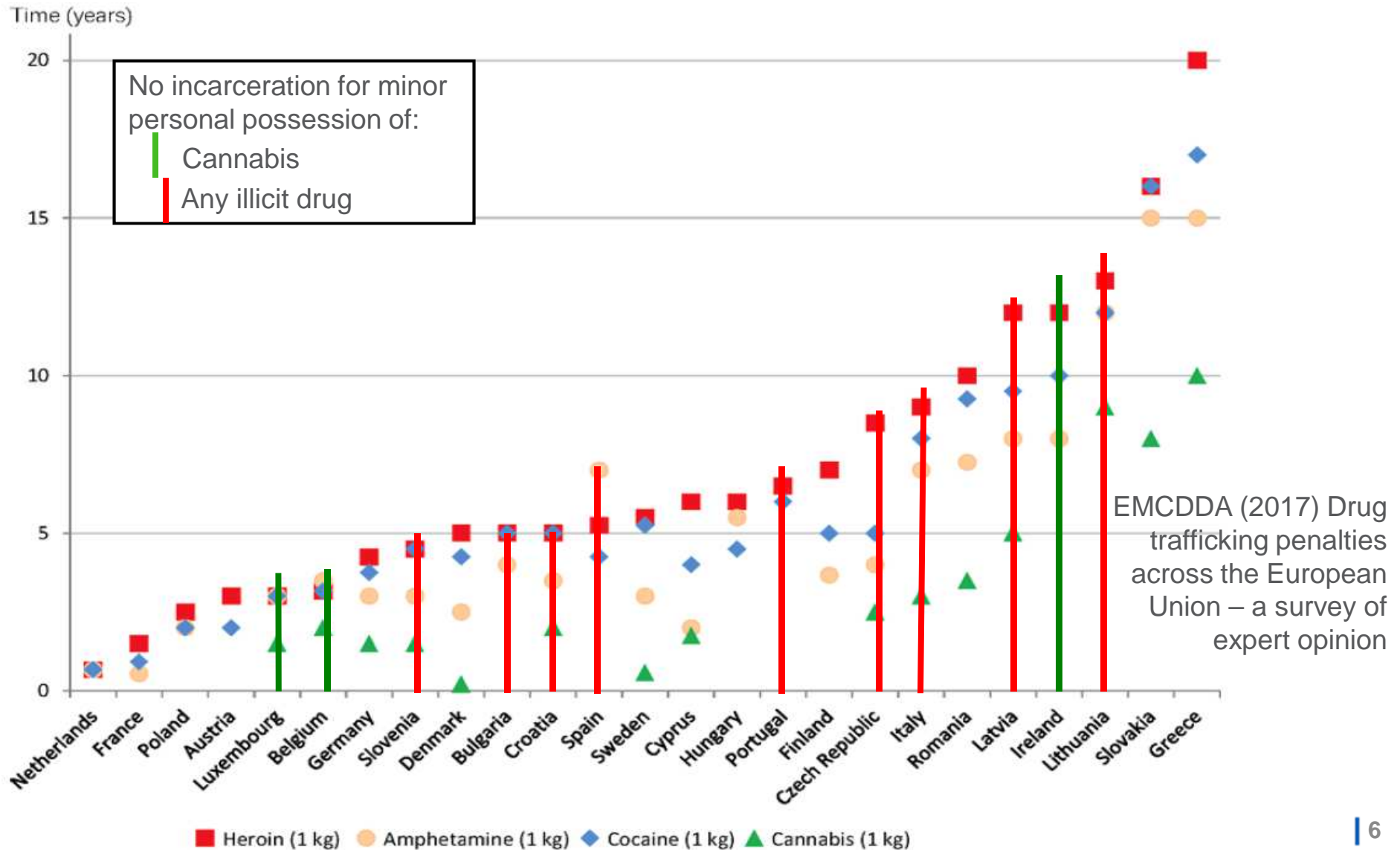


# Sentences for supply of 1kg cannabis

(laws and expert opinion)



