



THE MALTA CHAMBER

PRESS RELEASE

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A response to the proposed Bill to legalise recreational cannabis

More safeguards for the legal procurement of recreational cannabis needed

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry has noted the lack of significant improvement on the original white paper on the legalisation of cannabis for recreational use that was published earlier this year.

In spite of the recommendations which The Malta Chamber published in its response to the public consultation last May, government has not given due consideration to the issues raised, particularly those related to health and safety at the workplace as well as the right of employers to apply a zero-tolerance approach to the use of cannabis at the workplace.

This has resulted in an ambiguous bill which lacks the necessary safeguards to curtail the potential negative social and economic impact that this legislation may bring. Mental and physiological health should remain the priority in the government's proposed recreational cannabis reform.

The Malta Chamber notes that the bill which has been tabled does not provide the necessary detail to allow for the assessment of the associated public health risks. Whilst there is some room for a responsible Cannabis Authority to pose reasonable requirements on the quality and safety of the legalised product, safety should be a foremost consideration for government, and minimum acceptable standards should be included in the original bill.

Should this bill pass into law unamended it will allow the legalisation of cannabis products without having catered for the legal and safe supply of cannabis products through a well-regulated market. The Malta Chamber calls on the government and opposition to amend the bill to ensure that the resulting legislation is guided by a well-researched and evidence-based plan to procure cannabis seeds with safe THC levels and cannabis products free of harmful substances for home growers and members of cannabis organisations.

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