

The Impact of Drug Tourism on Socio-Cultural Conditions: A Case Study of the City of Amsterdam

Enan Agrippina Donovan^{1*}, Muhammad Faiz Parikesit², Muhammad Rivqi Pinandita³, Winne Yosephine⁴

^{1,2,3,4}International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. Jl. H.R Boenyamin 993. Purwokerto, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, 53122, Indonesia

**Corresponding Author: enan.donovan@mhs.unsoed.ac.id*

Keywords:

*Tourism; Drug
Tourism;
Cannabis; Socio-
Cultural;
Amsterdam*

History Article:

Submit:
3.5.2024
Revised:
9.6.2024
Accepted:
20.7.2024
Published:
28.8.2024

Abstract

Drug Tourism is a unique concept that posits how people will visit a place solely to legally purchase or use drugs. One of the famous destinations for drug tourism is Amsterdam. This article tries to explore the socio-cultural impact of drug tourism on Amsterdam, a city renowned for its liberal drug policies and vibrant tourist industry. By examining the influx of visitors drawn to the city's coffee shops and cannabis culture, we assess how drug tourism influences local social dynamics, cultural identity, and community well-being. The study highlights both positive and negative outcomes, such as economic benefits from increased tourism revenue versus the strain on public services, public wellbeing, and potential erosion of local customs and traditions that are unique to Amsterdam. Through library review of previous studies, media articles, and reports containing the condition of the residents, business owners, and policymakers in Amsterdam. This article provides a brief analysis of crime rates, public health data, and cultural trends. The article also provides a comprehensive overview of how drug tourism reshapes Amsterdam's societal landscape.

INTRODUCTION

Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, has long been known as a city that offers tremendous freedom in many aspects of life, including the consumption of illegal drugs. Liberal policies regarding the use and sale of certain narcotics, especially cannabis, have made Amsterdam one of the top destinations for tourists looking to enjoy experiences that cannot be had in their home countries. This phenomenon is known as “drug tourism”, which refers to the practice of traveling internationally to obtain and consume illicit drugs that are unavailable or illegal in the traveler's home country. Data shows that drug tourism, specifically related to cannabis use in Amsterdam, has a significant impact on increasing the number of tourists as well as the city's revenue. Based on existing research, Amsterdam has long been known as a drug tourism destination, especially through coffee shops that sell cannabis legally under certain regulations. The Mayor of Amsterdam has stated that drug tourism does not have a clear negative influence on the city but rather supports the development of the local economy (Wen et al., 2018). According to a BBC News report on November 1, 2012, around 1.5 million tourists annually visit Amsterdam to consume cannabis. The existence of coffee shops that sell cannabis is a major attraction for tourists from various countries, including tourists from China who come specifically for this purpose. A study found that most tourists are motivated by the commercial availability of cannabis as well as the social and legal tolerance towards its use in Amsterdam (Wen et al., 2018). Moreover, this policy of tolerance towards the sale of cannabis in coffee shops helps to retain and increase tourist arrivals, which in turn supports local economic development. Studies show that this policy has had a positive impact in increasing city revenue and creating jobs. However, on the other hand, there are also concerns about the potential for increased public order problems due to drug consumption among tourists.

The drug tourism phenomenon has a broad and complex impact on the socio-cultural conditions of local communities. On the one hand, relaxed policies towards the use of soft drugs such as cannabis have brought a number of economic benefits to Amsterdam. Tourists who come to enjoy this freedom bring significant income to the tourism sector and related industries, such as cafes, hotels, and entertainment venues. Statistics show that revenue from the tourism sector increased considerably after the drug tolerance policy was implemented. For example, in 2017, Amsterdam received 8.3 million hotel guests, with the number of nights stayed reaching 15.9 million, a 14% increase from the previous year (Gerritsma, 2019). Based on research published by Van Loon (2017), there is concrete evidence of the economic contribution of drug tourism in Amsterdam. This research shows that tourists who come to Amsterdam with the main purpose of using cannabis spend almost the same amount of money per day compared to those who come for special events or exhibitions. The research shows that tourists with the main purpose of cannabis allocate a large part of their daily budget to nightclub activities and buying cannabis, which means drug tourism has a significant economic impact. The average cannabis destination tourist spends €139 per person per day, with a median daily spend of €114.68. The average percentage of the daily budget spent on cannabis is around 3%. Tourist spending in Amsterdam covers a wide range of categories with 34% on accommodation, 30% on food, 15% on shopping, 10% on museums, 4% on nightclubs, and 3% on cannabis. The average duration of tourist visits is 4.52 days with an average group size of 3.18 people. The revenue generated from this tourism also contributes to the development of infrastructure and public services in the city, showing the positive side of drug tourism in terms of economic contribution.

