

## International Drug and Alcohol Policies

### Australia

**ALCOHOL:** There are laws that govern how alcohol may be used. These laws may differ depending on the state, territory or local area. For example, in some areas local by-laws make it illegal to drink alcohol in public places such as beaches, parks and streets. It is an offence for a person who is under 18 years of age to buy, receive or drink alcohol on licensed premises, unless they are with a parent or guardian. In some states in Australia, it is also an offence to supply a person under 18 years of age with alcohol in a private home, unless the young person's parent or guardian has given permission and the alcohol is supplied in a responsible manner. This is known as secondary supply. It is illegal to drive under the influence of alcohol. Penalties for breaking these laws can include fines, imprisonment and disqualification from driving. Employers have legal obligations in relation to health and safety of their workers and people who visit their workplace. Find out more about the responsibilities of employers and employees. (Info, 2010)

**DRUGS:** The following drugs are some of the drugs that are illegal in Australia. Federal and state laws provide penalties for possessing, using, making or selling them, or driving under their influence. cannabis, including some synthetic cannabinoids, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate), heroin, LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), PCP (phencyclidine).

There are also laws that prevent the sale and possession of bongs and other smoking equipment in some states and territories. (For example, Victoria has passed new legislation that will ban the sale of cannabis water pipes (bongs) from January 2012.) Drug laws in Australia distinguish between those who use drugs and those who supply or traffic drugs. The Federal Customs Act covers the importing of drugs, and each state has its own laws governing the manufacture, possession, distribution and use of drugs, both legal and illegal.

The Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act (DPCSA) includes these major drug offences:

Use includes smoking, inhaling of fumes, or otherwise introducing a drug of dependence, into a person's body (including another person's body).

Possession is the most common offence. Possession means having control or custody of a drug. Knowledge of such possession must be proven in court. Possession applies both to drugs found on the person or their property, unless it is proven the drugs do not belong to that person.

Cultivation is the act of sowing, planting, growing, tending, nurturing or harvesting a narcotic plant.

Trafficking is a very serious offence. It includes the preparing of a drug of dependence for trafficking; manufacturing a drug of dependence; or selling, exchanging, agreeing to sell, offering for sale or having in possession for sale, a drug of dependence. If this is done in commercial quantities, the penalties are extremely severe.

It is illegal to drive under the influence of drugs. Breaking this law carries penalties including disqualification from driving, heavy fines and/or imprisonment.

Some states have introduced random roadside testing for cannabis and amphetamines.

Penalties for breaking laws in relation to alcohol and other drugs may include fines, imprisonment and disqualification from driving. (Info, 2010).

## Austria

**ALCOHOL:** In Austria, 16 -17 year olds may have only beer and wine. It is not illegal for those under 18 to consume alcohol on private property. From the age of 18 you are allowed to drink any kind of alcohol. BAC of .05 (as opposed to .08 in the U.S.) or above is considered to be drunk. Driving drunk in Austria carries a fine of 5,000-30,000 Austrian shillings or prison up to 6 months. Driving drunk and causing an accident has penalties much more severe.

**DRUGS:** In Austrian law, illegal possession of drugs is a crime. Possession and acquisition of small quantities of drugs for personal use are punishable offenses depending on the policy of individual Federal states. Whoever acquires, possesses, produces, import, exports, delivers or supplies drugs to somebody or to a third person can be sentenced to up to 6 months of prison or to the payment of a fine of up to 360 times the daily unit fine. However the person will be sentenced to up to three years of prison if he/she has put a minor in a position of using (consuming) a drug and he/she is an adult and 2 years older than the minor; if the crime was committed with commercial purposes, or if the person is member of a criminal band. Austrian drugs law makes a distinction between possession of drugs for personal use and possession for trafficking. Criteria taken into account in practice when prosecuting to divide the two illegal acts are: the quantity - small, large; the frequency of use by the person –occasional/regular; the nature of the substance.

## China

**ALCOHOL:** No minimum drinking age. You must be 18 to purchase alcohol. Violators can be fined up to 2,000 yuan \$250 for serious infractions.

