

Pompidou Group

The Pompidou Group provides a multidisciplinary forum at the wider European level where it is possible for policy-makers, professionals and researchers to exchange experiences and information on drug use and drug trafficking. Set up at the suggestion of the French President Georges Pompidou in 1971, it became a Council of Europe partial agreement in 1980. In 2019, it has members from 39 countries: 37 of the 47 Council of Europe member states plus Morocco, Israel and Mexico.

MedNET:

MedNET is the Pompidou Group's Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addictions. Set up in 2006, it seeks to foster co-operation, exchanges and mutual transfer of knowledge between the countries on both shores of the Mediterranean. It supports the framing of drug policies which are respectful of health and human rights and addresses gender equality issues, based on evidence gathered by national observatories. As of 2019, the network has sixteen member countries.

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MedNET

Co-operation in the Mediterranean region on drugs and addictions

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The Council of Europe's Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs ("**Pompidou Group**") promotes public health and the implementation of a drug policy which respects human rights and supports gender mainstreaming.

The Pompidou Group's Mediterranean network (**MedNET**) for co-operation on drugs and addiction seeks to foster co-operation, exchanges and two-way knowledge transfers between the countries on both shores of the Mediterranean (North-South and South-North), and between countries of the Mediterranean Basin (South-South) in respecting human rights and integrating a gender dimension.

Participating countries

At the outset, in 2006, the network was aimed primarily at North Africa. The partners in Europe were France and the Netherlands.

16 countries participate today:

10 Pompidou Group members:

Cyprus, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey,
Croatia, France, Greece, Italy,

6 non-members:

Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine*, Tunisia.

Long-term objective

The long-term objective of MedNET is to promote the elaboration and implementation of coherent policies on addictive behaviours, based on scientifically validated knowledge.

All projects submitted by the participating countries will have to be developed and implemented with a special focus on human rights, and taking into account gender equality.

**This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member States on this issue.*

The setting up and development of the network

The **Pompidou Group** first turned its attention to the Mediterranean region in 1999, when it held a conference in Malta on “Co-operation in the Mediterranean region on drug use: setting up networks in the Mediterranean region”.

The first project implemented in the region was the school survey on alcohol and other drug consumption (the MedSPAD survey, “Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs”). This project which is an adaptation of the ESPAD school surveys in Europe gives an overview of the drug use and attitudes among young people attending school in the Mediterranean Region.

In 2006, a feasibility study carried out at the initiative of France and the Netherlands led to the setting up of the Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addiction (MedNET) and the Pompidou Group’s commitment to co-ordinate and manage the network. The network was assessed positively. Its flexibility was commended, and the network subsequently continued its activities, co-ordinated by the **Pompidou Group**.

MedNET activities have since expanded steadily and are helping to promote effective and appropriate responses to drug use, through exchanges of good practice and regional co-operation in the fields of research on the situation of drugs use, prevention, treatment and care, and law enforcement.

Activities are aimed at improving public health and the implementation of drug policies in the region while respecting human rights and meeting the needs expressed by countries.

MedNET action helps to reinforce the political and democratic process in the region by promoting drug users' right to health and supporting the necessary legislative reforms. Lebanon and Morocco were the first countries to introduce opioid substitution treatment, in 2009 and 2011 respectively, thereby offering drug users the possibility of rehabilitation. Algeria decided in 2016 to introduce this treatment into its healthcare system.

As part of the promotion of a comprehensive and balanced drug policy, law enforcement activities are carried out in the region through country-specific activities in response to requests from the countries concerned and through regional seminars and participation in the meetings of the **Pompidou Group's** law enforcement activities: Airports and General Aviation groups and the precursors network.

In July 2011, as a direct result of its involvement in the MedNET network, Morocco became the first non-Council of Europe country to join the **Pompidou Group**.

Participation

Accession to **MedNET** presupposes a voluntary commitment and a mutual interest. Any Mediterranean country and any country interested in this co-operation can become a member. To join the network, the Minister responsible for drug policy shall send a commitment letter to the **Pompidou Group's** Executive Secretary and shall appoint a national representative with the authority to commit on behalf of his/her government.

Chair

The positions of Chair and Vice-Chair are held during a period of one year alternately by a Northern Mediterranean country and a Southern Mediterranean country. In order to ensure the continuity of work, the Vice-Chair is expected to take over the position of Chair the following year. The election is by consensus.

Secretariat

The Secretariat of the **Pompidou Group** is responsible for the implementation of the work programme and the smooth operation of the network, whilst ensuring synergy between other working groups of the Pompidou Group and other Council of Europe's entities.

It manages the **MedNET** budget, made up of voluntary contributions from **Pompidou Group** member countries and other sources of funding (Council of Europe, European Commission, etc.).

Meetings

The Steering Committee made up of the representatives of the participating countries meets at least once a year to adopt the work programme based on projects submitted by each country, to review the implementation of on-going projects and to discuss future activities

The EMCDDA participates in the steering committee and shares its expertise in particular concerning data collection and analysis and the support to national observatories.

Flexible Working methods which reply to the needs of the countries

MedNET facilitates the recognition, diffusion and adaptation of good practices and experiences which had proved successful in partnership with other key national and international actors working in the region. Thus, participating countries, through their representatives, share and exchange knowledge and know-how, by providing the network with scientifically validated knowledge in all relevant fields. Member countries of the network both benefit from and provide expertise in the various activities. They take part as participants, speakers, consultants, study visitors, host countries for trainings, seminars ...

- | They are committed to alert competent national authorities on the actions led by **MedNET**.
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- | The implemented national and regional projects are presented in the annual activity report.
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- | The overall work of the **MedNET** network is subject to a regular and thorough evaluation
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Funding of the network

Participating countries are committed to contributing to the **MedNET** budget, financially or by making available their resources, in order to ensure project implementation.

Each project is funded in part by the requesting country, through a financial or an in-kind contribution.

The budget is mainly funded by voluntary contributions. It is also funded by the Joint South Programme of the Council of Europe and European Union within the neighbourhood policy of the Council of Europe.

Belonging to the MedNET network means contributing to the following actions:

- adaptation of the methodology and tools recognised and used in Europe to the southern Mediterranean cultural context

- prevention of addictive behaviours
- support to the launching of national surveys on the scope of the use of drugs
- promotion of the setting up of national observatories on drugs and drug addiction
- training of medical staff including opiate substitution treatment
- support for the establishment of treatment and care centres for women
- adoption of a global approach to the drug problem
- playing a bridging role between Europe and the southern part of the Mediterranean region
- exchange knowledge and experience between the countries
- undertake activities based on needs expressed by the countries
- contributing to awareness raising and create competences in the drug field through meetings where various agencies come together
- flexibility in the implementation of programmes
- regular and thorough evaluation by all stakeholders

To know the results of the actions, visit the **MedNET** page on **Pompidou Group** website

www.coe.int/en/web/pompidou/home