However, on the other hand, the negative impacts of drug tourism cannot be ignored. One of the most prominent impacts is the change in the social and cultural structure of local communities. The presence of a large number of tourists who come with the intention of consuming drugs can affect the norms and values of local communities. Research shows that there is a significant increase in the incidence of petty crime, disorderly behavior, and public health problems associated with drug abuse. For example, reports of an increase in drug-related crimes, including theft and violence (Engelsman, 1989). Furthermore, research by De Koning and De Kwant (2002) showed that drug policy in the Netherlands, although aimed at reducing the negative impacts of drug abuse, has resulted in increased crime and insecurity in large cities. They note that this policy, although effective in some aspects, also attracts drug users from abroad and results in disorderly behavior in certain areas of large cities such as Amsterdam. This suggests that despite the economic benefits, the negative social impacts of drug tourism are significant and need special attention from the government and society.

This research aims to explore the impact of drug tourism on the socio-cultural conditions of the Amsterdam community. Using a case study approach, this article will explore the various aspects affected by this phenomenon, including changes in social norms, interactions between locals and tourists, and the cultural consequences that arise. The research methodology involves analyzing secondary data from previous reports, surveys, and studies. This data will provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of drug tourism. Through a comprehensive analysis, it is hoped that this research can provide a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities faced by Amsterdam in managing the drug tourism phenomenon, as well as provide policy recommendations that can help mitigate its negative impacts while maximizing its economic benefits.

Thus, it is important to understand how drug tourism affects Amsterdam not only from an economic point of view but also from a social and cultural perspective. Amsterdam's experience can be a valuable lesson for other cities in the world facing similar challenges, assisting them in formulating better policies to deal with drug tourism and its impact on society. Comparative studies show that cities with different drug policies face a similar range of challenges and opportunities. For example, cities in other countries that adopted similar tolerance policies also reported significant socio-cultural impacts. A better understanding of the impacts of drug tourism can help policymakers in different cities develop effective strategies to manage this phenomenon, so that its economic benefits can be realized without compromising the social and cultural well-being of the community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research is carried out inseparable from the results of previous studies that have been carried out as comparison materials and literature. Besides that, previous research also serves as a reference so that there is no repetition of previous research. The results of the research used as a comparison are inseparable from the research topic, namely the impact of Drug Tourism on the socio-cultural conditions of the community by taking a case study of the city of Amsterdam.

The first research is research written by Thiago Ferreira Pinheiro Dias Pereira, Leonardo Batista de Paula in 2016 entitled *Drug Tourism: General Overview, Case Studies and New Perspectives in the Contemporary World*. This study describes drug tourism as a phenomenon that involves travel for the purpose of obtaining or using drugs that are

