

For immediate release

January 14, 2025

Europe launches campaign today to transform mental health with psychedelic therapies

Today begins a citizen campaign to collect signatures to regulate psychedelic-assisted therapies in the European Union.

Barcelona - The European Union is facing a mental health crisis that affects more than one in six people. The prevalence of disorders such as treatment-resistant depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance use disorders, together with the limited effectiveness of current treatments for a significant percentage of patients, has led to the search for innovative solutions. In this context, the [collection of signatures](#) for a European citizens' initiative entitled PsychedeliCare was launched today. This proposal aims to promote safe and legal access to psychedelic-assisted therapies, integrating them in a regulated manner into Europe's public health systems.

Towards a clear and safe regulatory framework

The initiative arises in response to the need to establish a regulatory framework that guarantees the safety of patients and the quality of treatments, while respecting the cultural roots of these plants and substances. Several scientific studies have demonstrated the efficacy of traditional indigenous medicines such as ayahuasca, psilocybes or iboga to treat complex disorders, which has led countries such as Australia, Canada, Switzerland or the United States to implement pilot programs of psychedelic therapy in their health systems. In Europe, the lack of specific regulation prevents these therapies from being of widespread benefit to the people who need them most.

This European citizens' initiative, led by a multidisciplinary collective of scientists, physicians, therapists and human rights advocates, seeks to collect one million signatures by January 13, 2026. Reaching this goal would oblige the European Commission to formally consider the proposal and pronounce on its implementation. The initiative emphasizes the need to promote scientific research, establish clear standards for the therapeutic use of these substances and traditional medicines, and promote a unified position at the international level to facilitate their regulation.

The importance of an evidence-based approach

The ICEERS Foundation (International Center for Ethnobotanical Education, Research and Service), based in Barcelona, has expressed its support for this initiative. José Carlos Bouso, its scientific director, states: "We are at a decisive moment for the integration of psychedelic therapies into Western medicine. These practices, backed by scientific research, offer promising solutions for mental disorders that conventional treatments have failed to effectively resolve. However, it is critical that their implementation be done responsibly, ensuring both patient safety and respect for the indigenous communities that have guarded this knowledge for centuries."

The lack of regulation not only limits access to these therapies, but also makes therapists and patients vulnerable to the uncontrolled use of these substances and traditional medicines. In countries where experimental programs have already been implemented, the results have been promising, with significant rates of improvement in disorders considered resistant to existing treatments. These experiences reinforce the urgency to act at the European level, establishing a framework that guarantees the safety and efficacy of treatments.

A crisis with economic and social impact

According to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the mental health crisis in Europe has an estimated economic impact of \$669.4 billion annually, due to lost productivity, cost of treatment and impact on healthcare systems. In addition, it is estimated that approximately 50% of psychiatric patients do not respond to conventional treatments, underscoring the need to explore innovative approaches such as psychedelic-assisted therapies.

ICEERS stresses that such regulations will not only benefit patients, but will also contribute to the development of a more inclusive and innovative public health model. The integration of these therapies can represent a paradigm shift in the way mental health is addressed, with an approach that combines scientific evidence with respect for ancestral knowledge.

This initiative represents an opportunity for European citizens to actively participate in the construction of public policies that reflect the current needs of society. Interested persons can sign up by clicking on the following link:

<https://eci.ec.europa.eu/050/public>