**DRUGS:** Severely punishing drug-connected crimes is one of the outstanding characteristics of China's criminal legislation for drug control. First, the law comprehensively specifies the types of drug-related crimes, guaranteeing that various drug-related criminal offenses are punished by law. The law specifies 12 crimes, which cover the smuggling, trafficking, transporting and manufacturing of drugs, the illegal holding of drugs, the harboring, transferring and concealing of drugs and illicit drugrelated money, the smuggling of materials for manufacturing drugs, the illegal trading in such materials, the illegal cultivation of mother plants of narcotic drugs, the illegal trading, transporting, hand-carrying and holding of seeds and seedlings of such plants, and the illegal provision of narcotics and psychotropic substances, as well as the criminal punishments for these crimes. Second, the law specifies that the criminal responsibility of a person for smuggling, trafficking, transporting or manufacturing narcotic drugs, regardless of their quantity, be legally pursued and punished. The quantity of drugs shall be calculated according to the verified amount of the drugs smuggled, trafficked, transported, manufactured or illegally held, and not in terms of purity. Third, economic sanctions are applied against drug-related crimes. Fourth, those who make use of or instigate minors to smuggle, sell, transport or manufacture drugs, sell drugs to minors, or lure, instigate, deceive or force them into taking or injecting drugs, and those who have again committed drug-related crimes after having already been convicted of the crime of smuggling, selling, transporting, manufacturing or illegally holding drugs shall be punished with severity. Fifth, criminals who smuggle, sell, transport or manufacture large amounts of drugs shall be sentenced to death.

## Czech Republic

**ALCOHOL:** The legal drinking age is 18. The sale of alcohol to minors is illegal, consumption is not prohibited by law. (*Wikipedia*)

**DRUGS:** The Czech Republic has always been relatively lenient about drug use, which has been legal since 1990. Possession, paradoxically, remains a crime but isn't actively prosecuted. The amount of drugs that equals a misdemeanor offense: possession of less than 15 grams of marijuana, 1.5 grams of heroin, 1 gram of cocaine and 4 tablets of ecstasy, for example, can result in a fine of 15,000 Czech crowns (\$830), the average monthly salary in the country. Possessing anything more is considered a felony. (*Post, 2010*).

## France

### ALCOHOL:

The sale, and even offering alcoholic beverages free of charge, to persons under the age of 18 is prohibited in licensed premises, shops, and public places. The person delivering the beverage may require the customer to establish proof of age.

"Open bars" – consisting of selling alcohol as a package deal – and "service at will" are also prohibited regardless of the consumer's age. A person found inebriated in the street, in bars, discos, and other public places may be taken to the police station and placed in a holding cell. The fine for obvious intoxication may reach €150.

It is forbidden to drive with a BAC greater than or equal to 0.5 grams of alcohol per liter of blood:

- between 0.5 and 0.79 gram per liter of blood, offenders face a fine of €135 and the loss of 6 driving license points;
- from 0.8 grams per liter of blood, offenders face two years imprisonment, a €4,500 fine and the loss 6 driving license points.

If a fatal accident occurs, offenders face up to 10 years imprisonment and a €150,000 fine. In all these cases, their driving license may be suspended or canceled. Offenders who do not have a home or a job in France may be forced to pay a fixed fine immediately, failing which, the vehicle may be impounded until a deposit of up to €4,500 is received.

Drivers who test positive for a substance classified as a narcotic face up to two years imprisonment and a €4,500 fine. These penalties are increased to three years imprisonment and a €9,000 fine for drivers also under the influence of alcohol. (*Diplomatie, 2012*)

### DRUGS:

Using drugs is prohibited in France. Drug use is an offense punishable by up to one year imprisonment and a €3,750 fine. Nevertheless, users may also be ordered to attend, at their own expense, an awareness program regarding the dangers of drugs use or to undergo court-ordered therapy consisting of treatment or medical supervision.

Selling drugs: The penalty is up to 5 years imprisonment and a €75,000 fine and imprisonment may be doubled for anyone who sells or offers drugs to minors or in or around a school or educational institution. Look-outs, scouts, and

other intermediaries are considered accomplices: they incur the same penalties even if they received no consideration in money or in kind.