# Tough on supply, but not personal possession?



# WHY change the law?

## Reducing penalties:

- Encourage addicts to treatment
- Save law enforcement resources
- Bring law closer to practice (credibility)
- Non-drug related reasons

## Increasing penalties:

- Send a message
- Give law enforcement more powers

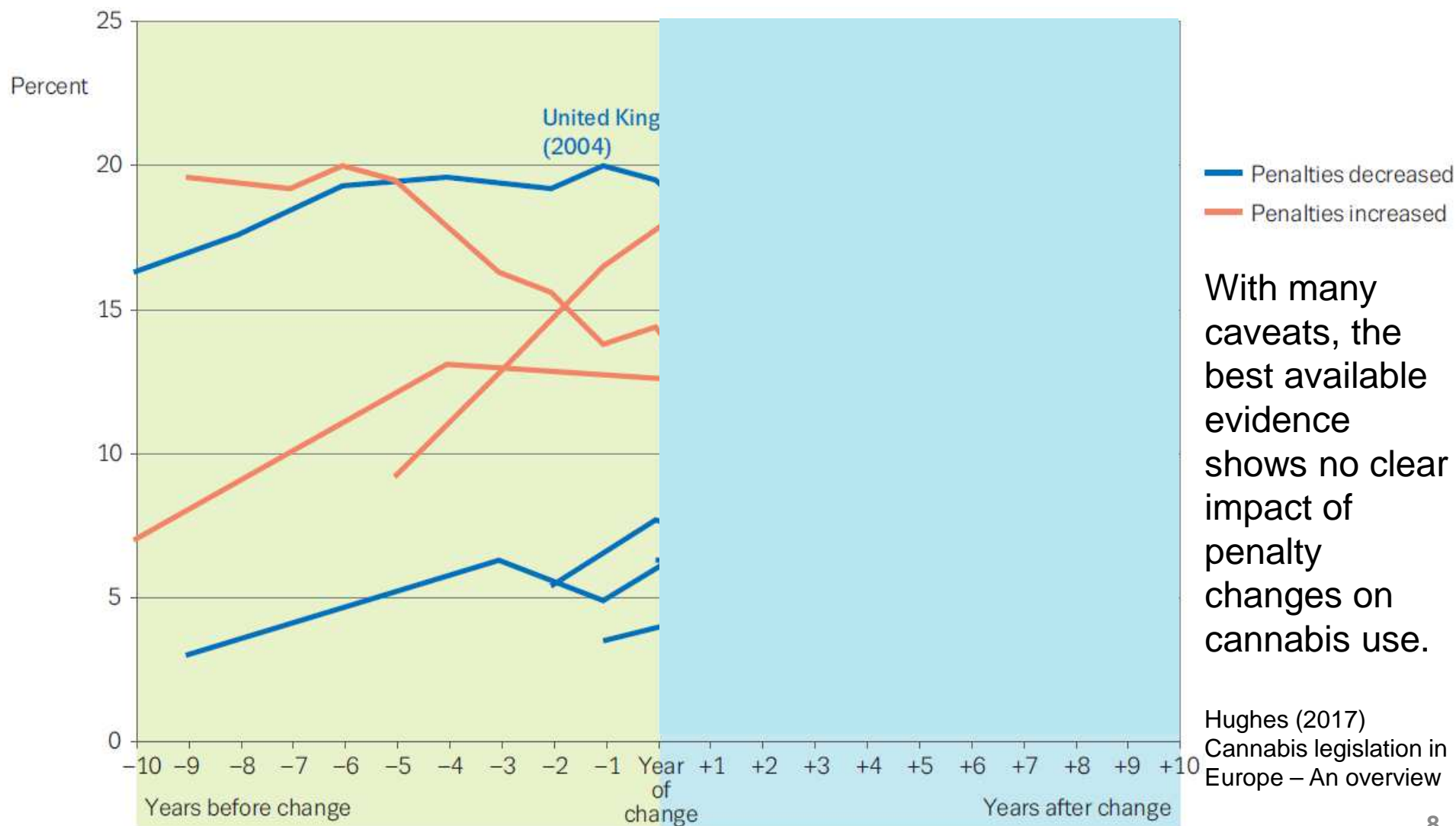
## Legalisation:

