

The Effect of Marijuana Legalization in Thailand on
ASEAN Regional Security



THESIS

*Submitted as one of the requirements to obtain a
bachelor's degree in the Department of International
Relations*

Arranged by:

Ipa Hudaipa (E061191080)

FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY
MAKASSAR
2024

BY:
IPA HUDAIPA
E061191080

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Submitted as One of The Requirements to Acquire Bachelor Degree on the
Department of International Relation Faculty of Social and Political Science
Hasanuddin University

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY
MAKASSAR

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN

JUDUL : THE EFFECT OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION IN THAILAND ON ASEAN REGIONAL SECURITY

NAMA : IPA HUDAIPA

NIM : E061191080

DEPARTEMEN : ILMU HUBUNGAN INTERNASIONAL


FAKULTAS : ILMU SOSIAL DAN ILMU POLITIK

Makassar, 19 Agustus 2024



Pembimbing I,

Pembimbing II,


Dr. H. Husain Abdullah, M.Si.
NIP. 196408121990031002


Abdul Razaq Z Cangara, S.IP, M.Si, MIR
NIP. 198909132024061001

Mengesahkan :
Plt. Ketua Departemen Hubungan Internasional,


Prof. Dr. Phil. Sukri, S.IP, M.Si
NIP. 197508182008011008



HALAMAN PENERIMAAN TIM EVALUASI

JUDUL : THE EFFECT OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION IN THAILAND ON ASEAN REGIONAL SECURITY

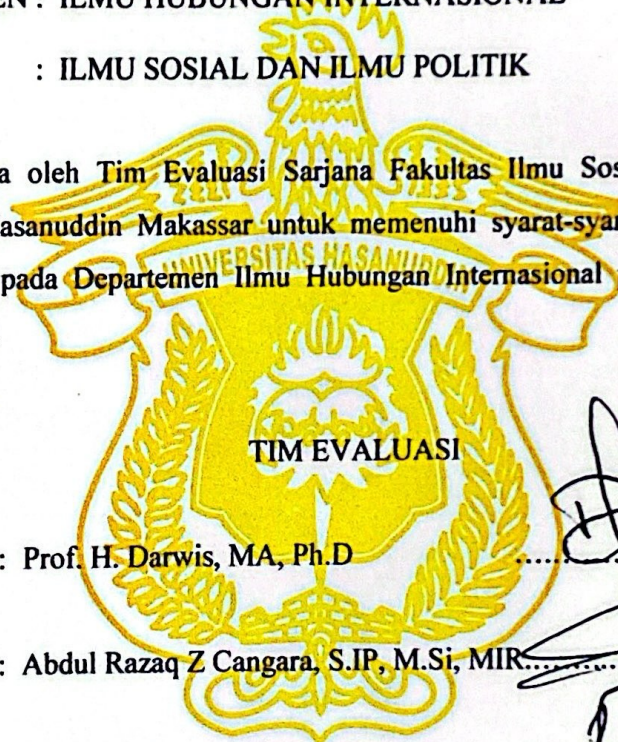
NAMA : IPA HUDAIPA

NIM : E061191080

DEPARTEMEN : ILMU HUBUNGAN INTERNASIONAL

FAKULTAS : ILMU SOSIAL DAN ILMU POLITIK

Telah diterima oleh Tim Evaluasi Sarjana Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Hasanuddin Makassar untuk memenuhi syarat-syarat guna memperoleh gelar sarjana pada Departemen Ilmu Hubungan Internasional pada hari Jum'at, 16 Agustus 2024.



Ketua : Prof. H. Darwis, MA, Ph.D

Sekretaris : Abdul Razaq Z Cangara, S.IP, M.Si, MIR

Anggota : 1. Dr. H. Husain Abdullah, M.Si

2. Agussalim, S.IP, MIRAP

3. Nurjannah Abdullah, S.IP, MA

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN

(Untuk Ujian Skripsi)

THE EFFECT OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION IN THAILAND ON ASEAN REGIONAL SECURITY

N A M A : IPA HUDAIPA

N I M : E061191080

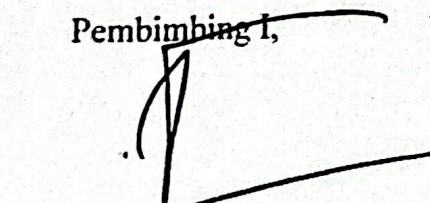
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FAKULTAS : ILMU SOSIAL DAN ILMU POLITIK

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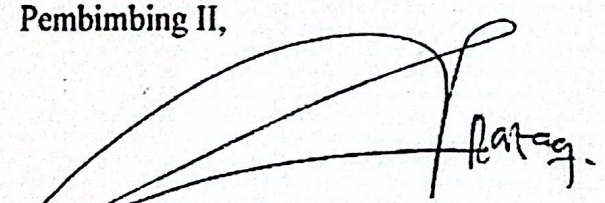
Disetujui Oleh :

Pembimbing I,



Dr. H. Husain Abdullah, M.Si
NIP. 196408121990031002

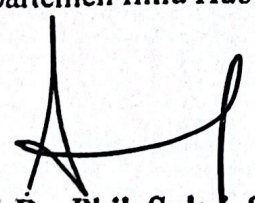
Pembimbing II,



Abdul Razaq Z Cangara, S.IP, M.Si, MIR
NIP. 198909132024061001

Mengesahkan :

Plt. Ketua Departemen Ilmu Hubungan Internasional,



Prof. Dr. Phil. Sukri, S.IP, M.Si
NIP. 1975081820088011008

LETTER OF STATEMENT

I, the undersign :

Name : Ipa Hudaipa

NIM : E061191080

Thesis Title : The Effect of Marijuana Legalization in Thailand on ASEAN
Regional Security

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Nama : Ipa Hudaipa .T
NIM : E061191080
Program Studi : S1- Ilmu Hubungan Internasional
Departemen : Ilmu Hubungan Internasional
Fakultas : Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik
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PREFACE

In recent years, the global landscape of drug policy has been undergoing a profound transformation. Among the most notable shifts is the movement towards the legalization of marijuana in various regions. Thailand, a key player in Southeast Asia, has emerged as a pioneering force in this realm, being the first country in the ASEAN region to legalize marijuana for medical and recreational use. This landmark decision, made in 2022, marks a significant departure from the region's traditionally stringent drug policies and carries profound implications not only for Thailand but for the entire ASEAN bloc.

The purpose of this research is to explore and analyze the effects of marijuana legalization in Thailand on regional security within ASEAN. As Thailand navigates this new legal landscape, it faces a myriad of challenges and opportunities that could reverberate across neighboring states. This study aims to investigate how Thailand's policy shift may influence regional stability, cross-border drug trafficking, economic dynamics, and international relations within ASEAN.

This research is driven by the necessity to understand how policy innovations in one member state can impact the collective security and cooperation of the region. The significance of this study lies in its potential to offer insights into the broader implications of drug policy reforms and to contribute to the discourse on regional security strategies in ASEAN.

Through a comprehensive analysis of policy changes, security dynamics, and regional responses, this paper seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how Thailand's marijuana legalization might shape the future of ASEAN's security architecture. It is hoped that the findings will not only inform policymakers but also stimulate further scholarly debate on the intersection of drug policy and regional security.

I am grateful to the many individuals and institutions whose support has made this research possible. Their insights, feedback, and encouragement have been invaluable throughout this endeavor.

I would also like to address the acknowledgement for parties involved in making this thesis possible;

1. Praise be to God Almighty, because only with His grace and mercy, I can complete this thesis well. All praise to Allah SWT, who has given strength, health, and inspiration during the process of writing this thesis. Praise to God Almighty, because only with His grace and grace, I can complete this thesis well. Praise be to Allah SWT, who has given me strength, health, and inspiration during the process of writing this thesis.
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Makassar, August 20, 2024

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ABSTRACT

Ipa Hudaipa, E061191080, With the title of the essay "The effect of Marijuana Legalisation in Thailand on ASEAN Regional Security" under the guidance of Dr. H. Husain Abdullah, M. Si as Supervisor I and Abdul Razaq Z Cangara, S.IP, M.Si, MIR as Supervisor II, at the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

This study aims to understand the analysis of the Impact of Legalisation of Marijuana in Thailand on Security Dynamics and its implications for ASEAN Security Stability.

The research method used in the preparation of this thesis is a type of qualitative research that is presented descriptively. The data collection techniques used by the author are observation and literature review to collect secondary data from articles, news, and journals. In analysing and presenting the data, the author uses qualitative analysis techniques accompanied by deductive writing techniques.

The results of this study show that the Marijuana Legalisation policy in Thailand has substantial consequences for ASEAN regional security, namely regarding the consistency of drug policies across member states. Thailand's decision to legalise marijuana in June 2022 is considered an innovative measure in Southeast Asia, with the aim to advance medical applications and foster economic prospects. Nevertheless, a rapid legalisation process took place without adequate regulatory structures, resulting in a thriving recreational market that fuelled concerns about drug abuse, especially among young people.

Keywords: Marijuana Legalisation, Thailand, ASEAN, Regional Security

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Background

After the end of World War II in 1945, there was a wave of awareness from developing countries towards their regional security. This awareness came from the bitter experience of developing countries during World War I and World War II where the position of developing countries, especially in the Southeast Asian region, was very weak. In this regard, it is well known that developing countries have experienced interventions during the World Wars, such as the colonization of Malaysia by the British, the Philippines by the Portuguese and Indonesia by the Dutch. Fearful of a return to colonization, Southeast Asian countries began discussing their own security and that of the global region to begin exercising greater autonomy (Kelly, 2007). Thus, in 1967 an agreement known as the Bangkok Declaration was signed by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand. The Bangkok Declaration was created to enhance cooperation among Southeast Asian countries in the fields of Economy, Security and Socio-Culture. This cooperation is inseparable from the existence of several similarities between Southeast Asian countries, as well as the natural wealth of these countries can meet the needs of neighboring countries in Southeast Asia. Then from this meeting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was born. Language, socio-cultural and fate similarities encouraged the formation of ASEAN, which today consists of 10 countries (Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia joined later) to strengthen international relations between Southeast Asian countries and to strengthen the ASEAN region, as well as to escape dependence on the West.

Southeast Asia is often viewed through the framework of a realist perspective on international relations related to geopolitical, security and economic affairs. According to realists, the region places a high value on state sovereignty and is peppered with power struggles between states maximizing their respective national interests. However, this view is in stark contrast to the recent phenomenon of the

changing nature of security relations in the wider Asia Pacific Region. ASEAN established the new ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1993, based on neoliberal institutional principles, aiming to create a security community in the region (Nishikawa, 2007). Under the influence of constructivist views that emphasize the importance of identity in shaping regional security, it has a role in determining economic, political, and security rules. These three views - realist, neoliberal, and constructivist - help explain the ARF's main rules (Nishikawa, 2007).

One of the many crimes that occur in Southeast Asia is known as the Golden Triangle, which in the border region of Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand has the second largest opium producing area after the Golden Crescent according to the United Nations on Drugs and Crime in 2013 (Siegers, 2016), thus forcing ASEAN to take further steps by forming the ASEAN Senior Official on Drug Matters which is a special body in tackling the problem of drug trafficking in Southeast Asia. ASOD is a gathering place for ASEAN officials to exchange information and discuss drug issues (Siegers, 2016).

Southeast Asia in particular has previously been more concerned with its economic potential than its political or security characteristics. But in recent years, political and security issues in Southeast Asia have become a concern, largely due to the ongoing upheaval in the region. Not only in the ASEAN region, but also in the Asia Pacific region and more broadly including the tensions between North and South Korea, Russia and Japan over the Kurile Islands, Japan and North Korea, and China and Taiwan (Nishikawa, 2007).

The collective approach that has been claimed to be ASEAN's way of representing security regulation has never developed in Southeast Asia, rather the influential approach of security regulation in the region is bilateral. This reveals that there are certain norms of behavior that define security among Southeast Asian states. The main principle in the region, which has a great influence on security and conflict management, is the protection of sovereignty, based on the experience of colonialism and imperialism for ASEAN countries as a basis for protecting the sovereignty of the region (Nishikawa, 2007). Countries in the region have experienced difficulties in maintaining statehood since independence, facing

problems in defending themselves from other countries while facing domestic challenges. The region was also in an unstable position during the Cold War, as it faced pressure from the United States and the Soviet Union. Therefore, respect for the norm of sovereignty provides protection from external threats and this continues to influence member states' attitudes and approaches to the regional order. The history of colonialism and imperialism that took place in Southeast Asia became a political culture in the region that developed non-formal and non-contractual relationships. ASEAN's approach to conflict is to try to reduce tensions between the parties involved. An example of this approach is the territorial dispute over Sabah between the Philippines and Malaysia that dates back to the 1960s and remains unresolved. ASEAN did not take the lead in resolving this dispute, but played a role in reducing tensions between the two sides. In this case, an open war between the Philippines and Malaysia was avoided. ASEAN was successful in managing disputes in the region, reducing tensions and potential violence and maintaining regional order (Nishikawa, 2007).

In this case, it is important to remember that Southeast Asia is experiencing conflicts between countries related to territorial claims in the region, so it is necessary to briefly understand Regional Theory again. The new Regional Theory is broad and explicitly mentioned as "multidimensional". It builds Regions based on relevant dimensions such as shared environmental impacts, regional cultural identity or trade patterns, rather than on pre-existing cartographic entities (Kelly, 2007). In addition to conflicts between countries over territorial claims in the Asian region. There are transnational crimes that occur in this region, such as terrorism, piracy, and illicit drug trafficking. Therefore, this region requires stricter security enforcement.

The Southeast Asian region has an area on the border between Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos that is utilized as a trade route for the 3 countries. This region is referred to as the Golden Triangle by the international community. The region is located on the border between the Ruak and Mekong rivers and is used as a trade route for tea, jade, and teak. In addition to being a trade route, this region is also used as a production for drug ingredients, namely opium. Therefore, the Golden

Triangle is used as an illicit drug trade route, usually through human smuggling. Knowing this, ASEAN and the local governments whose borders are in this region, did not remain silent. In 2013, the governments of Thailand, Laos, and China made efforts to stop the trafficking with the Safe Mekong Operation Project and expanded in 2015 by inviting Vietnam and Cambodia to work together to protect the ASEAN region from illicit drug trafficking. However, an increase in drug trafficking still occurred. So ASEAN strengthened its border management capacity by engaging countries in the region to further counter drug trafficking. However, Thailand continues to experience an increase in illicit drug trafficking until it has a high market and becomes a supplier of drugs in the Golden Triangle route.

Thailand became the first country to legalize Marijuana as an alternative medicine in Southeast Asia. This policy was passed by the Thai parliament to regulate the Thai military regime. The Thai parliament supported the amendment of the narcotics law in 1979 (Indriani, 2022). Thailand formalized the legalization of Marijuana as a medical purpose on January 1, 2019. Thailand strictly regulates the policy of legalizing Marijuana in medical form in terms of production and sales permits. Thailand also became the first country in Southeast Asia in research use. Residents are also allowed to consume and grow Marijuana at home in the new regulations in Thailand. However, under the new regulations, residents are required to report to the local government. Therefore, individual Marijuana possession is regulated by having a prescription and certificate recognized by the state (Campbell, 2020).

It should be noted that the use of marijuana in Thailand has been practiced since centuries ago in traditional medicine, belief rituals, and processed in textiles. Supported by the Bhumjaithai political party which is pro-Marijuana legalization, and whose party chairman also serves as the Minister of Public Health, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), under the Narcotics Act, steps were taken to remove certain parts of the CBD extract plant containing no more than 0.2% THC, from the list of Category 5 Narcotics.