not available or illegal in the tourist's place of origin, a topic that is still rarely discussed in depth but is real in various tourist destinations. This article seeks to provide a general discussion of drug tourism, including key examples, positive and negative impacts on the destination country or region, relationships with key tourism segments defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and new perspectives in this area. The research also provides definitions and data i.e. drug tourism can be seen as travel undertaken for the purpose of acquiring or using drugs that are not available or illegal in the tourists' place of origin. Examples include trips to Amsterdam, Netherlands, for the consumption of cannabis, which is tolerated in certain cafes. According to a report by the Amsterdam Department of Research and Statistics (2007), 26% of the 4.5 million tourists who spent the night in the city visited at least one café, with 10% mentioning that this was one of the main reasons for their visit. This research also provides some definitions and classifications of drugs where the definition of drugs is any substance that is capable of altering the normal functioning of the organism, including legal drugs such as alcohol and caffeine. The classification of drugs by origin can be natural, synthetic, and semi-synthetic; by effect can be stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens; and by legal status can be legal, illegal, and controlled. This research also brings the same case study as the researcher, namely drug tourism in Amsterdam where Amsterdam is known for cafes selling marijuana and hashish. This tolerance policy is based on a pragmatic approach that separates the cannabis market from hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin. While this policy brings economic benefits, such as increased foreign exchange and employment, there are also negative impacts such as increased crime and community disorder. This research also managed to explain some of the positive and negative impacts of drug tourism such as the positive impacts of drug tourism include increased foreign exchange and employment, as well as greater demand for local services. However, the negative impacts include increased crime rates, introduction of new drugs, increased drug use by locals, disruption caused by tourists, and increased prostitution. The research also provides new perspectives on drug policy changes in different countries, opening up new opportunities for research and development of drug tourism destinations. Uruguay, for example, became the first country to legalize the recreational and medical use of cannabis, as well as its production and distribution. These changes have enabled the emergence of new drug tourism in Latin America. In the United States, several states have legalized the recreational and medical use of marijuana, indicating a change in perception towards drugs. From this research it can be concluded that drug tourism is a real phenomenon in the contemporary world that requires more in-depth discussion without prejudice. Changes in drug policies in various countries open up new opportunities for academic research and the development of new tourist destinations that can have significant economic and socio-cultural impacts.

The second study was written by Scott Jacques, Richard Rosenfeld, Richard Wright, and Frank van Gemert in 2020. The research entitled *The Effects of Prohibition and Decriminalization on Drug Market Conflict: Comparing Street Dealers, Coffeeshops, and Cafés in Amsterdam* discusses the impact of drug decriminalization in Amsterdam and the comparison of violence experienced by illegal and legal sellers in Amsterdam. The research shows that the legalization of drug sales in cafés and coffee shops reduced the crime rate for them, while illegal street dealers experienced a higher risk of crime. This research also discusses the changes in the socio-cultural conditions in Amsterdam due to the decriminalization of drugs and explains with quite concrete data related to the crime that occurs in the city of Amsterdam.

From the previous studies, it can be seen that there are some similarities and differences between the research that researchers will do with previous studies. With several considerations, this research can be considered actual and is expected to contribute to the development of science, especially in related fields.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach to examine the impact of drug tourism on the socio-cultural conditions of the people in the City of Amsterdam. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of this complex phenomenon. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe in detail the phenomenon under study without manipulating variables. This research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural impacts of drug tourism in Amsterdam through the description and interpretation of the data obtained.

The data used in this research is secondary data. Secondary data is data that is already available and collected by other parties. Secondary data sources in this study include academic journals, books, research reports, media articles, official statistical data, government reports, and other relevant documents. The use of secondary data allows researchers to save time and money, as well as access verified information. Data collection in this research was conducted through literature and documentation studies. Literature study involves reviewing various sources relevant to the research topic to get a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under study. The steps of data collection include:

1. Identify Data Sources: Determine and identify relevant data sources, such as academic journals, books, research reports, media articles, and official documents.
2. Data Collection: Accessing and collecting data from the identified sources. Data was collected through searching academic databases, libraries and other online sources.
3. Data Evaluation and Selection: Assessing the credibility, relevance and validity of the data obtained to ensure quality and suitability to the research objectives.

The data analysis technique used in this research is a literature study. Literature study is a technique used to analyze and interpret data from various sources that have been collected. With this research method, it is hoped that this study can provide a comprehensive understanding of how drug tourism affects the social and cultural aspects of the Amsterdam community, and contribute to the development of more effective policies to manage these impacts.

Theoretical Framework

Drug tourism is defined by (Uriely & Belhassen, 2005) as a phenomenon when a person travels involving the use of illicit or illegal drugs both in the destination visited, and in the tourist's home country. Drug tourism activities can include crossing borders to obtain drugs that are not sold locally or to travel to other countries to purchase or use drugs that are illegal in the tourist's home country, or even traveling from one province/city/state to another to purchase alcohol or tobacco more easily. Most people engage in drug tourism to consume alcohol, nicotine, caffeine and psychotropic