- Concentrate on serious crime
- Save law enforcement resources
- Raise tax revenue (?)
- Limit access for children
- Product quality control

**EVALUATION  
depends on  
OBJECTIVE**



# Cannabis use before and after changes in legislation in selected countries: use in previous 12 months among young adults (age 15-34)



With many caveats, the best available evidence shows no clear impact of penalty changes on cannabis use.

Hughes (2017)  
Cannabis legislation in Europe – An overview



# Legalisation

## **An authorised / non-punished system of supply**

### **Supply models include:**

- permission to grow and consume in a private place only
- shared growing among a group of club members (cannabis social clubs), no sale
- Government growing and public sale, non-profit
- Commercial growing and public sale, for profit...



# Legalisation may vary by the “10 Ps”

[RAND / Kilmer 2015]

Production (OH)

Profit motive

Promotion (CA)

Prevention

Policing and Law

Enforcement

Penalties

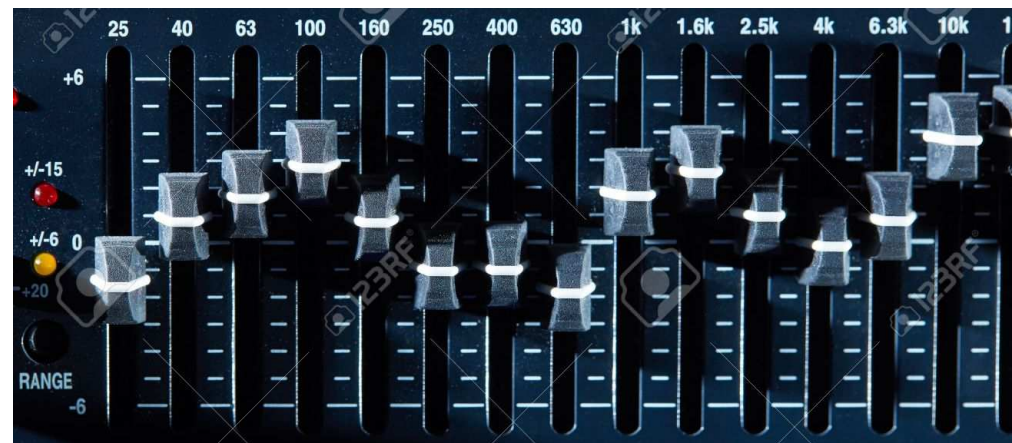
Potency

Purity

Price and taxation

Permanence

Place? Many allow municipalities to prohibit outlets...



# USA vs EU: 4 legal differences

1. Caregiver medical cannabis system since  $\pm$ 2000, commercial since 2009 (= available for most adults)
2. Direct to consumer advertising of prescription medicines
3. Commercial freedom of speech
4. Ballot initiatives [24 states] vs. parliamentary / technical debate  
1996-2004; 7/8 states passed medical cannabis by ballot initiatives.



## In the near future?

- **Spain: social clubs are “illegal”** – but 2015 law only penalises personal growing or use in public / visible space
- **Netherlands: proposal to formalise production and coffeeshops**
- **Italy: two proposals (parliament/citizens) for commercial legalisation**



# For more information:



Interactive: ELDD; Penalties at a glance

## YouTube: What is decriminalisation?



EMCDDA PAPERS

## Alternatives to punishment for drug-using offenders



**Study on alternatives to coercive sanctions as response to drug law offences and drug-related crimes**

EC study 2016:  
Kruithof et al.

TECHNICAL REPORT  
**Drug trafficking penalties across the European Union**  
a survey of expert opinion