Marijuana is a plant that contains three main compounds: Cannabinoids (CBN), Cannabidiol (CBD), and Tetrahydrocannabinol (delta-9-

tetrahydrocannabinol, THC). The THC compound is the main psychoactive cannabinoid in Marijuana, which affects the brain, memory, and motor control. After its legalization on medical use and recreational use, marijuana became popular among drug users. And Thailand legalized marijuana for medical use in early 2019 in ASEAN (Kanato, 2021). The following data reports marijuana in ASEAN:

Figure 1 Marijuana Users in Thailand 2020-2023

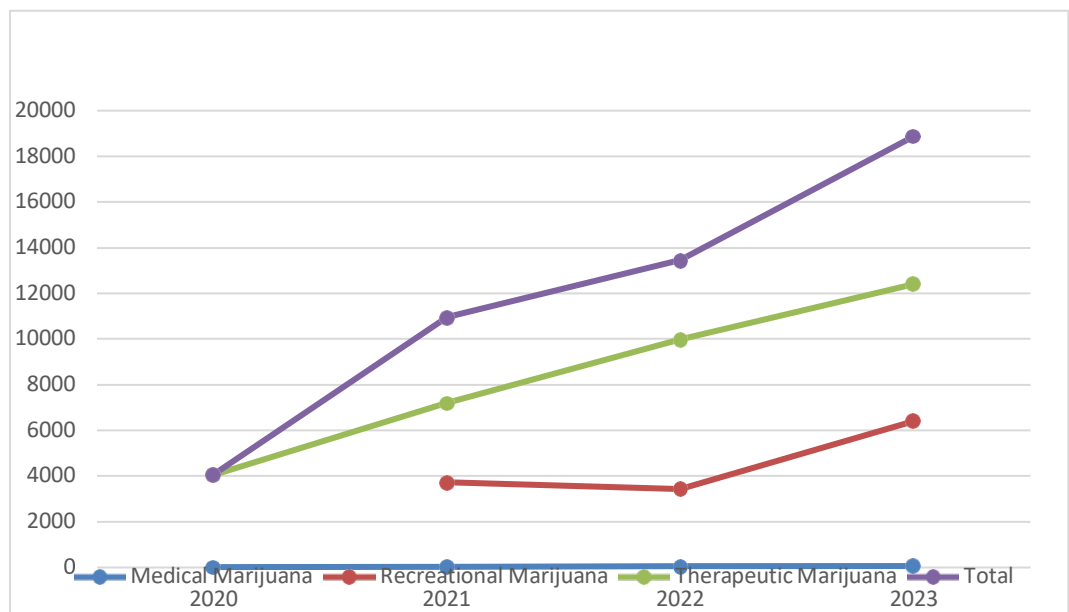


Table 1 Marijuana Users in ASEAN 2019-2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Thailand	27587 Kg	9227 Kg	41573 Kg	18097 Kg
Singapura	28 Kg	43 Kg	11 Kg	11 Kg
Brunei	1.39 Kg	1.247 g	84.28 g	1195.08 g
Indonesia	17534.85 g	338.920 Kg	186.25 g	121.32 Kg
Malaysia	650 Kg	5728 Kg	372 Kg	8129 Kg
Laos	5106 Kg	5564 Kg	5846 Kg	12014 Kg
Kamboja	103 Kg	292 Kg	135 Kg	60 Kg
Philippines	1863800 g	2075522.88 g	5924473.5 g	3922549.16 g
Myanmar	365 Kg	738 Kg	504 Kg	929 Kg
Vietnam	500 Kg	275 Kg	504 Kg	929 Kg

Source: Badan Narkotika Nasional (BNN) 2019-2021, Thailan Country Report, National Anti-Drugs Agency (NADA), Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), ASEAN Drug Monitoring

From the data above, we can know that the latest data in 2020 the illicit trade and use of marijuana in Thailand has decreased slightly. However, during the covid 19 pandemic experienced by the whole world, drug use and trafficking increased again. This is due to the covid 19 virus that has captured the attention of countries globally, so that drug trafficking has again expanded beyond the previous illicit trade. The reasons related to the legalization of marijuana is the one of southeast Asia of the regions that acts as a producer of drugs with its golden triangle region. Then in 2019 Thailand issued a policy to legalize marijuana in the country, which allows residents to possess individually to grow at home, this can be a threat to the security of ASEAN regional stability regarding transnational crimes in drug trafficking. Therefore, the author is interested in raising the title "**The Effect of Marijuana Legalization in Thailand on ASEAN Regional Security**".

2. Boundary and Problem Formulation

This study focuses on ASEAN regional security against the legalization of marijuana in Thailand, knowing that Thailand legalizes marijuana not only in medical but recreational for civilians, given Thailand's geographical location bordering several ASEAN countries.

- a. How Does Thailand's Marijuana Legalization Policy Affect the ASEAN Regional Security System?
- b. How Does Analysis of the Impact of Marijuana Legalization in Thailand on Security Dynamics and its Implications for the ASEAN Security Stability?

3. Research Objectives and Benefits of Research

Based on the research problem describe above, the objective of this study are:

- a. To understand the Thailand's Marijuana Legalization Policy Affect the ASEAN Regional Security System.
- b. To understand the analysis of the Impact of Marijuana Legalization in Thailand on Security Dynamics and the implications for ASEAN Security Stability

Benefits:

- a. Asses the direct impact of Thailand's marijuana legalization policy on ASEAN regional security.
- b. Identify concrete changes in Thailand's marijuana-related policies and practices and understand how these changes affect regional security stability.
- c. Examine the responses and reactions of ASEAN countries to Thailand's marijuana legalization policy.
- d. Identify whether these is conflict or new cooperation in the regional security context in response to Thailand's marijuana policy.

- e. Present policy recommendations for the Thai government and ASEAN countries regarding addressing the security impacts of the marijuana legalization policy.
- f. Contribute to a better understanding of how marijuana policies can be directed to support regional security.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study uses two theories that will clarify the relationship between Thailand and ASEAN, the theories are The Regional Security Theory and Non-traditional Security Theory. The concept of The Regional Security Theory explains analysing Thailand's marijuana legalization policy as part of foreign policy and see how it affects security dynamics in ASEAN. The concept of Non-traditional Security Theory explains understand the impact of Thailand's marijuana legalization policy on relations between countries in the ASEAN region in non-traditional security way. The following is a description and relevance of the concepts contained in this study, there are:

a. Regional Security Theory

This study uses two theories that will clarify the relationship between Thailand and ASEAN, the theories are The Regional Security Theory and Non-traditional Security Theory. The concept of The Regional Security Theory explains analysing Thailand's marijuana legalization policy as part of foreign policy and see how it affects security dynamics in ASEAN. The concept of Non-traditional Security Theory explains understand the impact of Thailand's marijuana legalization policy on relations between countries in the ASEAN region in non-traditional security way. The following is a description and relevance of the concepts contained in this study, there are:

"Security as the ability to safeguard the basic values of a society against threats. These basic values may include state integrity and sovereignty, economic prosperity, a healthy environment and human rights."

In contrast to Buzan and Wæver, Ken Booth defines security as the conditions that make it possible to live reasonably and with dignity. This emphasizes the importance of security for individuals and communities, not just for the state. According to the Human Security Centre, security is freedom from threats to life, and human dignity which emphasizes that security should include protection of basic human needs, such as clothing, food, shelter, health, education, and employment. Talking about security is inseparable from existential threats that cause countries and organizations to take emergency action. So what is a threat? Threat can be understood in relation to the specific character of the object of reference that is not related to a widespread standard based on what threatens individual human life. The quality of this existential threat varies widely across sectors as does the nature of the existential threat itself. (Buzan B. O., 1998)

In the existential threat above, it can be understood that it can be a threat to a country to a wider area such as a region that includes several countries. With this, it is also necessary to understand what is regional security? And how does regional security work in the regions it covers? And what influences policies in regional security based on each region in the international world?

Regional Security Theory provides a conceptual framework that captures the new structure of international security. Regional Security Theory has a historical dimension whose development allows it to be linked to Cold War and pre-Cold War patterns in the international system. The theory has constructivist roots, as the formation and operation of Regional Security depends on patterns of friendship and conflict among units in the system, which makes the regional system dependent on the actions and interpretations of actors, rather than just a mechanical reflection of the distribution of power. Make the relationship explicit, by showing that its social theory can be applied to the complexities of regional security. Each Regional Security consists of separate threats and aspirations. Both the security of separate units

and the process of global power intervention can only be understood by understanding the dynamics of regional security (Buzan B. a., 2003).

Regional Security Theory is useful for three reasons. First, it informs the appropriate level of analysis in security studies. Second, it can organize empirical studies, and third, theory-based scenarios can be created based on forms of regional security. Regional security can be defined by durable patterns of cooperation and conflict in the form of sub-global and geographically coherent patterns of security interdependence. The specific character of regional security is often influenced by historical factors. (Buzan B. a., 2003)

Regional security also has several characteristics according to Buzan in his essay titled Security: A New Framework for Analysis, as explained as follows:

- 1) Consists of two or more countries;
- 2) Geographically grouped (because threats in the region are easier to spread over short distances than long distances);
- 3) Have security interdependence, characterized by both good and bad gaps, significantly stronger among these countries than from outside the region;
- 4) This pattern of security interdependence should be deep and long-lasting though not permanent, not just a one-off interaction.

In addition, there are several variations of security that can be divided into five parts, which are explained as follows:

- 1) The Military Sector, which usually refers to a country where threats to the survival of the armed forces will increase the power of the state. This may serve to justify a coup against the existing government and its policies.
- 2) The political sector, traditionally defined in terms of the fundamental principles of sovereignty, as well as state ideology.

Sovereignty can be existentially threatened by anything that questions the recognition, legitimacy, or authority of the government.

- 3) Economic sector, in the economic sphere, existential threats are more difficult to decipher. Companies are usually existentially threatened by bankruptcy and sometimes by legal changes making them illegal and no longer viable.
 - 4) Societal sector, refers to large-scale group identities that can function independently of the state such as nations and religions.
 - 5) The environmental sector, encompasses a wider range of issues, from the survival of individual species, habitat types, to larger-scale issues such as the maintenance of the planet's climate.
- (Buzan B. O., 1998)

It should be noted that security theory in international relations is divided into two focuses, namely traditional security and non-traditional security. Traditional security which includes the state as an actor and the interests of the state which includes threats to the state, political interests, as the root of the problem. Meanwhile, non-traditional security centers on the survival and welfare of society and arises mainly from non-military sources, such as climate change, infectious diseases, drug trafficking and transnational crime.

b. Non-Traditional Security Theory

After discussing regional security, security theory is divided into two parts based on the type of security threat, namely traditional security and non-traditional security. Traditional security focuses on state security and national interests that tend to be military conflicts including armistice, coup, and war. So far, the concept of security is only in the military sector and the state, the concept of security also includes non-military areas and non-state actors.

(Buzan B. d., 2009)

Table 2 Differences in traditional security and non-traditional security theories (Phi, 2019)

Traditional Security	Non-traditional Security
The notion of security relates to the use or threat of the use of force and military action.	Focuses on other types of threats that impact human existence.
The concept of Security essentially jeopardizes certain core values of the state including sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.	Centering the security of the individual, society, and humanity as a whole.
External, i.e. threats from others, or internal, i.e. threats from groups or regions that demand secession.	Referred to as human security or global security from hazards originating from new sources or non-state actors.
Using force at the source of threats as well as suggestions for achieving peace and security.	New types of threats such as terrorism, human rights violations, drug trafficking, climate change.
The main strategies in countering threats include defending, surrendering, deterring attacks, forming alliances, maintaining a balance of power, and more.	Key strategies in countering non-traditional security threats include cooperation between countries.

Over time, the discussion of security has expanded. Thinking about the concept of security is referred to as the non-traditional approach. There are several thoughts on the concept of security in the non-traditional approach. First, security does not only focus on the security of the state, but also involves the protection of each individual, group, environment, and the existence of the earth itself. Secondly, it is important to know the sources of threats, which can come from within or outside the country. Third, the study of security is not only the military sector, but is broader such as the economic sector and the environmental sector. Fourth, security studies do not only have a feeling of threat, but also an attempt to attack or dominate. The development of this non-traditional security concept was marked by the end of the Want

War between the United States and the Soviet Union and the terrorist acts at the WTC Building on September 11, 2001. (Buzan B. d., 2009)

The most widespread non-traditional security threats are economic threats such as poverty and unemployment, environmental threats such as pollution and natural disasters, health threats such as infectious diseases and pandemics, and finally social threats such as ethnic conflicts and transnational crimes such as drug trafficking and human trafficking. In conclusion, non-traditional security issues pose significant threats to national security, stability and development such as drug trafficking. These issues intersect with other security challenges and require comprehensive and coordinated responses at the regional and global levels. The illegal drug trade undermines state stability and legitimacy, creates social and economic instability, and contributes to the rise of organized crime and terrorism.

a. Drug Trafficking as Non-Traditional Security Issues

International trade occurs or arises because of the interdependence of one country with another. This dependence is due to each country not being able to fulfil every need needed by the people or people of a country. International trade can also occur due to differences in country preferences for certain goods and services. These conditions are often utilized by rent-seekers who have access to the authorities to obtain preferences and for the benefit of consumers and citizens as a whole.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the illegal drug trade has evolved into a global issue that affects nearly every nation. The widespread availability of drugs and the cultural norms surrounding their use have led to the trafficking and abuse of various substances across different regions and countries. The global drug market is characterized by three dominant transnational markets: heroin, cocaine, and marijuana. Despite the relative stability of these traditional markets over the past few decades, a new trend has emerged in the form of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), which

have gained rapid popularity among a younger generation of users worldwide. (Gao, 2013)

A variety of narcotics, including heroin, cocaine, Marijuana, and synthetics like fentanyl and methamphetamine, are trafficked by criminal networks. Global drug addiction and accessibility have increased along with the permeability of international borders. Growers, producers, transporters, suppliers, and dealers are all involved in this international trade. It undermines political and economic stability, ruins people's lives, and harms communities in all of our member nations. Addicts and end users are frequently the targets of strong, cunning corporations. Drug trafficking is frequently linked to other types of criminal activity, including corruption and money laundering. Criminal networks employ trafficking channels to move additional illegal goods, such as live pangolins, uncut diamonds, and guns, which converges crime. (Interpol, 2024)

Criminals are finding new and inventive ways to hide illegal drugs so they can be transported, making it difficult for law enforcement to find these hidden chemicals. Furthermore, as new synthetic narcotics are created frequently, law enforcement must stay up to date on the latest developments and items available on the black market. Countries must cooperate in a unified and coordinated manner since the kinds of narcotics smuggled and the routes taken are always changing.

Narcotics trafficking crime is one of the international dimension crimes that has characteristics: organized, in the form of syndicates, there is a large financial support and its circulation utilizes sophisticated technology. The mode of international drug trafficking always involves foreign nationals and impacts the territories of two or more countries and is always preceded by preparation or planning carried out outside the territorial boundaries of a particular country. (Cahyani, 2023)

The person, the state, and the international system are the three tiers of analysis that increase in scale and reach. The person on the street, the drug dealer, or the drug user is the individual. The drug trade affects a lot of

people's security and safety. While some people work as enforcers and attempt to make a living in this hazardous industry, others trade in drugs.