substances. Drug tourism is also referred to as a phenomenon in which people become attracted to a particular location because of access to illegal drugs and related services (Valdez & Sifaneck, 1997: 880), they also define drug tourism tourists divided into two characteristics, namely, (1) tourists whose drug consumption serves as the main motivation for travel, and (2) tourists who have prior knowledge of the accessibility of drugs in the destination they visit. Many drug tourism tourists consume drugs simply to live or enhance the recreational experience. Some tourists consume drugs out of a desire to experience authenticity, local culture, and subcultures associated with drugs. One of the most famous examples of drug tourism is the Dutch coffee shops that sell marijuana, these coffee shops provide small amounts of marijuana whose sale and consumption are licensed and regulated by the government, the coffee shops are also required to comply with regulations such as not selling drugs to people under the age of 18 and not causing a disturbance in the neighborhood. Drug tourism is beneficial in enhancing existing services, the local economy, spawning new services such as internet, lodging, food, transportation, health services, and others that can affect the country's revenue. However, the practice of drug tourism also results in the loss of local culture and traditions, the displacement of people living in drug tourism destinations, and an increase in the cost of living.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Drugs stands for narcotics and dangerous drugs/materials, drugs consist of types of substances that are able to affect the central nervous system and provide changes in mood, behavior, and consciousness. Initially, doctors referred to narcotics as opioids, which are substances capable of providing anesthesia, but since the first national and international laws in the early 20th century restricting drug use, the term narcotics has come to be considered a prohibited substance, even substances that are not opioids, such as cocaine. With laws controlling drug use, not everyone can access drugs easily. However, there are some countries that have relaxed regulations on drug use, but not all drugs can be accessed legally. Drugs themselves are divided into two, namely soft drugs and hard drugs, examples of soft drugs are marijuana (cannabis and hashish), whose possession is also limited to 5 grams, and hallucinogenic mushrooms. Hard drugs include cocaine, heroin, MDMA (ecstasy), morphine, and amphetamines. Possession, transport, and use of these hard drugs are illegal and subject to severe legal sanctions.

The trend of legal drug use increased in the United States and Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of lockdowns made some users decide to use drugs to reduce stress and create new habits when the routine changed. This is the background why the trend of drug tourism is increasing, namely many tourism destinations that want to attract consumers by means of drug tourism. Indeed, after the Covid-19 pandemic, travel bookings to areas where drugs are legalized are on the rise. A study from MMGY Travel Intelligence showed that 29% of travelers showed interest in drug tourism, especially marijuana. Drug tourism is finally seen as one of the strategies to attract tourists after the pandemic, which has great potential and is considered to be able to restore the country's economy. Research was also finally conducted by the Dutch Government which found the results that 58% of these international tourists chose Amsterdam as a destination in order to consume drugs, plus the business of cafes that legalize marijuana in the Netherlands has also increased after the pandemic.

The Dutch government is one of the countries that has decriminalized soft drugs and established coffee shops that sell soft drugs. This aims to reduce the adverse effects

of separating the cannabis market from the market for hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, MDMA, and others. This policy certainly received negative reactions from various countries, especially from politicians and government agencies in the United States, France, and Sweden. In addition, there was a political dispute between the Dutch government and the French government over the drug policy in the Netherlands. However, the policy issued by the Dutch government regarding the decriminalization of soft drugs was done to focus on more serious crimes because too many people were imprisoned for minor drug-related offenses. (NMFA 2008:18) also explains that legal authorities tolerate the retail sale of cannabis by coffee shops to protect cannabis users from exposure to hard drugs and the criminal element that trafficks them. Even so, of course, the Dutch government still sets regulations regarding the sale and consumption of cannabis and can only be accessed in a few special places such as coffee shops. Marijuana use remains prohibited in public places although it is often tolerated such as some parks in Amsterdam.