In order to protect non-smokers, smoking is prohibited in places intended for collective use including bars, restaurants, and nightclubs. Smoking in public places risks a fine of €68. The sale of tobacco is prohibited to persons under the age of 18. (Diplomatie, 2012)

## Germany

**ALCOHOL:** Underage drinking in private is not regulated by a specific legal restriction. However, protection from physical and mental harm is part of parents' general obligation to care for a child.[1] Regarding alcohol purchase and alcohol consumption in public places (such as pubs and restaurants), Germany has three drinking ages by § 9 Jugendschutzgesetz (Youth protection act):

At 14 - minors are allowed to consume and possess undistilled (fermented) alcoholic beverages, such as beer and wine, as long as they are in the company of their parents or a legal guardian.

At 16 - minors are allowed to consume and possess undistilled (fermented) alcoholic beverages, such as beer and wine without their parents or a legal guardian.

At 18 - having become adults, people are allowed access to distilled liquor.

Because of moral panic involving alcohol abuse among minors (a 16-year-old boy died after having consumed 52 shots of tequila in a bar in early 2007), some Germans began to demand that the drinking age be raised. Most politicians, however, spoke against that notion, pointing out instead that such abuse already was forbidden according to current laws, which simply needed to be enforced. In Germany and the rest of Europe, unlike the United States, alcohol consumption by adolescents is traditional and generally accepted.

Violation of restraints will involve prosecution for vendors who sell alcohol to underage persons and also for bystanders who do not intervene in underage drinking. Although restrictions are nationwide and well-known, some salespersons violate the law at times. Minors themselves can never be prosecuted for illegal alcohol consumption. The supermarkets and stores generally check minors for their ID. It is less enforced in most bars and restaurants. But it can vary by location.

In 2008, the federal state of Lower Saxony started a series of trap purchases, which are conducted by specially trained police cadets, aged 16 or 17, who pose as customers. In 77% of all tests alcohol was sold illegally in shops, filling stations and kiosks. In 2009, about 3000 trap purchases were performed in Lower Saxony, in 1327 cases (44%) alcohol was sold without age verification to underage persons. Hundreds of summary proceedings led to administrative fines ranging from 500 to 3,000 euro. The standard rate for the illegal sale of one brandy bottle is 1,500 euro. Thus, alcohol trap purchases bring a return of circa 2,000,000 euro annually. Other German states, especially Schleswig-Holstein consider to implement the Lower Saxony model, but states like Berlin, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and Baden-Württemberg object to it (Wikipedia, Alcohol Laws in Germany).

**DRUGS:** Under German law, unauthorised possession of drugs is a criminal offence. Nevertheless, there are various possibilities within the law to abstain from prosecution if only small quantities of narcotic drugs for personal use are involved. Important criteria for such a decision are the amount and type of drugs, involvement of others, personal history, and public interest in prosecution. When a sentence is given, the principle 'treatment instead of

punishment' still allows a reduction or remission of the punishment if the offender undergoes treatment instead of imprisonment.

Since 1981, the increasing number of drug addicts and drug-dependent offenders has led to the inclusion of detailed provisions on activities in the Narcotics Act to reduce the demand for narcotics and to reduce drug-related harm. These include the legal bases for 'therapy instead of punishment' (1981), substitution-based treatment and distribution of sterile disposable syringes (1992), the prerequisites for the establishment of drug injecting rooms at the discretion of the Federal Länder (2000) and diamorphine-assisted substitution treatment in 2009. The illicit trafficking, cultivation and manufacture of narcotic drugs carry penalties of 1–15 years' imprisonment. Aggravating circumstances include 'not insignificant' quantities of narcotic drugs; an adult supplying narcotics to a person under the age of 18 years; someone trafficking narcotics 'professionally' or as a member of a gang; or, when committing a serious drug-related offence, carrying a weapon.

The Act on diamorphine-assisted substitution therapy entered into force on 21 June 2009. It created the legal preconditions for a transfer of the diamorphine-assisted therapy into regular care by changing the Narcotics Act, the Medical Products Act and the Regulation on the Prescription of Narcotic Drugs. The act stipulates, among others, that diamorphine (pharmaceutically produced heroin) becomes eligible to prescription — on very narrow criteria — as a narcotic drug used for heavily dependent opioid addicts. In 2010, additional legal provisions were passed to regulate availability of the therapy through the statutory health insurance and promote appropriate training among the medical professionals. In 2011, cannabis was transferred from Schedule I to Schedule III of the Narcotic Act which, for the first time, enables manufacturing and prescription of cannabis-containing proprietary medicinal after clinical testing and licensing by the BfArM. (Addiction, 2012).

