

# Soros-Funded Study in Uruguay Finds Voters Oppose Legalization (Even Users Think It Won't Work, and Their New President Isn't a Fan Either)

By Kevin Sabet, Ph.D.  
LearnAboutSAM.org | 3/13/15

Despite heavy opposition from the public and the country's medical profession, Uruguay made headlines last year when the country passed a law allowing the sales of state-grown marijuana in pharmacies to registered users.

But that's where the party appeared to have stopped.

Uruguay's newly elected president, Tabaré Vázquez, told the media last year he found it "incredible" that marijuana would be sold in pharmacies and that he would "pay close attention to the effects of the plan (law) to evaluate if it is necessary to back-track (the law)."

And yesterday he said that the sale of marijuana in pharmacies would be postponed until further notice, "in order to implement the law correctly and avoid mistakes." He did say they would eventually "comply with the law," but it is clear he is not a fan.

And, last month, the prospects of legalization have gotten even worse. In a low-key meeting overlooked by American media, a George Soros-funded survey of attitudes was released in Washington showing that even a substantial portion of marijuana users admitted they won't comply with the new law. A full 40% of frequent users in the survey said they would not register at all. Out of that number, 36% of users saw no advantage of being part of the registry, and 1 in 5 users said they didn't trust the system. These surprising findings (Soros is the world's biggest backer of drug legalization) undermine the rationale of Uruguayan legalization - the end of the black market - altogether.

It is not only users who do not like the law, but general surveys of Uruguayans reflect deep skepticism of legalization in general. In the report, only 33% of Uruguayans said they approve of the law, with 72% of people saying that marijuana is harmful to health and a gateway to other drugs. An overwhelming majority of Uruguayans thought consumption and illegal trafficking would increase under legalization.

To be fair, Uruguay never wanted to be like Colorado. Former President Mujica, the beloved far-left leader who brought legalization in as part of a package of other liberal reforms, has long said "marijuana is a dangerous addiction...it's not good" and that the rationale for legalization was not profit, but rather an end to black market violence. Uruguayan leaders have long been expressed caution in saying that legalization wouldn't be a magic bullet to end all problems. But they have struggled for months to get a functional program up and running.

Maybe it's time they stop trying altogether.