The state is the second level of analysis. An autonomous geographical unit with sovereignty and power over its own area is called a state or nation. A state can defend its national interests militarily and diplomatically. National security is compromised by anything that threatens national interests, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

Drug trafficking organizations are possibly more powerful than the government and could have the ability to take control of it via coercion or force. There are times when the state is unable to keep the peace in some areas of the state. A state like this is regarded as feeble or delicate. States that the government no longer has total authority over are considered failed states. Organizations involved in organized crime may infiltrate the state. States may work together or separately to accomplish their security objectives. Whether or not they are partners or enemies will determine this. Collaboration is reliant on the international system, which is the third level of analysis. There is no worldwide government that could control behaviour between states, in contrast to states. International law enforcement is not always reliable.

In fact, there are international laws and the United Nations, but since there is no global government or police force—that is, no international 9/11 hotline that a state can contact in case it is under attack—international law cannot be implemented. States must therefore assist one another in order to achieve security. Having a powerful military is necessary to counter threats and obstacles. States can sometimes be at odds with one another due to conflicting national interests. National interests contribute to state security. Keeping control of territory is one national interest. Criminal actors occasionally have the ability to launch cross-border incursions from a neighbouring sponsor state, such as Venezuela, as demonstrated in the instance of Colombia. Both states' sovereignty is hampered by this. There are other networks that have an international impact.

Realism is a theory of power, and power is about control—that is, when one actor exerts pressure on another to act in a way that serves his interests. Great nations use their clout to persuade weaker states to adhere to security protocols. Power politics can be understood through a variety of realisms, including human nature, classical, and offensive realism. Conflict is driven by evil and greedy human nature, according to classical realists. Other significant security risks went unaccounted for in favour of big power politics and nations. Non-state actors are involved in organized crime and drug trafficking. However, because drug trafficking networks influence, threaten, and subvert state power, realism can be used to analyse the significance of these networks. Drug trafficking networks violate laws, defying authorities in government. As networks buy their way to wealth and security at the cost of the government and people, it corrupts the state. Wealth growth may be followed by a sudden increase in crime, violence, and weapons. As the state gives up territory to these organizations, it frequently starts to disintegrate. Disorder can occasionally spread to neighbouring states, fostering corruption and terrorist networks.

Liberalism Opposing realism's emphasis on political power, liberalism contends that cooperation among governments will be more advantageous. Given that drug trafficking is an international issue, states must cooperate to find solutions. No state can accomplish this on its own. States will therefore trade and work toward peace because they are more concerned with absolute gains—that is, their overall gain. Classical liberalism, like classical realism, rests this idea on the virtues of human nature. People vote for politicians who oppose war because they are inherently altruistic. Liberals contend that states requiring illegal drugs are fuelling global supply chains, which in turn causes instability in states that produce drugs. Drug trafficking is a global concern that affects producing, transiting, and consuming

countries. To combat it, nations have ratified international treaties and collaborated through international organizations.

Beyond the material world, Social Constructivism explores the concepts and meanings that underlie it. Threats aren't just objective realities; they're also our perceptions of those facts. A multilevel analysis role is advanced by social constructivism: it establishes the speaker. This encompasses states that might be viewed as allies or adversaries. International politics, according to the theoretical framework of social constructivism, are the result of shared identities and ideas. Ideas are more important than material forces. Stated differently, "rather than being inherent, the interests and identities of purposeful actors are established by these associated ideas." Similar to Social Constructivism, Securitization Theory asserts that perceptions, identities, and ideas form the basis of threats. Language, which is founded on the viewpoints of states and peoples, is the basis for threats. States will convince the public if they believe drugs pose a security risk by presenting strong arguments.

Reverse securitization is another possible outcome. De-securitization, or legalizing and decriminalizing, has gained momentum as a result of numerous academics and commentators claiming that the war on drugs has not been successful. Reversing the existential risk once declared by world leaders requires a speech act in conjunction with decriminalization and legalization. In other words, certain governments in nations like Portugal, Canada, and the Netherlands no longer believe that marijuana poses a threat to public safety and is detrimental. In certain states, the use of marijuana is neither criminalized nor punishable by law; sale is permitted with a permit. Understanding social views can help us make sense of the world around us. Drugs like marijuana are currently being decriminalized and made legal. One intriguing facet of state policy is this reversal. (International security and the illicit drug trade). (Kassab, 2022)

Table 3 Summary of theory and level of analysis (Kassab, 2022)

Theory	Description	Level of analysis	Security	Drug trafficking as a threat
Realism	Power	The state and the international system	The state and its military (territorial integrity)	Challenges to the state, international stability
Liberalism	Cooperation	The state	Individual (freedom from exploitation)	Development and human security
Constructivism	Social meanings	The individual, the state, and the international system	Multi-dimensional (military, economy, society)	Based on social construction (securitization or desecuritization)

Aside from the paradigm of International Relations theory on the issue of marijuana trafficking that has been presented, the next discussion will convey the strategy of the drug trafficking process that has been operating in a structured and loosely connected manner in distributing goods. Therefore, drug trafficking can be long-lasting and widespread.

1) Group Structure

Various group structures within a loosely connected trade network are found in qualitative study investigating the layout of drug trafficking organizations, in contrast to conceptualizations of organized crime inspired by the media. In general, organized crime groups function similarly to respectable businesses. utilizing ethnographic techniques that demonstrated the ad hoc agreements among market participants and the loose structure of drug trafficking activities. Making the case that the origin of the medication handled affects market structure in some ways; specialized importation of foreign drugs requires fewer personnel and less formal structure than local

drug manufacture. Due to local competition, domestic drug manufacture is also more likely to imitate a legal firm.

Investigations with forty high-level, imprisoned cocaine and marijuana dealers revealed that their networks are usually composed of transient, dynamic coalitions of dealers operating as tiny partnerships. Three conclusions emerged from the interviews regarding what makes this group arrangement successful: (1) Access to finance, hard work, good fortune, and the lack of need for violence to achieve success are the main obstacles to entry into the field. (2) Because the market is nationwide, traders are not restricted to operating in specific regions. Experience and the readiness to create and seize chances set boundaries for participation in wholesale markets. (3) High-level drug trafficking operations can succeed without the need for extensive or long-lasting networks.

The research team came to the conclusion that there are few examples of large, hierarchically organized distribution networks, and that drug trafficking is more akin to a cottage industry made up of transient, small groups of people after closely examining the operations (such as communication patterns, transactions, and security). Analyses conducted on methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin trafficking networks in the 1990s and 2000s yielded comparable findings. For instance, an analysis of the best research on drug trafficking came to the conclusion that drug dealers have a variety of motivations and are not all the same. Group structure and vulnerability show these differences: compared to ideologically driven offenders, profit-motivated business criminals are more likely to have a strong core with multiple links to other organizations and individuals. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that trafficking networks are adaptable, growing and contracting in size and scope in response to opportunities and obstacles. (Bichler, 2017)

2) Role Difference

The assessment of qualitative studies also highlighted the significance of role difference by activity (e.g., cooking meth versus using precursor substances) or market niche (e.g., cross-border smuggling versus wholesale supply). Disruption efforts must be customized to the type of operation and the innate resilience of the group structure due to variations in organizational structure. Extensive interviews, for instance, revealed evidence of role differentiation in response to police attention: in order to be adaptable and resilient to counter-crime activities, disruption efforts involved segmenting drug market activities into specific tasks (e.g., separating owners, transporters, shippers, money counters, and guards, etc.). The study also discovered that organizational structure varies among market segments, including low-level distribution, transaction, and high-level distribution. This implies that certain limits are imposed on those engaged in the drug trade by market forces at every stage of the process.

This study discovered indications of variety in money laundering, which is typically seen as a rather specialized part of drug trafficking. This highlights the adaptable nature of the operation. For instance, it was discovered that just 14 cases, or half of the investigations, involved individuals offering financial services that are frequently connected to money laundering. Contrary to popular belief, this study found a wide range of financial activities, and the financial facilitators were not accountants or lawyers. Rather, the individuals were either involved in legal activities that made the money appear legal, like investing in legal sectors of the economy, or they were smugglers of cash, such as cash smuggling and hawala banking. However, this implies that human capital—individuals' abilities and resources—influences whether and to what extent, someone is involved in the drug market. Additionally, human capital is able to discern between easily replaceable subordinates and key leaders and individuals. (Bichler, 2017)

b. Marijuana Legalization

The marijuana has very long had a role in social life as a medicine or textile and paper needs. Other than that, Marijuana has historically been used as an indigenous treatment for a variety of illnesses and conditions, including malaria and venereal disease, as well as medical conditions like fever, insomnia, cachexia, headaches, constipation, and rheumatic pain. In 1850, marijuana was included in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia and acknowledged as an official, licit substance due to its alleged medical benefits. During Prohibition, in the 1930s, marijuana use for recreational purposes increased. The Marijuana Tax Act of 1937 essentially outlawed the use of Marijuana without making its possession or consumption illegal. Marijuana was placed in the most restricted schedule of illegal narcotics, schedule I, by the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, which also made possession a federal offense. Thus in the early 20th century led to regulations that prohibited marijuana because it was considered to be able to damage social order and become a threat in the economic field widely.

The FDA agreed with the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) continued support of the Schedule I designation, stating that Marijuana satisfies the three requirements for such classification under 21 U.S.C. 812(b):

- 1) great potential for abuse;
- 2) no recognized medical use at this time in the US; and
- 3) lack of recognized safety for usage in conjunction with medical supervision.

A previous assessment conducted by a number of Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies, including the FDA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) found no reliable scientific evidence to support the medical use of marijuana and no evidence to support

the safety or effectiveness of the drug for use in general medicine in relation to humans or animals. (Svrakic, 2012)

Although regulations prohibiting marijuana have been enacted due to several factors previously described in the United States. since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been several countries that have legalized marijuana due to several factors such as in the fields of health and tourism such as Canada, the Netherlands, and Uruguay. the legalization of marijuana in the medical field has become a hot topic of discussion in international forums. but recreationally it is still under consideration to remain prohibited due to several factors, one of which is because it contains intoxicating substances and is considered to cause transmission of diseases such as HIV / AIDS.

Table 4 The Countries legalized Marijuana

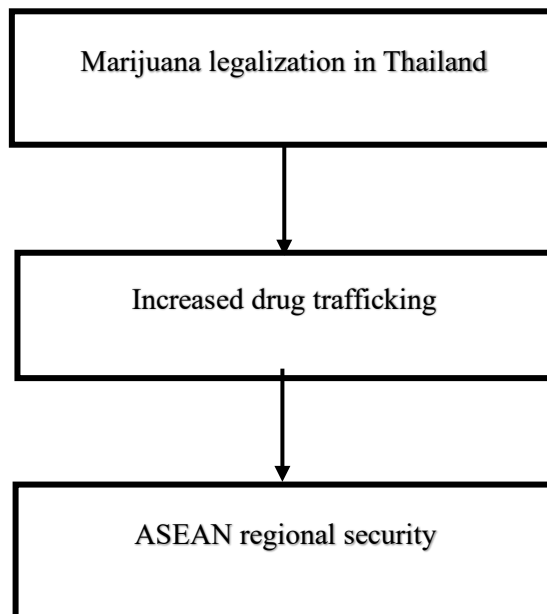
State	Medical Marijuana and year	Recreational and year
Canada	Yes since 2001	Yes since 2018
Italy	Yes since 2013	No
Argentina	Yes as scientific research and medical investigation since 2017	No
Australia	Yes since 2016	Yes since 2019
Mexico	Yes since 2017	Yes since 2021
Uruguay	Yes since 2013	Yes since 2013
South Africa	Yes since 2018	No
Netherlands	Yes since 1976 according to the prescription given by medical authority	Yes since 1976 only for retail sales. Max 5 grams
German	Yes since 2017	Yes since April 2024
Thailand	Yes since 2018	Yes since 2022

In the table above, it can be concluded that almost all countries on every continent have issued regulations to legalize medical marijuana because of the evidence of the health benefits of marijuana which helps treat several internal and mental illnesses. The interesting thing in the table is that some countries also issue rules to relax the recreational use of marijuana and some countries that allow their citizens to be able to use marijuana privately are a form of political interest in the field of tourism. Although personal possession of marijuana has been permitted by some of the countries above, there are rules that must be adhered to in this regard.

On legalization in some of the countries mentioned in the table, Uruguay became the first country to legalize marijuana nationally, while the Netherlands only tolerates selling marijuana in coffee shops or roadside shops and does not allow for commercial production.

Pro-legalization advocates frequently claim that rather than allowing Marijuana earnings to go to the illegal market, the state should make money from it. Additionally, they contend that people who use Marijuana shouldn't be detained because it's a substance that's safer than alcohol. Legalization's opponents claim that greater Marijuana usage brought on by the drug's easier access and cheaper cost will lead to dependency and other harmful health effects. Additionally, they fear that Marijuana will be promoted similarly to alcohol and that a strong lobby would be formed by the new sector to oppose regulation and taxation. (Caulkins J. P., 2015)

5. Analytical Framework



6. Research Methods

a. The Research Type

The researcher in this study utilizes a qualitative research design characterized by its explanatory nature. Qualitative research involves an exploratory process aimed at understanding social or human issues by constructing a comprehensive narrative presented in a scholarly context. The central aim of this approach is to provide a detailed, critical portrayal of the research thesis or to depict a phenomenon within the realm of social interactions, facilitating the exploration and discovery of meaning in real-world contexts. In employing this qualitative method, an inductive approach is embraced, focusing on specific logical procedures to derive general hypotheses. The qualitative analysis in this paper serves to articulate, document, analyze, and expound upon the collaboration between Regional Security ASEAN and the movement to legalize marijuana in Thailand.

b. Data Types and Sources

This study encompasses both primary and secondary data. Primary data, collected directly from the original source without intermediaries, is obtained through responses to research questions from individuals and groups connected to the research subject. The author conducts in-depth interviews directly with the primary source to gather this primary data. The in-depth interview method employed is a research approach that seeks to acquire firsthand information by posing oral questions directly to the primary source, aiming to extract the necessary facts and insights. On the other hand, secondary data is information gathered from literary sources pertaining to the impact of marijuana legalization in Thailand on ASEAN Regional Security, with a specific focus on Indonesia. Additionally, secondary data needs will be met through online sources such as reputable news websites, international journals, and international non-governmental organizations.

a. Data Collection Techniques

The author employs a data collection approach involving a literature review and the handling of primary data acquired through interviews with the primary source. To gather data related to the research issues, the author utilizes library study techniques, extracting information from various literary sources. These sources encompass books, journals, articles, documents, online platforms, and official reports pertinent to the research topic. The author then processes the information gathered from interviews and organizes the data systematically, adhering to the guidelines outlined in the proposal and thesis writing handbook for the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Hasanuddin Makassar in 2022. Employing qualitative analysis techniques, the author analyzes the obtained data to clearly elucidate the relationships between international actors, such as international organizations and countries.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Regional Security Theory

The concept of region has been subject to several academic and political debates on this issue. The definition of a region and indicators of "regionality" depend on the case or question being studied (Hurrell 1995). As such, the concept is ambiguous and difficult to define. In this regard, there is a lack of consensus among commentators on the definition of a region. Regions are often labeled as a group of countries that share a distinct geographic area and similar characteristics (Kassimeris 2009). This framing creates confusion because it is difficult to determine the start and end points of a region (Mansfield and Solingen 2010) and ignores other important variables that shape the "regionness" of a region. For Fawcett (2004), limiting regions to geographical realities alone - countries that are geographically contiguous and share a region of the world is problematic. Therefore, Fawcett argues that "such territorial definitions will not get us very far; we need to redefine regions to include commonalities, interactions, and thus the possibility of cooperation" (Fawcett 2004, 432). Such framing highlights the importance of meaningful interactions among nearby countries as an indicator of the "regionality" of a geographic area. interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-Ingersoll, 2010)