## Greece

**ALCOHOL:** A new law enacted in July 2009 from the ministry of health stipulates a drinking age of 18 and it remains to be seen how it would be enforced. Several establishments around touristy areas have signs posted that no one under 18 will be served alcohol, and on the popular island cruises the rules vary without rime or reason. A cruise on Luis' Aquamarine in 2010 enforced an 18-year age limit, while the same company's cruise ship Majesty had a 21-year old limit in 2009. (Landscapes, 2013)

Even though there are signs posted in a minority of establishments informing patrons that drinking is not allowed under 18 (or 17, or 16 without a guardian in several cases), practically, there is no drinking age limit in Greece. Evidently, there is no age limit to enter bars in Greece and no-one checks IDs either at the door or at the bar (Landscapes, 2013).

According to the regulations of the Ministries of Transport and Justice, a driver's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level is not to exceed a level of 0.08 per cent. These regulations have not been, however, effectively enforced until recently. Currently, the driver is considered to be driving under the influence of alcohol if the BAC level is over 0.05 per cent. The punishment for drunk driving is usually a fine. Punishments in general are not severe unless the driver in question has been involved in a car accident. If the BAC level is higher than 0.1 per cent, then the driver's driving licence may be suspended temporarily. From 1999 onwards, there has been more systematic traffic safety law enforcement, with the implementation of breathalyser tests. (Karlsson, 2010).

**DRUGS:** The most important developments in the drugs legislation were introduced in 2011. "Amending the drug code of laws 3459/2006. The bill has two axes, one being the non-criminal treatment of users, and two foreseeing a

new coordinating scheme." The law expressly provides that the offender's diagnosed drug dependence is grounds for lifting or reducing criminal liability and shall result in acquittal or reduced sanctions." With regard to the users' criminal treatment, it provides as follows:

- "• Full decriminalisation of possession and supply of drugs for personal use. Cannabis cultivation for personal use is defined as a minor offence.
- "• More lenient criminal treatment of the supply of small quantities (misdemeanour), and the supply of drugs to close friends/relatives.
- "• Increased penalties for offences committed by professionals (medical practitioners, pharmacists, civil servants) in certain settings (schools, army, prisons) or involving minors.
- "• Express prohibition of more lenient sentencing for dependent suppliers of large quantities of drugs, for whom the strictest penalty is envisaged (life sentence) or a prison sentence between 10 and 20 years and a € 600,000 fine. The supply of large quantities is determined by the financial yield, with a threshold of € 50,000." (Facts, 2013).

## Hong Kong

**ALCOHOL:** No licensee shall permit any person under the age of 18 years to drink any intoxicating liquor on any licensed premises. This is the primary legislation in Hong Kong under the DUTYABLE COMMODITIES (LIQUOR) REGULATIONS that speaks to the age at which a person may consume liquor in a premises that is the subject of a liquor licence: there are no other age restrictions on liquor consumption in Hong Kong however some retailers do limit sale of liquor at shops by age; others do not. There is no obligation on retailers to refuse to sell liquor to a person on the grounds of age.

The law against what is known as drink driving, impaired driving in Hong Kong is strictly enforced. Hong Kong's maximum blood alcohol level (BAL) is 55 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood, or 0.22 mg alcohol per litre breath alcohol content (BrAC).[4]

With effect from 9 February 2009, police officers in uniform can require a person who is driving or attempting to drive a vehicle on a road to conduct a breath test without the need for reasonable suspicion. In the new random breath test operations, the Police will use pre-screening devices to conduct the test to reduce delay and inconvenience to drivers.

Fines for drivers found impaired:

Maximum fine of HK\$25,000 and imprisonment for 3 years

Disqualification from driving for not less than 3 months on first conviction and not less than 2 years on second or subsequent conviction

Mandated to attend a driving improvement course

Incur 10 driving offence points

(The same penalty applies for failing to provide specimens for breath, blood or urine tests without reasonable excuse). (Wikipedia, Alcohol Laws of Hong Kong, 2013).

