Finnish drug policy is based on international treaties on narcotics, national legislation, and specially drafted administrative documents on drug policy: the National Drug Strategy of 1997 and subsequent government resolutions and the action plans based on them.

Finnish drug policy rests on total prohibition. In addition to the so-called serious drug offences (manufacture, trade, and smuggling of narcotics), also drug possession and use are illegal and punishable in Finland. The policy of total prohibition is based on the assumption that when drug use is illegal, attitudes towards drugs remain negative and drug supply and use decrease.

In addition to the policy of total prohibition, Finland also has a policy of harm reduction, which emphasizes national health. The primary focus of harm reduction policy is on minimizing the harms caused by drug use to individuals, the community, and the society. This means, for example, promoting lower-risk ways of using drugs and regulating the safety of certain substances. The most well-known harm reduction measures include health counseling centers where drug users are provided with clean needles as well as pharmaceutical substitution and maintenance therapies for drug addicts. In harm reduction policy, the main goal is not to intervene with drug use itself, but to prevent or reduce the most harmful consequences of drug use. Harm reduction was defined as part of Finnish drug policy in the National Drug Strategy of 1997.

In recent years, many Western countries have started to regard cannabis as different from other narcotic substances: cannabis use has been de-penalized (removing the punishability of use) in some countries, decriminalized (removing the illegality of use) in others, and yet other countries have even legalized the use and trade of cannabis. In Finland, the policy regarding cannabis has been under discussion on several occasions, but for the time being the initiatives to reduce the criminal control of cannabis have not received adequate support.

Finnish drug policy is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The key forum for cooperation in the field is the national drug policy coordination group where each administrative sector brings into discussion issues related to general drug policy that they have under preparation.

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