In the context of security regions, Iver Neuman questions Barry Buzan's concept of RSC and asks, "whose regions is Buzan referring to?" (Neuman 1994, 57). Neumann (2001, 57) emphasizes that "regions are spoken into existence; thus, lying where politicians want them to." In exploring this assertion, Kavalski (2011) highlights two important questions: who does the articulating and how the articulating matters. In this regard, it can be argued that security regions can emerge from the interest of a large state to mitigate security threats in an adjacent geographical neighborhood. Here, the role of the neighboring large state is crucial in articulating the boundaries of the developing region. Söderbaum (2012, 14) argues that "no region is 'natural'; all regions are heterogeneous with unclear

territorial boundaries." However, he notes that hegemons or "stabilizers" can stimulate the emergence of regional cooperation and regional institutions in various ways (Söderbaum 2012, 11). The claim here is that an external actor can organize a group of states to work together to advance its interests-economic, security, and others. The claim here is that an external actor can organize a group of states to work together to advance its interests-economic, security, and otherwise. Starr (2008) argues that "if the states [...] included in the region do not have clear common characteristics, or if the common characteristics that do exist are irrelevant to [security], economic, and social development, then it makes sense for the region to be organized from the outside" (Starr 2008, 6). In this regard, Katzenstein (2015, 9) concludes that "regions are political territories" interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-Ingersoll, 2010)

Over time, regional observers have defined regions based on a range of different variables. Russett (1967) described a region as one with geographical proximity, social and cultural homogeneity, common political attitudes and political institutions, and economic interdependence. Thompson (1973), on the other hand, included interaction in addition to geography and proximity. For Kacowicz (1999), a region is "a number of countries linked by geographic relationships and interdependence." Thus, for local states in a regional system, the actions and inactions of other members of the system can determine the course of their foreign policy (Nye 1968; Cantori and Spiegel 1970). The ontological disagreement about regional interconnectedness stems from the fluid nature of the concept, as commentators adapt it for different purposes. interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-Ingersoll, 2010)

Thus, as highlighted above, regions are created and recreated in the process of global transformation; therefore, no region is "natural" or "given" (Hettne and Söderbaum 2000). For Buzan and Wæver (2003, 43-44), "security complexity is region seen through the lens of security." Although not all commentators consider geography an important component of security complexity (Lake and Morgan 1997; Solingen 1998; Katzenstein 2015), most regional security theorists consider geographic proximity an important factor for assessing regional security dynamics.

William Thompson's focus on geography, proximity, and intense interaction provided the foundation for the modern wave of regional security theory (Thompson 1973).

The concept of regional security was developed to emphasize the regional level as a crucial domain for practical security analysis. Typically, security analysis is dominated by two extremes: national and global levels. However, security dynamics are inherently interconnected, and no nation's security is truly self-contained. Global security is often an idealized concept rather than a realistic goal, as the world is not highly integrated in terms of security. In contrast, the regional level represents the space where states or entities are closely linked, making their securities interdependent. This level is where global powers interact with regional security dynamics, and most security activity takes place. Understanding regional security dynamics is essential to grasp both the security of individual units and the role of global powers in intervening in regional security issues. interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-Ingersoll, 2010)

To analyze security dynamics, one might initially think to identify cultural, economic, or historical factors that define regions. However, this approach overlooks the unique perspective offered by security. These are regions viewed through the lens of security, where states are grouped based on their interconnected security concerns. The original definition of a security emphasized the interdependence of states' national securities. Later, the concept was expanded to include various actors and sectors of security, defining a regional security as a set of units whose security processes are closely linked. The core idea remains that significant security dynamics will manifest in regional clusters, which are both persistent and distinct from global processes. Understanding each level requires examining both its internal dynamics and how it interacts with other levels. interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-Ingersoll, 2010)

The evolution of the regional security theory from a state-centric, objectivist perspective to a multisectoral, multi-actor framework can be likened to the shift

from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics. While the latter is theoretically more accurate, the former is simpler and still yields accurate results for most cases, except for extreme scenarios. Similarly, the original RST formulation, though limited, can still provide useful insights into regional security dynamics, even if it does not fully capture the complexity of modern security issues. interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-ingersoll, 2010)

Regional Security Theory is valuable for three primary reasons:

- a. Level of Analysis: it clarifies the appropriate level of analysis in security studies, helping researches focus on the regional level.
- b. Empirical Organization: RST can organize empirical studies by providing a framework for analyzing regional security dynamics.
- c. Scenario Development: it allows for the creation of theory-based scenarios based on known forms and alternatives of regional security.

Regional Security are characterized by long-standing patterns of cooperation and conflict within geographically coherent areas. These patterns are influenced by historical factors, such as long-standing rivalries and shared cultural heritage. The formation of RSCs arises from the interplay between the anarchic international system and the pressures of geographical proximity. Simple physical adjacency tends to increase security interactions among neighboring states more than among states in different regions. This geographical proximity has the strongest impact on security interactions in sectors such as military, politics, society, and the environment. (Stewart-ingersoll, 2010)

Regional organizations play a crucial role in global governance and are seen as essential components of the global multilateral system. At the 2005 UN World Summit, the UN recognized the importance of regional organizations in managing global peace and security. Today, regional organizations like ASEAN in the Asia-Pacific are fostering cooperation among member states and partner countries on various policy issues, including non-traditional security threats such as pandemics, climate change, and disasters. This cooperation has strengthened trust and reduced

tensions between countries. There are two primary types of regional organizations: those with "multilateral utility" and those with "hedging utility." Organizations with "multilateral utility," like the European Union, actively contribute to global multilateral forums to promote stability, peace, and equality. In contrast, organizations with "hedging utility," such as ASEAN, use institutions to enhance their power and balance the influence of other states, often referred to as "soft balancing" or "institutional balancing." This approach acknowledges that institutions can facilitate peaceful dispute resolution while also allowing states to use them to increase their power. (Cook, 2019)

Academics suggest that cooperation on non-traditional security threats, such as pandemics and climate change, may lead to a broader range of initiatives at the regional level. This cooperation could potentially compete with traditional security concerns like territorial integrity, political independence, and state sovereignty. Furthermore, it may help alleviate apprehension and opposition to collective action on traditional security issues, ultimately facilitating cooperation and progress in these areas as well. (last sentence). (Cook, 2019)

In international relations, it also discusses the basic theory of regional security theory and the function of regional security institutions. The study is grounded in the understanding that regional security institutions are a crucial aspect of international relations, both theoretically and practically. The primary objective is to explore the forms that these institutions should take. Additionally, the study aims to provide a concise and practical overview of the topics discussed and the current state of research in this field, serving as a valuable resource for readers. (Kusztal, 2017)

The study is structured into two main sections. The first part delves into the aspects of regional security within the context of international relations. The second part focuses specifically on regional security institutions, examining the issues and challenges related to their development and implementation. By exploring these topics, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of regional security institutions and their role in maintaining international stability. (Kusztal, 2017)

The Concept of Region and Regional Security

However, if the issue of international security of a state is considered in the regional context, it is worth noting the specific two-planeness. First of all, it concerns the external aspects of national security, related to establishing and remaining in two - or multi- lateral relationships with other participants of international relations in the region, for example other countries, regional institutions, military alliances, integration organizations, etc. Further, it will be also linked to the international system as a whole. In the latter case, from the point of view of international security of a state in the regional context, such elements will be significant:

- Regional dynamics: The interplay of regional actors and their relationships with each other.
- Global implications: The impact of regional events on the broader international system.
- Country and regional positioning: The role of a country within its region and the global system, influencing its security concerns.

International security in the regional dimension is intricately linked to the dynamic and historically evolving international world order. This relationship is closely tied to the prevailing state of international relations and the dominant national security strategies employed by states within the region. Consequently, the international security of a country is synonymous with a state of international relations characterized by the presence of effective mechanisms to mitigate risks and the widespread acceptance of non-violent conflict resolution principles by the international community. This situation is marked by a sense of relative safety among members of the international community, where they are free from threats of military aggression, political coercion, or economic pressure. Furthermore, the current security models significantly influence the spatial dimension of a state's security in the international environment, including the regional context. However, it is essential to acknowledge that there are no fully effective global security models

in place, and a reliable mechanism of this nature can only be achieved at the regional or sub-regional levels. (Kusztal, 2017)

Examining the theoretical underpinnings of regional security necessitates a thorough analysis of the concept of a region. This topic has sparked significant debate in the social sciences due to its multifaceted nature, as it is relevant to various fields such as political sciences, international relations, sociology, economics, management, law, and history. The concept of a region is typically defined by specific criteria or features that distinguish it from other areas, including geographical, cultural, ethnic, administrative, or political criteria. In the academic literature, there exist at least two distinct conceptions of a region:

- Structural perspective: A region is viewed as a system with a specific structure and organization, which can be analyzed in terms of its spatial and social dimensions.
- Analytical perspective: A region is seen as a generalization of space, rather than a real social and economic system, emphasizing its abstract nature.
- Subjective perspective: A region is treated as an objectively existing socio-economic entity, comprising material elements and social relations between them, which are perceived as real and tangible.

These differing perspectives highlight the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept of a region, which is essential to understanding regional security dynamics. (Kusztal, 2017)

The concept of regional security has a long history in international relations, encompassing the effective protection of mutual relations between countries within a region against threats of instability, crises, armed conflicts, and regional wars. Regional security is often built upon a system or alliance operating within defined geographical boundaries, although this scope can vary depending on functional cooperation and shared interests. For instance, military alliances may cover areas beyond strict geographic or economic boundaries. (Kusztal, 2017)

In the context of regional security, it is crucial to identify the primary threats. These threats are similar to those outlined in contemporary security strategies and include the possibility of war, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, international terrorism, organized crime, uncontrolled migration, social tensions, environmental disasters, corruption, epidemics, and demographic threats associated with low population growth and aging populations within the region. These threats are central to understanding the challenges faced by regional security institutions and the measures necessary to mitigate them effectively. (Kusztal, 2017)

Regional Security Criteria

In addition to understanding the concept of regional security, it is essential to consider the criteria that define and measure regional security. These criteria are crucial for assessing national security at both the international and regional levels. The most significant and verifiable aspects of these criteria include:

- **Military capabilities:** The military potential of states within a region, including their technical and technological levels.
- **Armed forces:** The condition, strategy, and size of armed forces in countries within a region.
- **Defense management:** The quality of defense sector management in states within a region.
- **Border dynamics:** The character of borders between countries within a region and those with external regions, encompassing both geographical and political aspects.
- **Regional alliances:** The nature of political and military alliances within a region.
- **Elite decision-making:** The role of political elites and their rationality in choosing allies within and beyond a region.

These criteria provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating regional security and identifying the key factors that contribute to or undermine it. In the

context of regional security, the following elements should be considered among other safety criteria:

- International system dynamics: The condition of the international system in the immediate vicinity of states and at the regional scale (continental, subcontinental).
- Value complementarity: The complexity and complementarity of the most important values protected at the level of national security and the regional environment, as well as the reasons for determining these "absolute values" in countries of a region.
- Strategic dynamics: The nature and dynamics of strategies adopted by participants of the international system in a region.
- Protected areas: The issue of clear and unequivocally important areas subject to particular protection in the process of building a model of international security of states in a region.

Furthermore, the criteria of regional security should be considered from the perspective of the region's position in the world system. According to Immanuel Wallerstein's system theory, the world system is divided into three categories: core, semi-periphery, and periphery. The core includes countries with the highest level of development in terms of the capitalist economy, characterized by a stable, democratic political system and high levels of capital accumulation, consumption, innovation, and cultural patterns. These countries play the dominant political role in the world system. (Kusztal, 2017)

Semi-peripheries are characterized by a development model based on foreign investments and capitals, own activity, and a relatively well-educated workforce. They often have democratic but unstable or undemocratic political systems and primarily perform production functions and provide services, remaining under the economic and political influence of the core. Peripheries, on the other hand, have a low level of economic and social development, outdated or primitive economic models, high levels of debt and inflation, and often unstable and undemocratic political systems. These countries are under the economic and political influence of

the core and semi-periphery. Understanding these categories is crucial for assessing regional security and the role of countries within the global system. (Kusztal, 2017)

However, it is essential to consider Wallerstein's assumptions, which suggest that the most important criterion for belonging to the core is not solely economic. Countries with significant military positions can also be located in the center of the system. This implies that there are at least two fundamental world systems: economic and military, which are taken into account. The hierarchy of countries operating in the cores of these systems can differ significantly, and the position of the center of both systems depends on various factors, including social, political, religious, intellectual, and psychological ones. Moreover, countries located in a region representing semi-peripheries can have a greater impact on political decisions within the system than those in the core. For instance, the Russian Federation's position in Central and Eastern Europe is a notable example. From the perspective of international security, the structure of the global military system and a state's position within it are crucial. This perspective, in regional terms and specifically in terms of regional alliances, can be hazardous. For example, NATO member states are often automatically located in Europe, regardless of their actual military condition. This membership can create an illusory sense of security, which may not align with the real individual position of the Alliance members in the global military system. (Kusztal, 2017)

Therefore, it is vital to recognize that regional security guaranteed within an alliance does not directly guarantee the security of an individual state. Instead, it is primarily determined by the individual position of the country in the global military system. This highlights the importance of considering the global military system and a state's position within it when evaluating regional security. (Kusztal, 2017)

The Concept, Character and Evolution of Regional Security Theory

To discuss regional security, it is essential to consider the role of institutions. This begins by defining the concept of an institution, which is a formal structured organization capable of deliberate action, as well as an international regime made up of principles formulated through negotiations and explicitly approved by states.

Regional institutions are formal or informal organizations with membership limited to a specific geographical region or neighbouring regions. The regionality criterion can be recognized in contexts beyond geography, such as the problems, actions, and ideas undertaken. (Kusztal, 2017)

The character of security assigned to regional organizations can be understood as follows:

- 1) Predictable and Peaceful Relations: Regional organizations support the development of predictable and peaceful relations among their members, fostering a sense of security and community.
- 2) Clear Aims and Responsibilities: Organizations clearly define their aims in their statutes, which include providing security through coordinating national policies of defense, security, and foreign affairs, or responding to threats and conflicts.

These institutions play a crucial role in ensuring regional security by promoting cooperation and stability among member states. The development of regional security institutions has been intense since the mid-twentieth century. During this period, regional institutions have expanded their roles in the field of security, going beyond self-activity to collaborate with other international and non-governmental organizations, particularly in intervention operations.

Initially, after World War II, three types of regional organizations emerged:

- 1) Multi-tasking Organizations: These organizations performed a variety of tasks, including security-related activities.
- 2) Economic Profile Organizations: These organizations focused primarily on economic issues.
- 3) Defensive Alliances: These organizations were primarily focused on defense and security.