The activity of selling soft drugs in coffeeshops in Amsterdam is so famous that it attracts many visitors from various places even on an international scale. The coffee shop called Bulldog Coffee Shop became the first coffee shop in Amsterdam that was allowed to sell cannabis and became a famous coffee shop in the city that attracted many tourists who came to get the experience of consuming drugs without any punishment given. Not all countries legalize the use of soft drugs, therefore many people want to try cannabis in search of a spiritual and therapeutic experience. This has led to a large number of people traveling to other countries or provinces to try drugs, which is referred to as drug tourism. To avoid drug abuse from this drug tourism activity, the government provides a policy for coffee shops to only be able to sell five grabs per customer per day, in addition coffee shops cannot have more than 500 grams of marijuana in their inventory, can only sell to people over the age of 18, can only open coffee from eight in the morning to one in the morning, customers are prohibited from making noise, for coffee shops are prohibited from selling alcohol and hard drugs, the location of coffee shops must also have a minimum distance of 250 meters from schools. Basically, the government legalizes drug tourism as long as you don't buy or sell large amounts of marijuana. Police in Amsterdam are required to conduct random searches twice a year in every coffee shop (Trimbos Institute, 2010; Van der Gouwe, Ehrlich and Van Laar, 2009). In addition to coffee shops, cafes and drug dealers are prohibited from selling cannabis. If the offender sells, uses, cultivates, transports, and produces drugs in a coffee shop that is not licensed to sell drugs, the government will impose a sentence of six years in prison and/or a fine of €67,000 (NMFA, 2008).

The legalization of drugs in Amsterdam has attracted many tourists whose main or only purpose is to experience drug consumption, and many travel agencies now offer travel packages that include tour programs related to drug tourism activities. There are competitions that give people from any country the opportunity to choose the best marijuana, which means that the judges will smoke all the competing types of marijuana. On the one hand, Amsterdam also offers many popular destinations that attract visitors every year such as zoos, museums, red light districts, and others. However, it is undeniable that drug tourism is indeed a major contributor to Amsterdam's economy and a major attraction for tourists. The decriminalization of drugs has also changed the perspective of locals and tourists towards the use of marijuana, as it seems that both people and tourists in Amsterdam have started to normalize the use of drugs, especially marijuana, when compared to other countries that have strict laws regarding drug use. Not only the perspective of local people and tourists in Amsterdam has changed, the

perspective of international citizens in seeing Dutch culture, especially Amsterdam, has also changed, with the practice of drug tourism making Amsterdam considered a liberal city which is then considered as one of the distinctive cultures of the city.

With the many tourist destinations that Amsterdam has to offer, the attention of international tourists to visit increases and contributes a lot to the economy as well as the social and cultural life of Amsterdam. Starting from the infrastructure in Amsterdam also increases so that the services that can be accessed by local people and tourists also increase which ultimately also attracts tourists, then the opening of jobs because of this broad sector. The high interest of tourists also helps to promote local Dutch culture such as local art, music, and cultural events. In addition, cultural exchange with foreign cultures creates an inclusive and culturally diverse environment. Coffee shops in Amsterdam that legalize cannabis help users to seek medical help if needed more easily and aim to reduce the health risks associated with cannabis use due to regulated use.

Although the community is helped and benefits from these tourists, drug tourism creates a negative impact due to the often unkind and unacceptable behavior of tourists such as some tourists who eventually come causing street brawls, vomiting from marijuana which causes social conflict for the local community as well. Changes in the social environment are also seen in the daily interactions between locals and tourists. Tourists who come with the main purpose of consuming drugs often do not respect local culture and customs. This can lead to tension and conflict between locals and tourists. Research by Uriely and Belhassen (2005) suggests that the behavior of drug tourists is often on the edge of social legitimacy, with some tourists showing disregard for the social norms of the destinations they visit. For example, their research noted that some tourists were more interested in an intensive experience with drugs than understanding and appreciating the local culture (Uriely & Belhassen, 2005). This indicates that this kind of behavior is not only disruptive, but can also affect the local community's perception of tourists as a whole, which in turn can damage existing social ties. In the long run, these changes could alter the face of the city and damage social bonds that have existed for years, threatening the social well-being of the community.