#### **DRUGS:** Penalties for Narcotics Offences:

Any person who traffics in a dangerous drug shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of HK\$5,000,000 and imprisonment for life . [trafficking includes selling or giving away any amount of a dangerous drug]

Any person who manufactures a dangerous drug, shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of HK\$ 5,000,000 and imprisonment for life .

Any person who has in his possession; or smokes, inhales, ingest or injects a dangerous drug, shall be liable upon conviction to a fine HK\$ 1,000,000 and imprisonment for 7 years .

Any person who has in his possession any pipe, equipment or apparatus fit and intended for the smoking, inhalation, ingestion or injection of a dangerous drug, shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of HK\$10,000 and imprisonment for 3 years .

Any person who cultivates any plant of the genus cannabis or opium poppy, shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of HK\$ 100,000 and imprisonment for 15 years (Force, 2013).

#### **Ireland**

**ALCOHOL:** Under the Intoxicating Liquor Acts, it is an offence to sell alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. Anyone found guilty of doing so is liable on summary conviction in a District Court to a class B fine for a first offence and a class A fine for a second and any subsequent offence.

It is an offence to buy alcohol for people under the age of 18. It is also an offence to give alcohol to anyone under the age of 18 unless in a domestic home and they have parental consent. If found guilty of any of these offences, you could be liable on summary conviction in a District Court to a class B fine for a first offence and a class A fine for a second or any subsequent offence.

Young people under the age of 18 are not allowed in licensed premises during extended hours (except in certain circumstances). It is the responsibility of the licence holder to make sure this does not happen.

If you are under 18, you cannot legally buy alcohol. Also you cannot drink it unless you are in a private residence and have permission from your parents. It is also an offence to pretend that you are over 18 in order to buy or drink alcohol. If you are found guilty of these offences, you are liable to a class E fine on summary conviction in a District Court.

Under the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994, it is an offence for you to be so drunk in a public place that you could reasonably be presumed to be a danger to yourself or to anyone around you. If found guilty of this offence, you could be liable to a class E fine and a member of the Garda Siochana can confiscate any alcohol you may be carrying.

Under the Road Traffic Act 2010, it is illegal to drive or be in charge of a vehicle if you are under the influence of alcohol. The current legal limit is .50mgs of alcohol per 100mgs of blood in the case of experienced drivers, and .20mgs of alcohol per 100mgs of blood in the case of new and professional drivers. If you are over this limit, you are

liable on summary conviction to a class A fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months. If the court decides, you could be liable to both. Anyone found driving while over the legal limit may be disqualified from driving. The period of disqualification will usually depend on the level of alcohol consumed. Read more about driving offences in Ireland here (Information, 2012).

**DRUGS:** Class A: Ecstasy, LSD, heroin, cocaine, crack, magic mushrooms, amphetamines (if prepared for injection). Up to seven years in prison or an unlimited fine or both. Up to life in prison or an unlimited fine or both.

Class B: Amphetamines, Cannabis, Methylphenidate (Ritalin), Pholcodine. Up to five years in prison or an unlimited fine or both. Up to 14 years in prison or an unlimited fine or both.

Class C: Tranquilisers, some painkillers, Gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), Ketamine. Up to two years in prison or an unlimited fine or both. Up to 14 years in prison or an unlimited fine or both.

All of the drugs on the list above - whether Class A, B or C - are designated as controlled substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, and using them is illegal.

Class A drugs are considered to be the most likely to cause harm.

The Misuse of Drugs Act states that it is an offence to:

- possess a controlled substance unlawfully
- possess a controlled substance with intent to supply it
- supply or offer to supply a controlled drug (even if it is given away for free)
- allow a house, flat or office to be used by people taking drugs

The punishment is serious: Drug trafficking attracts serious punishment, including life imprisonment for Class A offences.

To enforce this law the police have special powers to stop, detain and search people under the 'reasonable suspicion' that they are in possession of a controlled drug.