These early regional organizations laid the foundation for the more comprehensive and cooperative security institutions that exist today. The concept of regional security institutions has been a crucial aspect of international relations

for centuries. The development of these institutions has been shaped by various historical events, international agreements, and the evolving nature of global politics. This essay will provide a historical perspective on the development of regional security institutions, highlighting their significance and the factors that have influenced their growth. (Kusztal, 2017)

The concept of regional security institutions dates back to the early 20th century, with the establishment of the League of Nations after World War I. The League was the first formal security institution, aimed at preventing future wars and promoting international cooperation. Although it was a universal organization, it had many regional features, with European countries being the dominant members. The League of Nations' experience had a significant impact on the development of regional security institutions. The League's failure to prevent World War II led to the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945. The UN Charter emphasized the principle of partnership and regional activity, recognizing the importance of regional organizations in promoting international security. The post-World War II period saw the establishment of several regional security institutions, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These institutions were created to address specific regional security concerns, such as the threat of communism and the need for collective defense. (Kusztal, 2017)

The Cold War period saw the establishment of several regional security institutions, including the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON). These institutions were created to promote economic and military cooperation among socialist states and to counter the influence of Western powers. The post-Cold War period has seen the establishment of several new regional security institutions, including the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These institutions have been created to promote economic integration, political cooperation, and collective defense among member states. (Kusztal, 2017)

During the Cold War era, regional institutions formed by newly decolonized countries, often referred to as the "third world," found themselves in a unique situation. These countries were typically influenced by the dominant powers within their respective regional organizations, which were largely dominated by the two superpowers, the Warsaw Pact and NATO. These institutions played a crucial role in maintaining the balance of power and creating a relatively stable "long peace" for decades. However, this dominance of superpowers in regional security institutions left little room for other regional organizations to operate effectively. Nevertheless, these institutions managed to address important issues for their members, such as decolonization, racism, apartheid, and the situation in Palestine. (Kusztal, 2017)

In response to the dominance of superpowers, a second wave of regional institutions emerged in the mid-1960s to mid-1980s, primarily created by developing countries. These institutions were characterized by a sub-regional focus, with membership limited to countries within a smaller geographic area. They also emphasized self-sufficiency, genuine cooperation, and independence, often combining security and economic activities. Examples include the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which were established in response to specific regional threats. (Kusztal, 2017)

After the Cold War, regional security became more unstable, but also more dependent on state entities within specific regions. This led to the emergence of a regional type of security complex and another wave of regionalism. Initially, the end of the Cold War fostered universalistic visions of the world order, but the success of European integration and the popularity of Samuel Huntington's thesis on the clash of civilizations highlighted the importance of regions and sub-regions. The trend of regionalism was once again a response to attempts to create governance on a global scale, and the intermingling of globalization and regionalization processes. The shift to stronger regional identification was a reaction to the perceived threats of globalization and the fragmentation of governance structures. (Kusztal, 2017)

After the Cold War, it became clear that universal institutions like the United Nations were unable to effectively address all security-related tasks, particularly those related to conflict resolution. This led to the idea of dividing tasks between universal institutions and regional ones. The United Nations lacked the necessary resources and genuine involvement from major actors to play a significant role in global security. This gap was filled by regional institutions, which were better equipped to handle regional security issues. (Kusztal, 2017)

The post-Cold War wave of regionalism in security was characterized by the "impotence of the United Nations" and the lack of enthusiasm from major powers to maintain old alliances and engage in costly operations in remote areas. Weaker states found it easier to navigate the new environment by operating in groups, while more powerful states developed their own concepts of cooperation and leadership in their regions. During this period, new institutions dedicated to security issues emerged, and existing ones underwent significant reforms. New institutions were established in previously neglected regions, such as the South Pacific and former Soviet republics. China also became involved in regional security systems for the first time. Regional institutions from Europe, the Americas, and Africa underwent major reforms, adding provisions on conflict resolution, human rights, and permissible military intervention. (Kusztal, 2017)

The quantitative aspect of this development was marked by a growing number of organizations dealing with regional security issues and a growing number of their members. For example, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) grew from 56 member states in the mid-2000s to 57 members in 2015, making it the largest regional security organization in the world. (Kusztal, 2017)

The problem of the effectiveness of the Regional Security Theory

It appears that initial scepticism about the effectiveness of regional security institutions is gradually fading as these institutions gain significance. However, it is crucial to maintain a degree of scepticism regarding unambiguous claims about the success of the regional approach in security. It is challenging to definitively state whether this trend is permanent and whether it genuinely impacts the security

environment. The facts do not always confirm that this trend has real and positive effects. The increasing number of regional organizations and their members does not necessarily imply success. Some regional organizations have achieved success, but others, such as those in the Middle East and Central Asia, have failed to create a nuclear-free zone. The development of the regional approach to security at the institutional level lacks clear, easily perceptible correctness, and the value of regional institutions in security can be assessed differently depending on theoretical paradigms. For instance, in the theoretical approach of Karl Deutsch or other liberal theories, institutions are seen as capable of shaping state behaviour, including security issues and cooperation with other partners. Institutions facilitate dialogue, agreements, and even a common identity. (Kusztal, 2017)

However, sceptics, primarily representing the realistic trend, argue that regional or other institutions do not significantly contribute to strengthening security and the international order. Institutions are seen as mere reflections of the current balance of power, and only the strongest centers in regions can encourage beneficial systems of forces and alliances. In this context, it is essential to maintain a nuanced perspective on the effectiveness of regional security institutions, acknowledging both their potential benefits and limitations. The usefulness of regionalism in the theoretical and practical spheres of security issues remains an open question. On one hand, regional security can be seen as an element that contributes to global security, at least as a step in that direction. On the other hand, it is often claimed that regional security is of secondary importance and can even be harmful to global security. This is because some believe that global security should be under the responsibility of a single, universal structure that transcends regional particularisms, rather than a collection of regional structures. (Kusztal, 2017)

Regardless of the effectiveness of regional security institutions, three contemporary challenges stand out: organization and participation in intervention operations, terrorist threats, and the uncontrolled spread of weapons, including weapons of mass destruction. Regarding the first issue, regional players have been actively involved in interventions since the 1990s. This trend continued in the early

2000s, with operations ranging from peacebuilding missions to supervising elections and implementing peace agreements. However, there was a short-term decline in commitment from 2006 to 2007, followed by a subsequent renaissance. This can be attributed to the increasing severity of regional security problems, the lack of or failure of other security organizers in the area, or the ambitions of major countries in the region engulfed in conflict. The involvement of regional institutions in these activities raises numerous concerns, including the legitimacy of regional actors' activities, the lack of UN Security Council approval, the lack of impartiality, the imposition of security priorities by the strongest countries in the region, and the deprivation of the poorest and least attractive regions of high-quality international assistance. (Kusztal, 2017)

Regarding the second issue, regional institutions' response to terrorist threats, it is not a new phenomenon, but it has become increasingly significant and complex. Regional security organizations are not always well-equipped to address terrorist threats, monitor, and prevent them. However, over the past decade, most regional organizations have introduced relevant provisions and actions to address terrorism. (Kusztal, 2017)

The activity of regional organizations in combating terrorism is crucial, especially given the challenges the United Nations faces in obtaining a common position on this issue. However, this activity also raises questions, such as the extent to which states are willing to entrust international institutions with the management of a politicized security issue like terrorism. Some states prefer to develop their anti-terrorism policies independently, while others may view addressing terrorism as a distraction from more pressing issues. Regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional institutions continue to play a role in enforcing the existing treaty regime on these issues. While nuclear-free zones have been successfully created in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, the question arises about the role of third parties, including regional security institutions, in shaping these zones. It is also unclear whether the existence of these zones is a result of the inability of countries in the regions to complete their nuclear ambitions due

to objective reasons or if it is a result of the influence of regional institutions. (Kusztal, 2017)

In other words, it is doubtful that states in these regions would completely refrain from acquiring and delivering nuclear weapons under the influence of regional institutions or sanctions. This highlights the complexity and challenges of addressing these issues at the regional level. (Kusztal, 2017)

Following the end of the Cold War, the scope of security threats expanded to include non-traditional threats alongside traditional ones. Today, national security is no longer limited to territorial defense but encompasses non-territorial threats that pose an existential risk to individuals and states. Non-traditional security challenges are non-military and transnational, directly affecting the well-being of the population. In essence Regional Security Theory (RST) in the context of non-traditional security (NTS) involves a comprehensive approach to security that transcends traditional state-centric perspectives. This theory includes non-state actors and sub-regional dynamics, recognizing that security threats can come from various sources beyond military or inter-state conflicts. (Kusztal, 2017)

2. Non-Traditional Security Theory

The concept of security is centered around the safety of individuals and the entities that affect them, including states, governments, organizations, enterprises, communities, families, and individuals. Barry Buzan et al. noted that human collectives are influenced by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal, and environmental. Barry Buzan also discussed the notion of individual security, explaining that traditional security is often a top-down approach focused on protecting the state from physical or ideological threats. The UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report highlighted that the concept of security had been narrowly interpreted as the protection of territory from external aggression or national interests. However, it emphasized that security should also encompass the legitimate concerns of ordinary people, such as protection from threats like disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflicts, political repression, and environmental hazards. (Nguyen, 2019)

The concept of non-traditional security (NS) views threats and insecurity as they directly impact human survival and happiness, as well as the safety and development of enterprises not only within a country but also in neighboring countries. In many instances, the insecurity caused by NS threats such as terrorism, pandemics, or air pollution can harm the stability not only of one nation but also of other countries in the region and globally. (Nguyen, 2019)

On the surface, one might argue that comprehensive security encompasses non-military concerns, and non-traditional security (NTS) refers to the subset of these threats that typically require non-military responses. Although these threats are non-military, they can still lead to conflict or even war, as seen in conflicts over scarce resources like oil or water. The NTS framework considers both the state and the individual as referents of security, whereas human security primarily focuses on the individual. Proponents of NTS aim to broaden and deepen the understanding of security today, ensuring that non-state actors, organizations, political entities, and individuals most at risk play a greater role in providing or ensuring their own security. As a practical approach, NTS assesses and analyzes security issues from a comprehensive, needs- and rights-based perspective rather than a purely statist or military-based understanding. The traditional conceptualization of international security in terms of national sovereignty and territorial integrity is no longer sufficient to address the array of immediate challenges facing the world today. The transboundary nature of contemporary phenomena cannot be denied. For example, the Asian financial crisis began in Thailand but quickly spread to other economies, leading to plummeting currencies and stock prices. Similarly, the SARS outbreak in 2002 and 2003 was transmitted from Beijing to Hong Kong and then to Southeast Asia and the rest of the world. More recently, the Syrian refugee crisis is another example of a transboundary NTS issue. (Caballero-Anthony, 2019)

Non-traditional security perspectives can be seen as a departure from the state-centric, military-focused traditional security paradigms. The development of non-traditional security as a concept and approach in Security Studies is influenced by postcolonial thinking and security perspectives from the global South. This shift

is also driven by scholars from the developing world who aim to make security language more relevant and representative of contemporary challenges that significantly impact people's security in these regions. Non-traditional security issues are threats to the survival and well-being of people and states that arise from non-military sources such as climate change, resource scarcity, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking, and transnational crime. These threats often transcend national borders, necessitating comprehensive responses that combine political, economic, social, and humanitarian measures, including the potential use of military force. (Arsian, 2021)

Characteristics of Non-Traditional Security Threats

Non-traditional security focuses on non-military threats that share several characteristics:

- 1) Transnational nature: They originate, are conceived, and have effects that transcend national borders.
- 2) Political and socioeconomic definitions: These threats are not rooted in state competition or power shifts but are defined in political and socioeconomic terms.
- 3) Societal and political instability: Issues like resource scarcity and irregular migration cause instability, making them security threats.
- 4) Human-induced environmental damage: Threats like climate change are caused by human actions, leading to severe consequences for both states and societies.
- 5) Inadequate national solutions: These threats require regional and multilateral cooperation for effective solutions.

The key characteristics of non-traditional security:

- 1) Broader referent of security: Security is no longer just about state sovereignty or territorial integrity; it also includes the survival, well-being, and dignity of individuals and societies.

- 2) Comprehensive security: It addresses a wide range of emerging security threats with non-military responses.
- 3) Overlapping with human security: It encompasses issues such as economic security, health security, environmental security, and personal and community security.
- 4) State and individual as objects of security: It recognizes both the state and the individual as objects of security, without diminishing the role of states in delivering security.
- 5) Transnational nature of threats: It emphasizes the importance of states cooperating to address transborder threats.
- 6) Role of non-state actors: It highlights the role of non-state actors, civil society organizations, and international institutions in improving global governance for human security.
- 7) Comprehensive analysis: It assesses security issues from a comprehensive, needs- and rights-based perspective rather than a purely statist and military understanding.
- 8) Interconnectedness of threats: It frames issues like pandemics as threats to human and state security, mindful of their interconnectedness with other issues.
- 9) Legitimacy and sovereignty: It underscores that security is also about legitimacy and that sovereignty rests not only on territorial control but also on a nation's service, support, and fulfillment of the basic rights of its citizens.

Non-traditional security broadens and deepens the understanding of security by emphasizing the role of non-state actors and international institutions in improving global governance for human security. (Arsian, 2021)

Non-traditional security can be seen as a subset of comprehensive security, requiring non-military responses to address various emerging security threats. Although these threats are non-military, non-traditional security acknowledges that they can still lead to conflict or war. Additionally, it can be viewed as a broader umbrella that encompasses human security issues such as economic security, health

security, environmental security, and personal and community security. Non-traditional security argues that the traditional focus on national sovereignty and territorial integrity is insufficient, given the pressing global issues of hunger, poverty, environmental degradation, and transnational crime. It recognizes both the state and the individual as objects of security, without diminishing the role of states in delivering security. Given the transnational nature of most non-traditional security threats, it is crucial to acknowledge the role of states in facilitating cooperation to address these threats. (Arsian, 2021)

Following the end of the Cold War, the scope of security threats expanded to include non-traditional threats. Today, national security is no longer limited to territorial defense but encompasses non-territorial threats that pose an existential risk to individuals and states. Non-traditional security challenges are non-military and transnational, directly affecting the well-being of the population. These threats undermine a state's socio-political and socioeconomic stability. In the contemporary security landscape, states must address both traditional and non-traditional threats, such as environmental degradation, demographic changes, and transnational organized crimes. These non-traditional challenges have severely impacted sustainable development, economic growth, and political stability of states. The transcendental nature of these threats makes regional security more vulnerable and poses a serious existential threat to the sovereignty of states. (Arsian, 2021)

Non-traditional security broadens the understanding of security by emphasizing the roles of non-state actors, civil society organizations, political entities, and at-risk communities in providing or ensuring their own security. It highlights the importance of non-state actors and international institutions in improving global governance for human security. As an approach, it assesses security issues from a comprehensive, needs- and rights-based perspective rather than a purely statist and military understanding. It frames issues like pandemics as threats to human and state security, mindful of their interconnectedness with other issues. Non-traditional security underscores the importance of analyzing issues across different levels of analysis, where states interact not only among themselves but also with non-state actors, civil society groups, individuals, and communities in

addressing non-traditional security challenges. It emphasizes that security is also about legitimacy, with sovereignty resting not only on territorial control but also on a nation's service, support, and fulfilment of the basic rights of its citizens. (Caballero-Anthony, 2019)

Moreover, in recent decades, transnational crime (or what is sometimes called transnational organized crime) has become an increasing concern for states and inter-state organizations. Since the end of the Cold War, in particular, there has been a greater tendency for governments and international organizations to view transnational crime from a security perspective, along with increased international efforts to counter it. These trends and developments will be explained in the context of non-traditional security studies. In the 1970s and 1980s, as academic work re-evaluated the concept of security, a new range of non-military threats emerged as pressing policy concerns. This trend accelerated after the fall of the Soviet Union, leading some to believe that traditional threats like interstate war had been replaced by new non-traditional issues. These challenges could be military in nature, but also economic, societal, political, or environmental. (Capie, London)