In addition to social impacts, drug tourism also has significant cultural consequences. Amsterdam, with its reputation as a liberal city, is often perceived by tourists as a place where anything goes. This creates a negative image for Amsterdam that discourages other tourists from visiting Amsterdam due to the prominence of drug tourism. The behavior of tourists who tend to take more risks because they are away from home is also a factor that curiosity about drugs can cause unwanted things. This perception can damage the city's cultural image and the values upheld by the local community. Studies show that tourists' perceptions of Amsterdam as a drug city often obscure aspects of its rich culture and history. Amsterdam is often perceived as a morally permissive city by tourists. This is a result of the city's changing identity under the influence of global mass tourism. According to Dahles (1998), tourist representations of Amsterdam draw heavily on the city's reputation as a center of tolerance and liberalism, including its red-light district and drug scene. However, this image often ignores the city's rich cultural and historical aspects, such as museums and historical sites, which are of less interest to tourists who come only to enjoy the drug policy. Nijman (1999) also notes that Amsterdam's popularity as a global tourism destination has changed the city's identity. The idea that Amsterdam is a city with a very liberal attitude towards sex and drugs emerged under the influence of global mass tourism, and does not necessarily reflect the true cultural authenticity of Amsterdam. As a result, local identities that have developed over centuries, such as Calvinism, commercialism, and tolerance for diversity,

are beginning to be marginalized by a new image that is more attractive to global tourists. Amsterdam's rich and diverse culture, which includes a long history in art, architecture and commerce, can be eroded by outside influences that are incompatible with the city's original character.

Drug tourism can also have a negative impact on tourists themselves due to the adverse effects of their drugs with two-thirds of ambulances used to deal with drug problems ending up being used by tourists instead of local people, putting pressure on Amsterdam's health services. Not only that, violence is also not uncommon by customers against drug sellers such as robberies of marijuana and money in coffee shops. The decriminalization of marijuana use, which aims to reduce drug-related crime, does not seem to be fully effective because there are still problems such as public disorder caused by tourists using marijuana who provide a nuisance to the public, tourists who do not behave in an orderly manner, and other things that disrupt the daily lives of local residents in Amsterdam so that it is not uncommon for local residents who live in areas around drug tourism destinations to choose to move to other places.

In conjunction with drug tourism, the incidence of sexually transmitted infections has also increased, due to the cheapness and ease of drug distribution. Having sex is also one of the destinations of tourists because of the inherent motto of Sex, Drugs, and Tourism for tourists, plus when starting to 'high' in drug use, people will find it difficult to control their actions and behavior. In addition to the violence mentioned above, impulsive actions such as hiring sex workers are not uncommon. In 1978, there was a small study that showed that 48 female sex workers used drugs and the prevalence of venereal disease transmission was quite high, namely 19% infectious syphilis and 29% gonorrhea (van Santen, DK, Coutinho, RA, van den Hoek, A. et al, 2021). To the extent that the infectious diseases department of the health service set up outpatient clinics outside of working days for drug-using sex workers. Sexual networks between drug consumers can also be a risk factor in HIV transmission.

Femke Halsema as the Mayor of Amsterdam emphasized that there needs to be a clearer and more binding policy regarding the legalization of marijuana in order to minimize criminal interference in drug buying and selling activities in Amsterdam. Despite the legalization of several types of drugs in Amsterdam, drug trafficking in Amsterdam is not 100 percent clean, aka there is still a lot of interference from criminal organizations such as cartels and drug kingpins who play in the Amsterdam drug market. It is true that coffee shops in Amsterdam are allowed to sell some types of drugs such as marijuana and hashish legally, but they are not allowed to grow their own cannabis plants for commercial purposes so that coffee shop entrepreneurs in Amsterdam inevitably have to buy from criminal organizations that sell drugs, which indirectly contributes to the increase in the crime rate in Amsterdam because it helps and empowers criminal organizations to continue operating. Therefore, the Mayor of Amsterdam and his staff want a firm policy to deal with this problem both at the national and international levels. Having previously discussed the policy of banning tourists from buying and using cannabis in Amsterdam's coffee shops, Halsema argues that the policy should be strengthened in order to reduce the level of cannabis abuse in the city (Boztas, 2022).

However, the Dutch government has taken into account the impact of drug tourism and wants to change its image to make Amsterdam a different tourist market than drug tourism and had proposed banning tourists from consuming cannabis when visiting Amsterdam in 2013. The proposal contained that cafes would be limited to 2000 members per cafe and could only sell to Dutch people who obtained a 'drug card' which meant that tourists could not enter cafes in Amsterdam that sold cannabis. This was