In the Irish Misuse of Drugs Act a distinction is made to see whether the individual intended "Possession for Personal Use" or "Intent to Supply"

**Possession for Personal Use:** the court must be satisfied that the individual in possession of a controlled substance was for his or her own "immediate personal use". In deliberating this quantity seized is very important; In law to be in possession there does not need to be a sufficient quantity for use but the amount must be "tangible and visible". This means that even the smallest amounts of drugs discovered once visible can still be prosecuted.

**Intent to Supply:** The court must be satisfied that the controlled substance was not intended for personal use and that it was his/her possession for the purpose of selling or otherwise supplying to another. It is important to note that money does not have to change hands in order for an individual to be guilty of the offence of supplying. Broadly speaking it is the quantity of drug found in the persons possession which determines which charge is applicable. Possession does not necessarily refer to direct physical control, one or more persons may be in possession of a drug which is in the hands of another.



Once they have reasonable ground for suspicion the Gardai have the power to search a person, vehicle, vessel or aircraft without a warrant under the Misuse of Drugs Act (Team, 2010).

## Italy

**ALCOHOL:** The legal drinking age in Italy is 16. South Tyrol prohibits both getting served or purchasing for those under 18; everybody is forbidden from being in a state of inebriation. (Wikipedia, Legal Drinking Age, 2013).

**DRUGS:** The Italian law controls as "narcotic drugs" in a schedule system cannabis, coca leaves, opium, their derivatives, synthetic opiates, and certain psycho-tropic substances. For the illegal use, possession, manufacture, importation, exportation, or trafficking of any of the listed drugs, the penalty is from three to eight years in prison and a large fine. (Cowan, 2010)

## Japan

**ALCOHOL:** Age 20 is the legal drinking age. The drunk driving laws in Japan are among the strictest in the world. In Japan, citizens are considered drunk once their exhalation surpasses 0.25 milligrams of ethanol per liter (.03 BAC as opposed to .08 BAC in the U.S.). Penalties for drunk driving include an immediate loss of license, a large fine, and potential jail time.

**DRUGS:** It is illegal to bring into Japan some over-the-counter medicines commonly used in the United States, including inhalers and some allergy and sinus medications. Specifically, products that contain stimulants (medicines that contain Pseudoephedrine, such as Actifed, Sudafed, and Vicks inhalers), or Codeine are prohibited. Up to a two-month supply of allowable over-the-counter medication and up to a four-month supply of allowable vitamins can be brought into Japan duty free. Some popular medications legal in the U.S., such as Prozac and Viagra, are sold illegally in Japan on the black market. Persons traveling to Japan carrying prescription and non-prescription medications should consult the Japanese Embassy, or a Japanese Consulate, in the United States before leaving the U.S. to confirm whether they will be allowed to bring the particular medication. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Japan are strict, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and fines. In most drug cases, suspects are usually detained incommunicado, which bars them from receiving visitors or corresponding with anyone other than a lawyer or U.S. consular officer until after indictment, which may take as long as several months. Solitary confinement is common. People can be convicted of drug use based on positive blood or urine tests alone, and about half of all Americans now in prison in Japan are incarcerated for drug-related crimes.

## Netherlands

**ALCOHOL:** Legal age is 18 for alcoholic beverages containing more than 16% of alcohol and age 16 for alcoholic beverages with less than 16% alcohol content. The BAC is .05 while in the U.S. it is .08. First offenders with a BAC level between .13 and .21 are obliged to follow a 3-day course at their own expense. If they were involved in a road accident, they are not allowed to follow the course, but must undergo a medical examination in order to establish their driving ability. First offenders with a BAC level greater than .21 also must undergo a medical exam.

**DRUGS:** Users are not generally prosecuted for possession of small quantities of soft drugs ("for personal use"), even though they are still illegal. A distinction is drawn between hard drugs (which bear "unacceptable" risks; e.g. cocaine, heroin, opiates, cannabis oil, codeine, amphetamines, LSD, etc.) and soft drugs such as the psychedelic

psilocybin mushrooms as well as cannabis. The limit of the "for personal use" clause is 5 cannabis plants per person for growing, or possession of 5 grams of hashish or marijuana per person. The Dutch Ministry of Justice applies a gedoogbeleid (policy of tolerance or allowance policy) with regard to soft drugs products: hashish and marijuana. Anyone found in possession of less than 0.5 grams of list I (i.e. 'hard') drugs will generally not be prosecuted, though the police will confiscate the drugs and consult a care agency. As for cannabis a maximum of 5 grams will not lead to investigation or prosecution. So-called coffee shops are allowed to sell soft drugs openly. Within the framework of the Opium Act importing and exporting of any classified drug is considered a serious offence. The penalty for hard drug trade can run up to 12 to 16 years. Cannabis remains a controlled substance in the Netherlands and both possession and production for personal use are still misdemeanors, punishable by fines. The maximum penalty for importing or exporting any quantity of cannabis is 4 years' imprisonment and/or a €45,000 fine.