Buzan and Waever's approach emphasizes the role of securitizing actors, authoritative figures who create security issues by declaring that a particular referent object is under existential threat. These actors can include political leaders, officials, lobbyists, and norm entrepreneurs. Analysts argued that the emergence of global markets, new technologies, and increased human movement in the late 20th century gave criminal networks powers previously reserved for states. Criminals could exploit the same opportunities as licit commerce, leading to transnational crime being seen as the "dark side of globalization." Globalization also changed the organization of criminal groups, which shifted from hierarchical and centralized structures to networks that emulated licit commerce and established transnational franchises across borders. This made them harder to combat, as criminals could operate from low-risk locations while conducting activities in less regulated spaces. (Capie, London)

A key argument for the securitization of transnational crime is that criminal entities now pose a direct or indirect threat to states. Criminal networks can corrupt police forces, judiciaries, and infiltrate governments, potentially taking over control of the state. The relationship between criminal groups and states can be seen as a spectrum, ranging from adversarial to collusive. Transnational crime needs to be understood in its historical and political context, encompassing a wide range of actors and activities. Its scope is dynamic, influenced by changing societal norms about morality, domestic politics, and competing national interests. Activities that were legal a few decades ago are now considered unlawful, and new prohibitions are constantly being created. (Capie, London)

Non-traditional security issues are threats to the survival and well-being of people and states that primarily stem from non-military sources such as climate change, resource scarcity, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking, and transnational crime. These threats often transcend national borders, necessitating comprehensive responses that combine political, economic, social, and humanitarian measures, including the potential use of military force. (Capie, London)

To comprehensively address non-traditional security (NTS) issues, it is essential to adopt a multi-level analytical framework that encompasses the roles of states and political entities, the perspectives of societies, communities, and individuals, and the interactions, influences, and feedback loops between these levels on specific issues such as water scarcity, pandemics, or climate change. This multi-level approach necessitates the development of more comprehensive and innovative strategies to effectively address the multifaceted challenges posed by NTS issues. (Capie, London)

a. Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking is a significant national security danger that impacts people, the state, and other nations in the international system. At these levels of analysis, there is theoretical relevance, as explained in the introduction.

Organized criminal networks erode the state's power and impede its autonomy and sovereignty. The act of transporting and distributing illicit substances, often known as drug trafficking, is prohibited in countries worldwide. The United Nations' General Assembly has passed resolution 66/183, acknowledging that the world drug problem undermines socio-economic and political stability as well as sustainable development, despite the ongoing increased efforts by States, relevant organizations, civil society, and non-governmental organizations. Whenever there is a need for a certain product or service, there will always be individuals or businesses who provide those goods or services. If there is a demand for vehicles, there will be a enough supply of cars. By 1920, the Prohibition campaign achieved its goal of outlawing alcohol in the United States. A significant number of individuals became part of this movement due to the deleterious effects of alcohol addiction and domestic abuse. The issue persisted as individuals continued to desire alcoholic beverages, expressing a strong craving for alcohol and displaying a lack of fear regarding its origin. Mafia syndicates in the United States started meeting this need by producing homemade alcohol and engaging in illicit importation from Canada, the Bahamas, and other locations. Organized criminal gangs fulfilled the need as long as it existed. As the notorious mobster Al Capone, the leader of a criminal organization in Chicago, would famously state: "Somebody had to satisfy that craving by providing alcohol!"^{Four} Once some narcotics are banned, they present a lucrative economic opportunity for organized criminals. As their money increases, so does their authority. As a firm gains greater power, it becomes increasingly probable that it will grow, potentially reaching a global scale and scope. In order to safeguard their interests, organized criminals frequently depend on two key elements: a destitute community and pervasive corruption. (Rosen, 2022)

The initial element to be examined is a society that is economically deprived. Developed states are characterized by a significant level of income, as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the aggregate value of all products and services produced within an

economy within a specific time period, often a year. In addition, they proudly own a high Human Development Index (HDI). The Human Development Index (HDI) quantifies the overall well-being of individuals by considering a composite of factors such as anticipated years of schooling, life span, and income, all condensed into a single comprehensive metric. A higher score indicates a superior quality of life, whereas a lower score indicates an inferior quality of life. Less developed states are now undergoing the process of development. This indicates their efforts to augment the magnitude of their economy's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and alleviate poverty. Developing countries often achieve independence in recent times. They experience the enduring effects of colonialism and imperialism. During the process of decolonization and the attainment of independence, colonial powers would establish artificial boundaries that separated tribes and ethnic cultures from one other. (Rosen, 2022)

These states have limited or nonexistent familiarity with democratic systems. Such action would solely exacerbate hostilities, leading to the outbreak of civil conflicts. Civil conflicts result in economic impoverishment, since individuals lack motivation to engage in entrepreneurial activities and employ others. At times, governments would exert oppression on their citizens by extorting money in exchange for the provision of public services. This form of corruption is institutionalized, indicating that it is ingrained in the regular operations of the state and society. States afflicted with elevated levels of corruption frequently exhibit economic impoverishment, as well as a pervasive infiltration of illicit activities and violent criminal behavior. Corruption functions as a form of insurance that criminals employ to safeguard their company. Engaging in the act of bribing public authorities might potentially assist in avoiding incarceration or facilitating an escape from prison. Additionally, it can facilitate the illicit transfer of commodities between nation A and country B. Therefore, corruption grants organized criminal syndicates the liberty to conduct their illicit operations without apprehension of retribution. (Rosen, 2022)

Corruption significantly affects economic progress. Undoubtedly, corruption exists to some extent in every state. Nevertheless, there were disparities between industrialized governments and undeveloped ones in terms of the extent of corruption. The states with the lowest levels of corruption are characterized by their mature and developed nature, and they promptly penalize corrupt officials by enforcing the rule of law. Developed nations such as Norway, Australia, and Finland have minimal corruption. Lebanon, Somalia, and Haiti, which are among the most corrupt regimes, are distinguished by their undeveloped and fragile institutions. (Rosen, 2022)

Corruption and progress have an interdependent relationship. This implies that one does not always result in the other, but rather the two are interconnected. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, corruption results in an inequitable allocation of power within society, which subsequently leads to an uneven distribution of income and opportunities.⁸ The amalgamation of underdevelopment and corruption yields a state that is incapable of effectively safeguarding itself against many dangers. The subsequent section will elucidate the concepts of weak, fragile, and failing nations in the context of drug trafficking and organized crime. (Rosen, 2022)

In order to comprehend the manner in which feeble, delicate, and unsuccessful nations facilitate drug trafficking and disrupt the global system, it is crucial to grasp the progression of drug trafficking in relation to the downfall of the state. This section will chronicle the establishment of contemporary drug trafficking networks. Commencing with the opium trade in China, progressing to the creation of cocaine, and culminating with the development of methamphetamine and fentanyl, this analysis will elucidate the correlation between underdevelopment, corruption, and state fragility. Drug trafficking engenders insecurity. Tracing history in this manner will aid in comprehending the ideas employed in this book, as it impacts all levels of analysis, ranging from the person to the state, and even to the international system. (Rosen, 2022)

History of Drug Trafficking

The origins of drug trafficking may be traced back to the eighteenth century. However, in contrast to the present day, the trafficking was not carried out by non-state actors, but rather by enterprises that were supported by colonial powers. Great Britain was purchasing large quantities of tea and other goods from China. China's reduced imports from Great Britain resulted in a substantial trade imbalance that required rectification. A trade imbalance occurs when there is an unequal flow of money between two countries, with more money leaving one nation and entering another. Nevertheless, due to the utilization of the silver standard in the international monetary system, Great Britain was required to allocate substantial quantities of silver in order to safeguard the value of the British Pound. Great Britain sought a solution to encourage China to increase its imports, so reducing its reliance on silver expenditure. Opium was the specific commodity in question. Opium is a sedative drug that has a depressant effect on the body. As your consumption increases, so does your level of addiction. Deprived of opium, an individual has withdrawal symptoms similar to those of influenza. Consequently, individuals have an increasing demand for additional resources. Therefore, the strategy of inducing addiction to opium among Chinese individuals was employed as a means of rectifying any trade disparities. China quickly developed an imbalance. (Rosen, 2022)

The Chinese authorities observed that opium addiction was causing significant harm to the population. It criminalized the use of opium. The practice of smuggling intensified when British firms, engaged in the sale of opium, recruited individuals to transport the substance to the Chinese market. Expressing discontent with the increasing flow of opium into the nation, Lin Zexu, a government official, composed a public missive addressed to Queen Victoria of Great Britain, affirming: "I have been informed that the consumption of opium is rigorously prohibited in your country; this is due to the evident comprehension of the detrimental effects caused by opium." Given

that it is forbidden to cause harm to one's own country, it is much more imperative to prevent any harm from being inflicted against other nations, particularly China. Seventeen The Chinese government initiated a campaign to suppress the consumption and trade of opium. All ships entering China were confiscated and subjected to thorough inspections. If opium was discovered, it was eradicated. As a result of these activities, a declaration of war ensued when Chinese warships initiated attacks on British commerce vessels. This event signalled the commencement of the First Opium War. (Rosen, 2022)

The primary objective of the First Opium War was to coerce China into entering into new trade deals. Great Britain became victorious because to its superior technical advancements. Great Britain compelled China to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, which entailed the relinquishment of land to Great Britain and the payment of reparations by China. The opium trade persisted in China. China suffered another defeat in the Second Opium War. On this occasion, more European nations, such as France and Russia, were also participating. European nations imposed further reparations on China and acquired more land through territorial concessions. The legalization of opium also occurred. The opium wars significantly augmented opium imports into China, surging from around 3,000 metric tons before to the conflict to almost 7,000 metric tons by 1880. Eighteen The opium traffic persisted and grew, not just within China but also on a global scale. (Rosen, 2022)

In the United States, there was a notable surge in immigration during the nineteenth century. Similarly, in China, individuals started to establish communities along the western coastline and in New York. They introduced other distinctive elements of their culture and way of life, including opium. Opium establishments proliferated extensively across the United States, particularly in metropolitan regions. Furthermore, individuals uncovered that opium possesses the ability to alleviate bodily agony, resulting in further advantages. Significant advancements in medicine occurred with the creation of potent analgesics such as morphine. This had a profound impact on the

American Civil War. Nevertheless, a significant number of individuals developed a dependency on the substance. It got increasingly powerful, comparable to heroin. Therefore, opium was one of the earliest medications to be misused in modern times. (Rosen, 2022)

Another powerful substance that will be examined is cocaine. It originates from the coca plant. The indigenous populations residing in the Andean area engage in the practice of masticating the leaves as a means of obtaining energy and alleviating symptoms of altitude sickness. By the 1920s, the Prohibition movement successfully enacted legislation to prohibit the consumption and distribution of alcohol, as well as some potent narcotics. The Harrison Act of 1914 implemented strict regulations and levies on the manufacturing, distribution, and commerce of opiates and coca products. Nevertheless, irrespective of the rules pertaining to prohibition or control, individuals persisted in the illicit production of narcotics and alcohol. Twenty The prevalence of organized criminal activity surged due to continued consumer demand for these goods. The implementation of Prohibition facilitated the acquisition of the necessary resources for organized crime syndicates to develop their operations and accumulate fortune. (Rosen, 2022)

While the repeal of Prohibition legalized alcohol, narcotics remained prohibited. Organized crime syndicates resorted to other revenue streams such as gambling, prostitution, extortion, and narcotics. Countries like as Japan and the Netherlands maintained their desire for cocaine. Peru experienced a surge in the exportation of coca leaves, which resulted in significant economic gains. The drug trade originated in the 1960s but experienced significant growth in the 1970s and 1980s. (Rosen, 2022)

Cocaine remained prohibited and did not gain popularity as a leisure drug until the 1960s. The "hippie" movement promoted the widespread use of many drugs, with marijuana being the most well-known, leading to a significant increase in its use. As the number of people utilizing it increased, criminal

networks grew wealthier and more influential. Drug traffickers easily took advantage of the local inhabitants who were desperate for employment, including both men and women. One of the groups included the Ochoa family, who originated from Medellín, Colombia. The network gained recognition as the Medellín cartel. In the 1970s, the United States shifted its attention to the illicit narcotics originating from Colombia. The Colombian government recognized the national security risk presented by these organized criminal gangs, yet took no action to prevent their activities. The causes are two-fold, arising from the government's lack of authority and influence.^a Initially, these criminal organizations functioned with impunity since they illicitly influenced government officials to disregard their activities. The second method involves the use of violence: if a government official decides to press charges against a trafficker, they would be subject to assassination. Drug traffickers recognized that their infiltration of the legal system would result in a mutually beneficial relationship with the state, wherein they would become closely connected with government officials. Currently, drug trafficking has spread to every corner of the world. Illegal substances are illicitly transported into correctional facilities. Even certain maximum-security jails are filled with illicit substances. Over the years, medications have gotten increasingly potent and effective. Opium is far more powerful in its purer form, heroin. The substance known as cocaine is also characterized by its purity. In the 1970s, merchants would adulterate it by mixing it with other substances. In order to reduce the cost of the product, merchants devised a method involving crack cocaine. Crack is a kind of cocaine that is combined with baking soda, resulting in a more potent but shorter-lasting high. (Rosen, 2022)

This alteration enhances its addictive nature. Individuals frequently combine cocaine and heroin, resulting in the formation of a substance commonly referred to as an 8-ball. Drug trafficking networks have also broadened the range of items accessible to the general public. Synthetic narcotics such as methamphetamine have had a significant influence on the

Midwest and rustbelt regions of the United States. When individuals are no longer able to receive legitimate prescriptions for medicines such as oxycodone, they frequently resort to these readily accessible medications. There are hallucinogens such as LSD and other psychedelics, sedatives like Xanax, dissociative like PCP and ketamine, and other prescription stimulants like Adderall. Improper usage of prescription medications can have equally detrimental effects on both the brain and body. This affects the analysis at the individual level. Furthermore, corruption and violence impede individuals from realizing their maximum potential. Bribing authorities deprives them of funds, while violence hinders firms' ability to grow and contribute in the community. This results in less tax income and eventually a less robust government. If the government is unable to operate efficiently, then the state has essentially forfeited its capacity for sovereignty. States can be vulnerable to the infiltration of organized criminal entities. This situation results in more global instability, affecting the international system as a whole. Drugs are ubiquitous worldwide. Therefore, the history of drug trafficking depicts a lack of security at several stages of analysis. The presence of organized crime poses a significant threat to the security of individuals, states, and the international system. International security theories are necessary to better demonstrate the influence of drug trafficking networks on security. (Rosen, 2022)

Production, Supply and Trafficking

Drug trafficking involves the illegal cultivation, manufacture, distribution, and sale of controlled substances. Here is a detailed explanation of the procedure:

Cultivation and Production

- Cultivation: Illicit drugs are often grown in remote areas, such as rural regions or hidden farms. For example, opium is cultivated in Afghanistan, Myanmar, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. (Nations, 2010)

- Manufacturing: Heroin is produced from opium, while cocaine is derived from coca leaves. These substances are then processed into various forms, such as powder, crack, or pills. (Nations, 2010)

Distribution

- Routes: Drugs are transported through various routes, such as the Balkan and northern routes for heroin, and sea routes for cocaine. These routes often involve multiple countries and can be complex. (Nations, 2010)
- Smuggling: Drugs are smuggled across borders using various methods, including hidden compartments in vehicles, containers, and even human bodies. (Nations, 2010)
- Retail Distribution: Drugs are sold to end-users through various means, including street dealers, online markets, and other illicit networks. (Nations, 2010)
- Wholesale Distribution: Larger quantities of drugs are sold to distributors who then sell them to smaller dealers or directly to end-users. (Nations, 2010)

International Cooperation

- International Organizations: Organizations like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL work to monitor and combat drug trafficking globally. They provide training and operational support to law enforcement agencies to help detect and investigate drug trafficking. (Nations, 2010)
- AML Practices: Anti-Money Laundering (AML) practices are used to prevent, detect, and expose financial activities linked to illegal drug trafficking. These practices help in tracing and freezing illicit funds. (Sanction Scanner, 2019)

Drug trafficking is a complex and global issue that involves multiple stages, from cultivation to distribution and sale. It is illegal under both federal

and state laws and carries severe penalties. Effective countermeasures require coordinated efforts from law enforcement agencies worldwide and international cooperation to combat and prevent its spread.

