Travelling cannabis policy exhibition hits Paris ahead of French 420

VERBOND VOOR OPHEFFING VAN HET CANNABISVERBOD

PARIS – After making waves at the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna and major cannabis expos in Bilbao and Berlin, a unique travelling exhibition about the French and Dutch cannabis policies has arrived in Paris. The exhibition launches on the eve of June 18, the French equivalent of 420, in the heart of the French capital.

50 Years of the French/Dutch paradox

The year 2026 marks a dual 50th anniversary. It signifies half a century of the Dutch tolerance policy for cannabis, which paved the way for their world-famous coffeeshops. Simultaneously, it marks 50 years since the *Appel du 18 Joint*, a plea by prominent French intellectuals calling for the decriminalization of cannabis. The exhibition, '*1976-2026 – The French/Dutch Paradox in the Global Drug War*', explores half a century of cannabis policy within these two founding members of the EU.

Visitors can trace the evolution of the Dutch model, up to the current experiment with a fully regulated supply chain for some 70 coffeeshops. The contrast with France is stark. The 1976 appeal has evolved into a French version of 420, with demonstrations for legalization all over France on June 18. But the law remains strict and repression persists. Despite decades of criminalisation and mass arrests, France paradoxically maintains the highest cannabis consumption rate in Europe.

What's on display?

The heart of the exhibition is a narrative wall featuring photos, illustrations and English texts. A display case contains historical artefacts depicting Dutch and French cannabis culture. There's a live cannabis plant in a cage and a section dedicated to the late Joep Oomen (1961-2016), drug reform activist extraordinaire and cofounder of VOC and ENCOD.

Nine cities in seven countries

The project is a collaboration between ENCOD (European coalition for just and effective policies) and Dutch Stichting VOC (Union for the abolition of cannabis prohibition), supported by PCN, Cannabis Sans Frontières, FAAAT and Cannabis Embassy. We hope to show the exhibition in nine cities in seven countries: Vienna, Bilbao, Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Prague, Amsterdam, The Hague and Eindhoven.

Opening night: June 17, from 19.00

The exhibition opens on Wednesday, June 17, starting at 19.00, at the Legalize Shop, 42 rue Sedaine (75011 Paris). ENCOD chairman Farid Ghehiouèche will host the night, Dutch company Sensunique will surprise visitors with their cannabis wine. Admission is free. Translations of the exhibition text in French and a comprehensive 24-page exhibition guide in English are available. The exhibition is on display until June 27. Website: www.frenchdutchparadox.org.

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