## Singapore

**ALCOHOL:** The legalized drinking age in Singapore is 18 years and anyone found violating the laws is punished severely. The BAC limits are 0.08%. The drunk driving is considered a non-compoundable offense in Singapore (Bureau of Consular Affairs, Singapore Country Specific Information, 2013).

**DRUGS:** Mandatory Death Penalty for Many Narcotics Offenses: Singapore police have the authority to compel both residents and non-residents to submit to random drug analysis. They do not distinguish between drugs consumed before or after entering Singapore in applying local laws. In Singapore, detained U.S. citizens have been surprised that they had been arrested for violations that would not have resulted in arrest in the United States. (Bureau of Consular Affairs, Singapore Country Specific Information, 2013)

The Misuse of Drugs Act is a national drug control law classifying substances into three categories, Classes A, B, and C. Section 44 provides that "The Minister may, by an order published in the Gazette" add, remove, or transfer drugs among the classes. The statute's penal provisions are draconian by most nations' standards, providing for long terms of imprisonment, caning, and capital punishment. The law creates a presumption of trafficking for certain threshold amounts, e.g. 30 grams of cannabis. It also creates a presumption that a person possesses drugs if he possesses the keys to a premises containing the drugs, and that "Any person found in or escaping from any place or premises which is proved or presumed to be used for the purpose of smoking or administering a controlled drug shall, until the contrary is proved, be presumed to have been smoking or administering a controlled drug in that place or premises." Thus, one runs the risk of arrest for drug use by simply being in the company of drug users. The law also allows officers to search premises and individuals, without a search warrant, if he "reasonably suspects that there is to be found a controlled drug or article liable to seizure". (Wikipedia, Misuse of Drugs Act (Singapore), 2013)

**OTHER:** Homosexual acts, including kissing between men, are illegal in Singapore and penalties include imprisonment. Authorized cigarette packs have a stamp of SDPC and one is not allowed to bring in cigarette to Singapore from other places unless an open pack. Violation of smoking rules has a penalty up to 500 dollars per pack. Smoking in public areas is strict prohibited. Import of chewing gums from Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia are not allowed (Singapore, 2010).

## South Korea

**ALCOHOL:** If a person is at least 20 according to Korean age reckoning, that person may drink alcohol. (Wikipedia, Legal Drinking Age, 2013).

**DRUGS:** South Korea has very strict laws regarding illicit drugs. Conviction for possessing, using, or trafficking illicit drugs can result in long jail sentences and large fines (AFFAIRS, 2012).

## Spain

**ALCOHOL:** The legal drinking age is 18 in Spain. Drunk driving is a serious offence in Spain. Experienced drivers can be deemed under the influence of alcohol with a blood level as low as 0.5mg/l (it is 0.8mg/l in the UK). Spanish law makes a distinction for new drivers ie those with less than one year's experience, for whom a lower limit of just 0.1mg/l applies. Penalties for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is penalized with 8-12 weekends of arrest, or a hefty fine, plus the loss of your driving licence for a period of one to four years. There is no need to have committed a moving traffic offence. Refusing to give a breath test can be punished by imprisonment for six to twelve months and loss of licence. In Madrid, the Balearic and Canary Islands, the consumption of alcohol in the street is banned. It may be consumed only in licensed premises. (Home, 2010)

**DRUGS:** Possession of all recreational drugs (even for personal use) is strictly illegal and Spanish law usually imposes a period of imprisonment on offenders. These sentences can be up to twelve years. Smoking is now totally prohibited in all places of work, both public and private, and in all public buildings. It is also forbidden on public transport. Fines range from €30 to €600. (Home, 2010)

## Switzerland

**ALCOHOL:** In Switzerland, the legal drinking age is 16 (beer and wine) and age 18 (spirits and spirit based cocktails). The age limit on beer and wine varies between cantons (states).