Gaining a more profound comprehension of the functioning of illegal drug markets is crucial for developing efficient policies and measures to curb crime. If the structure of drug trafficking operations differs, such as in different market niches or based on the characteristics of the group involved, it is necessary to customize crime control measures in order to focus on the weaknesses of certain types of operations. The arrangement and organization of elements is of great importance. Social Network Analysis (SNA) studies differ from traditional approaches that use researcher-generated typologies to describe groups in general terms. Instead, SNA studies employ standardized metrics to precisely characterize the structure of a group. This allows for the identification of specific actors and groups that exert control over crucial market activities, such as drug importation and money laundering. Furthermore, SNA studies can identify individuals who are strategically positioned to resume trade activities in the event that central figures are eliminated. Consequently, Social Network Analysis (SNA) offers a chance to critically reassess our existing understanding of market structure from a new and unbiased standpoint. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Commence by providing a concise summary of significant qualitative studies and elucidate the ways in which Social Network Analysis (SNA) might enhance the examination of the organizational structure of criminal gangs. Next, provide a clear and concise description of our document search process, and elaborate on the specific techniques we employ. The findings are divided into two categories. Initially, analyze the network architecture and gather information that supports the notion that organizations and drug marketplaces have a decentralized structure, with recognizable key people inside the groups. Furthermore, it is crucial to assess the comparative significance of social capital, such as one's network position, and human capital, such as access to resources. This assessment confirms a connection between social and human

capital and reveals that weaknesses within networks, which may be attributed to influential individuals, can be identified. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Structure of drug trafficking groups

Contrary to popular portrayals in the media, qualitative research on the organization of drug trafficking groups reveals different group structures within a loosely linked network of commerce. Upon conducting a thorough analysis of operations, including communications patterns, transactions, and security, the authors reach the conclusion that drug trafficking bears a stronger resemblance to a cottage industry characterized by small, temporary groups of individuals, with few occurrences of large, hierarchically-structured distribution networks. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Conducted an analysis of scholarly literature on high-level drug trafficking, ultimately determining that drug traffickers exhibit a wide range of characteristics and are motivated by many factors. The variations in group structure and susceptibility may be observed in corporate criminals who are driven by financial gain. These individuals are more inclined to possess a resilient core with many associations to other organizations and persons, as compared to ideologically motivated offenders. Examines the distinctions between lawful and illegal marketplaces, with a particular emphasis on the importance of trust in illicit enterprises. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

This literature resulted in the formulation of the following working hypothesis: although there are several structures, the majority of activities are interconnected networks that can promptly respond to changing market conditions. Unclear from this body of work is whether mapped networks display loose connectedness and the amount to which this structure applies to specific, well-defined groups of participants, as well as the extent to which these patterns represent the overall market structure. An essential aspect of comprehending the structure and purpose of a network is to define the bounds of membership. This is crucial since the inclusion of peripheral persons who are not truly part of the group can greatly impact our characterization of the

network. Therefore, it is crucial to separately analyze the group structure (within a clearly identifiable crime group) and market structure (relationships between different groups in a distribution chain). It is conceivable that the internal group structure can be hierarchical, even if the overall market behaves like a loosely connected network. Furthermore, due to the fact that each author creates their own classification system for group structure, it becomes challenging to do cross-study comparisons that are necessary for establishing overarching trends. Uniform measurements are necessary to accurately depict the characteristics and arrangement of organizational frameworks. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Role Differentiation

The analysis of qualitative research reveals the significance of distinguishing roles based on specific activities (such as obtaining precursor substances or manufacturing methamphetamine) or market niches (such as cross-border smuggling or wholesale providing). The presence of diverse organizational structures necessitates the customization of disruption strategies based on the specific nature of the operation and the intrinsic ability of the group structure to withstand and recover from disruptions. Through conducting in-depth interviews with 296 individuals engaged in the distribution of crack, cocaine, and heroin, evidence was discovered of role differentiation in response to police attention. This involved dividing drug market activities into specific tasks, such as separating individuals responsible for holding, transporting, delivering, and counting money from those who acted as guards. This approach aimed to enhance flexibility and resilience in the face of efforts to suppress criminal activities. Their research also revealed that market niches, such as low-level distribution, dealing, and upper-level distribution, exhibit diversity in organizational structure. These findings indicate that persons involved in drug trafficking face distinct limitations due to market dynamics at each stage of the activity. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Even within the realm of money laundering, which is commonly associated with drug trafficking, we may observe indications of the diverse and adaptable character of operations. It was found that just 14 cases, which is half of the investigations, featured individuals engaging in financial activities commonly associated with money laundering. In contrast to commonly held beliefs, the study revealed a diverse array of financial transactions, and it was not accountants or lawyers who acted as financial facilitators. Instead, individuals engaged in either transferring money across borders (such as through cash smuggling and hawala banking) or engaging in activities that made money appear legal, such as investing in the legitimate economy. This implies that the knowledge, abilities, and expertise possessed by individuals have an impact on their involvement in drug market operations, determining the extent and nature of their participation. Human capital may also distinguish leaders and essential workers from easily replaceable subordinates. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

A recent study analyzed 89 organizations that were discovered through extensive investigations conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration. Out of these, 50 cases were selected as a nationwide sample, while the remaining 39 cases were prosecuted in New York City. The study aimed to evaluate a classification system for categorizing these groups based on their organizational structure and tasks. The data collected spanned from 1997 to 2007. Significantly, they discover that the choice of data source has a substantial effect on structural variation. When analyzing New York City statistics, it was found that 12.8% of groups had a corporate organizational model, while 30.1% were communal enterprises. In contrast, federal cases mostly included corporate firms (54%) or community businesses (42%). Corporate organizational design often has a structured hierarchy and division of work, whereas community enterprises consist of individuals who share at least one common trait, such as religion, nationality, neighborhood, or race. In addition, 41% of the prosecutions in New York and 62% of the charges at the federal level involved groups that were engaged in numerous areas of

operation, including as smuggling, wholesale activities, and regional distribution. The flexible and informal structure, together with involvement in many activities, demonstrates the significant influence that both collective resources and individual human capital have on molding the operational structure. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

These studies indicate that drug trafficking involves businesses leveraging their social and human resources. The second working hypothesis is derived from this concept. The theory posits that different levels of market engagement give rise to distinct structural qualities, and that persons with the highest level of human capital, such as market leaders and critical staff, are the most influential. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Networking analysis of trafficking networks

Criminal network structure

Criminal networks should not be mistaken with ordinary social networks that function inside a criminal framework. The hidden configurations that include them need certain engagements and relational characteristics both within and outside the network. Due to the efforts of several entities within the criminal justice system to control illegal trade, those who benefit from criminal activities must operate covertly, remaining unseen. In contrast, legal commerce may be organized to optimize operational efficiency. This persistent difficulty significantly influences the functioning of both the organization and the entire market. According to our initial working hypothesis, qualitative research indicates that drug operations are mostly loosely linked networks that may quickly adapt to changing market conditions. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Another advantage is that even if any member is removed, the group will still operate well because to its strong resilience to attacks, which is a result of its extensive interconnections. Although the structure is more efficient and resistant to assault, it compromises operational security. This indicates that the network is vulnerable to law enforcement's attempts to unearth operational

information, rendering it not "secure." For instance, apprehending person 6, or any other individual for that matter, would result in them possessing information about all members of the gang and potentially incriminating everyone in an inquiry. Sparse networks, also known as loosely linked networks, often consist of persons who are centrally positioned as hubs and brokers. Individuals who have a large number of direct connections, compared to others in the network, are referred to as hubs. In theory, hubs are regarded as having the highest level of influence in the network. They have the ability to directly disseminate information to a larger number of individuals than anybody else. Brokerage refers to a unique concept of central placement, where individuals in brokerage roles have the ability to regulate the exchange of information between any two players in the network, regardless of their selection. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

Social and Human Capital

Another contention in the realm of social networks is that individuals who are connected to distinct groups of people possess higher levels of social capital. Facilitating connections between diverse groups of people offers a strategic benefit. These individuals become crucial to the whole group as they are the sole link that holds the group together. Additionally, they guarantee that they are the first to get any new information that circulates inside the network. When examining organized criminal organizations and drug markets, it is possible to assume that different forms of market engagement lead to the emergence of varied structural features. Due to the notion that some activities, such as money laundering and smuggling, hold more significance in operations, market leaders and vital workers, who possess the highest level of human capital, are considered central persons within a group or those who bridge other groups. Only when the advantages gained from social status combine with one's skills and knowledge that tangible benefits are likely to be achieved. (Gisela Bichler, 2017)

b. Marijuana Legalization

Drug trafficking is a crucial and dangerous phase in the illicit drug trade. On a daily basis, a significant quantity of illegal drugs, weighing thousands of kilograms, is illegally transported over national borders. This clandestine commerce involves nefarious individuals who supply the narcotics to both traffickers and individuals afflicted with addiction. Every week, a substantial number of persons are fatally injured in incidents directly associated with trafficking. Despite several global programs focused on addressing the problem of drug trafficking, their effectiveness has been restricted and has only yielded minor outcomes. Nevertheless, after the passage of forty years, there remains one approach that has not undergone a comprehensive assessment: the universal legalization. Although it may seem counterintuitive at first, the legalization of drugs has the potential to provide a viable framework for disrupting the global market and addressing the problem of drug trafficking. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

The concept of legalization entails the comprehensive legalization of every part of the drug industry, encompassing production and use, on a worldwide level. The legalization of drugs would instantly lead to a reduction in the violence associated with the drug trafficking aspect of the sector. The prohibition of drugs creates an environment conducive to self-initiated violence inside the drug business, as it compels the market to operate covertly. Legalization would establish a legitimate drug market, allowing conflicts to be addressed via legal means and attracting trustworthy market players instead of criminals, comparable to the result of ending the alcohol prohibition in the United States in the 1930s. Skeptics may argue that the fundamentally aggressive drug traffickers would not suddenly embrace nonviolent conduct with the introduction of legalization. Although there is some substance to this argument, it is probable that these violent offenders would ultimately be recognized and expelled from the sector. They would likely focus their efforts on other closely linked sectors of illegal commerce that provide greater benefits, such as the trading of weapons and the trafficking of humans. However, without the significant income provided by the illegal drug trade, these other illicit industries would likely experience a decrease as well. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

An analysis of the global market using economic research is the most evident illustration of the enduring impacts of legalization. Drug cartels create a market structure that is similar to a monopoly, but more specifically, it is an oligopoly. To accurately demonstrate the effects of drug cartels, a direct analysis of supply and demand is the most efficient approach. The current supply curve for illicit drugs is steep due to the elevated costs connected with global trade as a result of prohibition, which include endeavors to elude law enforcement and instances of violence. Through the imposition of additional costs, governments effectively impose taxes on makers and traffickers, leading to increased prices per unit of drugs in comparison to a scenario where drugs were legalized. However, the projected increase is predicted to be minor because the legal status of drugs typically has little impact on the majority's decision to use drugs. These behaviors may be deduced from the U.S. experience with alcohol prohibition, which serves as a similar market. Throughout the Prohibition era, there was no substantial change in alcohol use in reaction to changes in prices. In a similar vein, there was no significant surge in alcohol use following the conclusion of Prohibition. The shift from a policy of drug prohibition to drug legalization leads to a substantial decrease in price and a moderate increase in the demand for drugs. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

What is Marijuana?

Prior to recent times, the majority of discourse around the impacts of marijuana mostly centered around a singular compound: delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, more commonly referred to as THC. THC, or delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, is the primary psychoactive compound found in marijuana. It is primarily responsible for the intoxication effects associated with the consumption of marijuana. THC is one of over sixty cannabinoids included in marijuana. Various components of the plant, plants with distinct genetic variations, and plants cultivated under varying environments possess diverse combinations of these compounds. The impacts of the remaining

cannabinoids are not as comprehensively comprehended as those of THC. In the absence of THC, they do not induce a state of euphoria. However, they interact with THC to modulate its effects in several ways: amplifying or reducing its impact, expediting or delaying its onset, and changing its duration. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

Cannabidiol (CBD) is a chemical that is attracting growing interest from scientists and medicinal marijuana providers. CBD is non-intoxicating, meaning it does not provide a high on its own. However, there are claims that CBD may have a calming effect on the anxiety that can be caused by high dosages of THC. It may also possess antipsychotic properties. Some studies indicate that marijuana strains with a more optimal ratio of CBD to THC pose lower risks compared to the prevalent high-THC, low-CBD strains that now dominate the top tier of the marijuana market. A new study conducted by James Burgdorf and his colleagues at RAND reveals significant variance in ratios and a clear shift towards higher levels of THC and lower levels of CBD in samples confiscated in California. However, the majority of marijuana users, even those who are aware of CBD, are unable to perceive its presence or absence in the substance they consume. Additionally, only a small number of merchants, including medical marijuana dispensaries, have their goods analyzed and labeled for their chemical composition. Gaining a deeper understanding of the impact of this proportion and its variations among different types of marijuana might enhance our understanding of the psychological and public health implications of marijuana use. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

The evolving understanding of the functions of THC and CBD implies that further revelations may arise when researchers delve into the functions of additional constituents inside marijuana. Research in this field is still in its early stages. The potency of Marijuana, as determined by its THC content, can significantly differ based on factors such as the plant's genetics, cultivation methods, utilization of certain plant parts, and the preparation techniques employed. Due to these variations, both market players and enforcement organizations differentiate between different types of Marijuana products.