indeed created to change a better image for Amsterdam which eventually attracted many tourists. However, it caused controversy and was considered tourism 'suicide' as drug tourism was a major contributor to the economy. While it is true that many social and cultural conflicts occurred due to the legalization of marijuana, Amsterdam benefited from the development of infrastructure and clean streets that benefited tourists as well as the local community. Prostitution is also something that will remain legal in Amsterdam as it is also something that is sought after after drug use and when feeling 'high'. By offering a wide variety of activities, Amsterdam ends up attracting a lot of tourists although there are definitely some who have a bad opinion of the fact that drug tourism will remain legal in Amsterdam.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper tries to analyze the intertwined connection that drug tourism had with the socio-cultural aspect of The City Amsterdam. We find that despite drug tourism providing a beneficial output for Amsterdam in the sector of economy, drug tourism also brings new problems for Amsterdam after legalizing cannabis trade. In this article we found one of the problems that occurs in the socio-cultural scene of Amsterdam is the rise of sexually related diseases like gonorrhea, HIV, and syphilis by sexual workers that use drugs (mainly cannabis) after the legalization of drug trades in Amsterdam. Another problem that occurs is the behavior of tourists that uses recreational drugs oftentimes can not be controlled and they wreak havoc in the residency area. Another problem that we find is the connection coffee shop owners have with criminal syndicates because they have to buy cannabis from those syndicates. This problem occurs because there's a policy that prohibits people from growing cannabis for commercial purposes. The government has introduced new regulations to address the emerging issues. We hope that in the future, Amsterdam can develop its tourism sector in a more balanced manner, ensuring sustainability so that tourism in the city can be enjoyed by future generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank our friends and family that gave us support in the form of emotional, financial, and physical support while we do our research. We would also like to thank our tutor and friends that help us in understanding the concept and discuss with us about our research topic so we have a better understanding of the topics. Through discussing with them we can conduct this research with ease.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In the writings of this article there is no conflict of interest between authors or organization that occurs and disrupts the course of the research.

REFERENCES

- Belhassen, Y., Santos, C. A., & Uriely, N. (2007). Cannabis Usage in Tourism: A Sociological Perspective. *Leisure Studies*, 26(3), 303-319. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614360600834958>.
- Boztas, S. (2022). *The drug trade has wrecked Amsterdam Soft policies caused disorder and violent crime*. UnHerd; UnHerd. <https://unherd.com/2022/10/the-drug-trade-has-wrecked-amsterdam/>.
- Castro, I. G. K. D. (2018). The Impact of Cannabis Tourism on Local Economies: Evidence from Airbnb Listings in Amsterdam. *Urban Economics and Policy*, 41-43.
- Dahles, H. (1998). Redefining Amsterdam as a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(1), 55-69.
- De Koning, P., & De Kwant, A. (2002). Dutch drug policy and the role of social workers. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 2(3-4), 49-68.
- Engelsman, E. L. (1989). Dutch policy on the management of drug-related problems. *British Journal of Addiction*, 84(3), 211-218.
- Gerritsma, R. (2019). Overcrowded Amsterdam: striving for a balance between trade, tolerance and tourism. In C. Milano, J. Cheer, & M. Novelli (Eds.), *Overtourism: Excesses, Discontents and Measures in Travel and Tourism* (pp. 125-147). CAB International. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781786399823.0125>.
- Jacques, S., Rosenfeld, R., Wright, R., & Van Gemert, F. (2020). *The Effects of Prohibition and Decriminalization on Drug Market Conflict: Comparing Street Dealers, Coffeeshops, and Cafés in Amsterdam*. <https://doi.org/10.21428/7b6d533a.2004aa14>.
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA). 2008. Q & A Drugs. The Hague, NL: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Nijman, J. (1999). Cultural globalization and the identity of place: The reconstruction of Amsterdam. *Cultural Geographies*, 6(2), 146-164.
- Pereira, T. F. P. D., & de Paula, L. B. (2016). Drug tourism: General overview, case studies and new perspectives in the contemporary world. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, 7(3), 188-202. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ejthr-2016-0021>.
- Uriely, N., & Belhassen, Y. (2005). Drugs and tourists' experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43(3), 238-246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287504272024>.
- Uriely, N., & Belhassen, Y. (2006). Drugs and risk-taking in tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(2), 339-359. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2005.10.009>.
- Van Loon, R. (2017). Economic impact of cannabis tourism in Amsterdam. *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 41(1), 109-127.