**DRUGS:** Swiss drug policy is based on a harm reduction policy that includes: Prevention, Treatment, Harm Reduction, and Enforcement. Current legislation provides that narcotics and at the airport, don't take packages from strangers on your flight. You are responsible for the contents. Psychotropic substances cannot be cultivated, manufactured, prepared or sold without cantonal authorization. The following narcotics cannot be cultivated, imported, manufactured or sold: smoking opium, heroin, hallucinogens (such as LSD) and hemp for the extraction of narcotics or hash. A special permit from the Federal Office of Public Health is required for the importation or exportation of controlled narcotics. The current legislation also contains criminal provisions that apply to: anyone who unlawfully cultivates, manufactures, extracts, processes or prepares narcotics; anyone who, unless authorized, stores, ships, transports, imports, exports, provides, distributes, sells, etc., or buys, holds, possesses or otherwise acquires narcotics; and anyone who finances illicit traffic in narcotics, acts as an intermediary or encourages consumption. The production, possession, consumption and sale of illegal narcotics, even for personal use, is punishable by a monetary penalty or by imprisonment of up to three years, as are public incitements to the consumption of illegal narcotics. For petty offences, the appropriate authority may stay the proceedings or waive punishment and may issue a reprimand. Finally, anyone who persuades or attempts to persuade someone to use narcotics is also punishable by detention or a fine. Cannabis is sold mostly on the street and – under the guise of e.g. "scent bags" through "Cannabis shops" are the target of irregular police crackdowns in some cities, while in others they are tolerated to some degree. Overall, enforcement varies substantially depending on the canton.

## Taiwan

**ALCOHOL:** It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to consume alcohol. Parents, guardians, and others taking care of people under 18 shall prohibit underage drinking, or risk administrative fines of 10000 to 50000 new Taiwan dollars when the situations are serious. One shall not supply alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. A violator shall be administratively fined 3000 to 15000 new Taiwan dollars. (Wikipedia, Legal Drinking Age, 2013)

**DRUGS:** Cannabis is a schedule 2 narcotic in Taiwan, and possession can result in up to 3 years imprisonment. (Erowid, 2013) While you are traveling in Taiwan, you are subject to Taiwan law even if you are a U.S. citizen. Penalties for possession or use of, or trafficking in, illegal drugs in Taiwan are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. Taiwan law also provides for the death penalty for certain violent crimes and drug offenses (Bureau of Consular Affairs, 2013).

## United Kingdom

**ALCOHOL:** Age 16 is the legal drinking age in restaurants. Persons aged 12 and over can have a meal with beer, cider or wine in a restaurant or in a pub with an area specifically set aside for meals, providing it is eaten with a person aged over 18 present. Otherwise the minimum purchase and drinking age in relevant premises" is 18. Liqueur confectionery sale and consumption age is 16. The allowable BAC is .08 which is the same as the United States. Penalties for drunk driving include fines of up to 5,000 pounds (\$8,005.00 US). The average is 300 pounds (\$480.30 US). Suspension of license is possible, though rare for first offense. Imprisonment for up to 6 months is possible, though rare for first offense.

**DRUGS:** In general drug use or consumption (except opium) is not in itself an offence under the Misuse of Drug Act (MDA) - it is the possession of the drug which constitutes an offence. Class A drugs such as heroin or cocaine involve penalties of up to 6 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5 000 (€7 500); on indictment penalties may reach 7 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. Class B drugs, e.g. cannabis or amphetamines, attract penalties at magistrates level of up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2 500 (€3 800), on indictment up to 5 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. Possession of class C drugs, such as barbiturates, attracts softer penalties: up to 3 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £1 000 (€1 500) at magistrate's level, or up to 2 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine on indictment. For trafficking in class A drugs the maximum penalty on indictment is life imprisonment, while trafficking in Class B drugs can attract a penalty of up to 14 years in prison. In addition, the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 introduced a minimum sentence of 7 years imprisonment for a third conviction for trafficking in Class A drugs.

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