Products with greater levels of THC generally have a higher price. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

Items of higher quality typically have a higher price. The plant's stalks and stems have little psychoactive substances, while the leaves contain a moderate amount. The flowers, also known as "buds" or "flowering tops," have a higher concentration, and the trichomes, which are hair-like structures on the flowers, contain the highest amount of psychoactive material. Therefore, marijuana that has a high proportion of stems and leaves is of lower value compared to marijuana that is mostly composed of the flowering tops. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

Marijuana plants exist in two distinct genders: men, which produce pollen, and females, which capture pollen and produce seeds. Female plants secrete a viscous glue that ensnares airborne pollen grains. It has been discovered by marijuana cultivators that unfertilized female plants continue to produce an increasing amount of resin, hence enhancing the concentration of cannabinoids in the final product. Flowers that do not undergo pollination do not develop seeds. As a result, the high-potency marijuana obtained by preventing female plants from being pollinated is devoid of seeds, which is referred to as "sin semilla" in Spanish. The THC content of "Sinsemilla" usually ranges from 10 percent to 18 percent, which is almost three times higher than the THC level seen in traditional "commercial-grade" marijuana derived from pollinated plants. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

Hashish, produced by compressing the sticky trichomes, can contain more than 40 percent THC. Hashish, mostly manufactured in Asia and North Africa, is widely used in Europe. It carries a unique allure due to its association with notable figures like Baudelaire and other French bohemians of the nineteenth century. Several users argue that it exhibits distinct effects compared to sinsemilla, maybe attributed to either the high quantity of THC or the elevated CBD levels found in the North African hashish often used in Europe. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

Hash oil, a highly potent substance, is derived from marijuana by chemical extraction. It shares only its name and strong intensity with hashish. Although not widely utilized, it is accessible at certain medical marijuana clinics across the United States. (Caulkins J. P., 2014)

In North America, there has been a consistent and gradual rise in the prevalence of Marijuana usage across various age groups over an extended period of time. Furthermore, studies have shown a rise in recent Marijuana consumption among vulnerable groups, including persons suffering from depression and pregnant women. Concurrently with the rise in Marijuana consumption, there has been a corresponding increase in Marijuana-related negative outcomes in both Canada and the U.S. These consequences include higher rates of Marijuana dependence and Marijuana use disorder, an increase in crime rates such as possession charges, and an increase in incidents of driving while impaired by Marijuana. Additionally, there is a decrease in people's perception of impairment and risk associated with Marijuana use. Moreover, the use of Marijuana presents a potential danger of early initiation or usage throughout adolescence, since research indicates that Marijuana use during this period is associated with diminished cognitive abilities, the development of psychotic illnesses, and an elevated susceptibility to mood and addiction disorders. It is crucial to understand the impact of Marijuana legalization on the increasing rates of negative consequences associated with Marijuana use, especially in North America where Marijuana has been legalized in many parts of the US and all of Canada. This understanding will help inform future changes in Marijuana policies globally. (Kyra N Farrelly, 2023)

Marijuana is subject to significant legal variation across different countries and areas. Despite Marijuana being predominantly banned worldwide, there is a gradual trend towards more lenient rules around its usage. Decriminalization, which entails the reduction of penalties for personal use but not for distribution, is an increasingly prevalent practice globally. This

approach is adopted in countries like as the Netherlands, Portugal, and some regions of Australia. Peru, Germany, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and other U.S. states have also implemented medical legalization. Currently, only Canada, Uruguay, and Malta have enacted national legislation to allow the recreational use of Marijuana. In addition, starting in 2012, many states in the United States started the process of legalizing recreational Marijuana. As of 2023, about half of the states in the U.S. have passed laws to legalize recreational Marijuana. It is essential to comprehend the implications of significant legislative changes, like as the national and subnational legalization of recreational activities, in order to guide continuing policy adjustments. (Kyra N Farrelly, 2023)

Medical Marijuana Legalization and Recreational Marijuana Legalization

The issue of marijuana legalization is gaining significant traction among lawmakers and the general public. The current study examines a 30-year dataset of traffic fatality information to ascertain if the legalization of medicinal and recreational marijuana has noteworthy effects on road deaths. We expand upon the existing literature in two distinct manners. Our study focuses on states that have recently implemented marijuana regulations and presents new information on the impacts of Medical Marijuana Laws (MMLs) and Recreational Marijuana Laws (RMLs). Furthermore, in light of current debates on the constraints of DD models, we also utilize alternative estimators that specifically tackle difficulties related to negative weights and contamination. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

The estimates obtained from our Time-Weighted Fixed Effects (TWFE) analysis align well with the findings of prior research that employed earlier years of data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) using TWFE estimation methods. Minimum speed limits (MMLs) are linked to a decrease in traffic deaths, but recommended speed limits (RMLs) do not have a notable impact. Nevertheless, the TWFE estimates of MMLs (Minimum

Mean Squared Errors) and RMLs (Restricted Maximum Likelihoods) are adversely affected by negative weights and are also influenced by other treatments. The estimate concerns for MMLs are not significant due to the magnitudes and total of the negative weights. Regarding RMLs, the presence of negative weights is not a significant concern, nevertheless, the problem of contamination poses a significant hazard. Considering these prejudices, we resort to other estimators that have been suggested in the field of econometrics. In order to isolate the effects of MMLs separately from RMLs, we additionally limit the complete sample. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

The results obtained from the alternative estimators exhibit similar signs, but are of lesser magnitude when compared to the estimates obtained using the Two-Way Fixed Effects (TWFE) method. The estimations from DIDM indicate that there are no immediate impacts of MMLs or RMLs. The DIDL estimates suggest that the implementation of MMLs has a delayed negative impact, resulting in an average decrease of 3.9% in the total fatality rate. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

When we analyze the MML provisions by categorizing them into early and late adopters, the findings indicate that early adopters (with lenient provisions) experience more pronounced adverse impacts compared to late adopters, but the disparities are never statistically significant. Although we have thoroughly examined data spanning several decades on road fatalities, as well as various policy initiatives related to marijuana and other factors, our analysis does have a few constraints. The Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) encompasses all traffic accidents on public roads that lead to at least one death over a 30-day period. However, it does not account for deaths that take place on private roadways. Furthermore, it is important to note that FARS does not document motor vehicle accidents that lead to injuries without any fatalities, or incidents that solely cause damage to property, which are far more frequent. Furthermore, almost half of all fatal collisions lack information regarding alcohol participation. Therefore, our variable measuring alcohol participation is susceptible to a certain degree of measurement error.

Furthermore, we exclude dispensary opening dates from our studies because to the inconsistent reliability of these dates in certain states. Instead, we conduct separate analyses of early and late MML adopters to account for variations in MML provisions. Furthermore, our ability to assess the impacts of RMLs independently from MMLs is restricted due to the little data available. This variation in data stems from only 11 states, with 9 of them implementing RMLs in 2015 or later. Event studies that incorporate time lags and leads, as well as Difference-in-Differences with dynamic effects and placebos, are greatly affected by the restricted variation of RMLs. As more states adopt RMLs and accumulate more years of data, researchers can more accurately estimate the consistent impacts of RMLs. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

Our findings provide a thorough and up-to-date analysis of the effects of marijuana legalization measures on road fatalities, which is a crucial outcome of these policies. Critics of MMLs and RMLs frequently highlight the increased risk of hazardous road conditions as an adverse outcome of these legislative measures. Our findings indicate that this claim is weak. Although TWFE estimations indicate that MMLs are linked to a rise in traffic safety, the alternative estimators demonstrate lesser protective benefits of MMLs. RMLs have no discernible effect on traffic safety in any aspect. Subsequent studies should reassess these impacts over a period of time as an increasing number of states implement marijuana legalization legislation, particularly recreational marijuana laws (RMLs). Policy makers should take into account not only the impact on traffic safety, but also other potential desired outcomes such as improvements in health and reduced healthcare usage, as well as unintended consequences like increased marijuana use among young people and higher crime rates. This comprehensive assessment will provide a complete understanding of the costs and benefits of marijuana legislation. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

An often mentioned public health issue associated with the legalization of marijuana is the heightened likelihood of driving while under the influence of marijuana (Hall et al., 2019; Zvonarev et al., 2019). Marijuana usage has the

potential to impact driving abilities by diminishing cognitive abilities, motor coordination, and response time (NIDA, 2023). Nevertheless, from a scientific standpoint, it has been difficult to definitively determine the influence of marijuana consumption on automobile accidents. The presence of marijuana can be detectable in the body for a period of many days or weeks following its use, even after the individual is no longer under its influence (NIDA, 2023). However, it is important to note that measuring THC and its metabolites in blood and tissues may not accurately indicate impairment in driving skills, unless accompanied with assessments of psychomotor and cognitive abilities (Preuss et al., 2021). Due to these factors, it is difficult to establish a consensus on the amount of impairment caused by marijuana usage. In addition, individuals frequently engage in concurrent marijuana use and alcohol intake (NIDA, 2023), which complicates the determination of whether a driving accident is caused by one or both of these drugs. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

When it comes to driving, marijuana has a less severe impact on impairment compared to alcohol. Individuals who are under the influence of marijuana exhibit reduced driving speeds, refrain from passing other vehicles, and increase the distances between their vehicle and the one in front of them. Conversely, drivers who are intoxicated with alcohol exhibit the opposite behavior (Sewell et al., 2009). On the other hand, if drivers use both marijuana and alcohol, the likelihood of a traffic accident is higher compared to taking either substance separately (Hartman & Huestis, 2013; Kelley-Baker et al., 2021). (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

To comprehend the potential impact of marijuana legalization on road fatalities, it is essential to consider the demand link between marijuana and alcohol. If marijuana and alcohol are often consumed in conjunction (i.e., as complements), the implementation of marijuana legislation would lead to an increase in traffic collisions due to the heightened risk associated with the simultaneous use of both substances. If the utilization of marijuana leads to a decrease in the intake of alcohol (i.e., acts as a substitute), then there is a possibility that traffic accidents will decrease. Research provides empirical

support for both replacements and complements (Risso et al., 2020; Subbaraman, 2016), albeit there is a greater body of data supporting substitutability rather than complementarity. A recent research by Anderson and Rees (2023) provides a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature on the legalization of marijuana and its impact on alcohol use. The study reveals compelling evidence that marijuana and alcohol are highly interchangeable. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

Given the research examined earlier, it is unsurprising that the results on the effects of marijuana legalization on road deaths have been inconclusive. A study conducted by Mark Anderson et al. in 2013 utilized spatial and temporal differences in MMLs between 1990 and 2010. The study applied a DD framework. A study revealed that the legalization of marijuana for medicinal use resulted in significant reductions in both the cost of marijuana and the use of alcohol, indicating that marijuana and alcohol may be seen as alternatives to each other. After the legalization, there was a reduction of around 8%–11% in traffic fatalities throughout the first complete year. Several studies have found that the incidence of marijuana use among drivers involved in fatal crashes has increased after the implementation of medical marijuana laws (Couper & Peterson, 2014; Masten & Guenzburger, 2014; Salomonsen-Sautel et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the authors advise against interpreting the data as causative due to the presence of residual marijuana in the body for an extended period of time. A comprehensive case-control research done in Virginia Beach by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration simultaneously concluded that there is no correlation between marijuana usage and the probability of driving crashes. This conclusion was reached after taking into account driver demographics and alcohol use (Lacey et al., 2016). Several research reassess the correlations by utilizing more up-to-date data (Cook et al., 2020; Dewey et al., 2020; Santaella-Tenorio et al., 2017; Sevigny, 2018). Most studies indicate a general negative correlation between the legalization of marijuana and fatal car accidents. However, the impact of this correlation varies among different states, possibly due to unique aspects of marijuana

legislation such as the presence of dispensaries, home cultivation, and centralized registries. The outcomes also differed across the immediate and extended periods. (Weiwei Chen, 2022)

Legalization abolishes criminal and financial sanctions for the possession, consumption, and distribution of marijuana for recreational use. While nations that have decriminalized marijuana, like the Netherlands, have effectively legalized it in practice, and medicinal marijuana programs are sometimes seen as disguised forms of recreational legalization, the official legalization of marijuana is a comparatively recent development. The ballot initiatives approved by voters in Colorado and Washington in November 2012 were the first instances in which any jurisdiction in the world officially controlled marijuana. The focus has mostly been on the newly established retail markets for legal marijuana in these two states. However, it is important to note that the commercial model is only one option for regulating legal production. There are other alternative tactics that might be considered (Caulkins et al. 2015). The potential outcomes of legalization have not been thoroughly examined in research. However, the impact on the frequency of marijuana usage and the development of usage disorders will mostly hinge on the particular laws implemented at the state level and the reaction of the federal government. (Rosalie Liccardo Pacula, 2017)

Defining decriminalized, medicalized, and legalized states is not just a matter of semantics. It actually emphasizes the various ways in which policies can affect drug use, such as altering perceptions of risk or social disapproval, increasing the availability and range of products, and changing production methods or costs to lower prices. While it may be tempting to use evaluations of decriminalization and medical marijuana policies to gain insight into the potential outcomes of legalization, it is important to note that the experiences of these states may not provide a complete picture of the changes in price, potency, and product variety that are likely to occur due to increased commercialization and promotion under legalization (Caulkins et al. 2012).

Furthermore, previous studies on decriminalization and medical marijuana laws (MMLs) have been hindered by significant constraints caused by an excessive dependence on basic measures that fail to include the intricate and diverse approaches that states have taken in designing and implementing their policies (Pacula & Sevigny 2014a,b; Pacula et al. 2005). While the current body of work may have limitations in addressing the impact of marijuana legalization on usage and related outcomes, it provides valuable insights on how we can assess the consequences of changes in marijuana policies in a dynamic and complex policy landscape. (Rosalie Liccardo Pacula, 2017)

The Effect of Marijuana Legalization to Youth Marijuana Use

Consistent with the results of a meta-analysis conducted by Sarvet et al. (2018), there is little evidence to support the hypothesis that MMLs have increased youth marijuana use on either the intensive or extensive margins.²⁵ With or without including state-specific linear trends on the right-hand side of their DD regressions, most researchers have produced small and statistically insignificant estimates. Some researchers have, in fact, found a negative association between MMLs and youth marijuana use. For instance, using data from the YRBS for the period 1999–2015, Coley et al. (2019) found that MML adoption was associated with a 9 percent decrease in the odds of past-month marijuana use among teens. Using NSDUH data for the period 2002–09, Harper, Strumpf, and Kaufman (2012) found that MMLs were associated with an 8 per- cent decrease in past-month marijuana use among teenagers. (D. Mark Anderson, 2023)

A recent working paper by Smart and Doremus (2021) provides the only credible evidence of which we are aware that MMLs can lead to increased use among teenagers. Using data from the NSDUH for the period 2002–13, these authors leveraged the fact that, after the Ogden memorandum was issued, dispensaries proliferated and registration rates soared in medical marijuana states with “loose production limits,” defined as those that allowed caregivers to serve multiple patients. Marijuana use among 12–17-year-olds also

increased in these states after the Ogden memorandum was issued. As noted above, the Ogden memorandum, issued in 2009, deprioritized the prosecution of medical marijuana users and producers. Smart and Doremus (2021) found no evidence that MML adoption affected youth marijuana use. Drawing on YRBS data for the period 1993–2017, Anderson et al. (2019) found that RMLs were associated with an 8 percent decrease in the odds of any marijuana use among high school students and a 9 percent decrease in the odds of frequent marijuana use among high school students. These results are consistent with the argument that it is more difficult for teenagers to access marijuana when drug dealers are replaced by licensed dispensaries that require proof of age. (D. Mark Anderson, 2023)

Using YRBS data for the period 1999–2017, Coley et al. (2021) found no evidence of a relationship between RMLs and past-month marijuana use, although RML adoption was associated with a small reduction in the frequency of use. By contrast, using NSDUH data for the period 2001–17, Hollingsworth, Wing, and Bradford (2022) found that legalizing recreational marijuana was associated with a 13–15 percent increase in past-month marijuana use among 12–17-year-olds. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the estimates such as those reported by Anderson et al. (2019), Hollingsworth, Wing, and Bradford (2022), and Coley et al. (2021) are based on limited geographic and temporal variation in RML adoption. Researchers will have to wait until more years of post-legalization data become available before drawing firm conclusions about the relationship between RMLs and youth marijuana use. (D. Mark Anderson, 2023)