

JORDAN and MedNET

**MedNET: the Pompidou Group's
co-operation network on drugs
and drug addiction
in the Mediterranean region**

Council of Europe, Strasbourg

**Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe
Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse
and illicit trafficking in Drugs**



Jordan



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JORDAN AND MEDNET

Council of Europe

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MedNET: the Pompidou Group's co-operation network on drugs and drug addiction in the Mediterranean region

The Pompidou Group launched its activities in the Mediterranean region in Malta in 1999 with a conference on “co-operation in the Mediterranean region on drug use”.

■ Following this conference, the scale of the drug problem was studied for the first time in the region by means of surveys carried out in Algeria, Morocco and Lebanon as part of the “Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs in Schools” (MedSPAD). This project, which is an adaptation of the ESPAD school surveys conducted in Europe, provides an insight into drug use and attitudes towards drugs in the Mediterranean region.

■ In 2006, at the initiative of France and the Netherlands, the Mediterranean network (MedNET) was set up with the participation of Algeria, Morocco, Malta and Tunisia and with the involvement of the Pompidou Group in co-ordinating and managing the network. The network was set up initially for one year. An evaluation carried out at the end of that period highlighted the flexibility of its operation and the network has been active ever since.

■ MedSPAD surveys were carried out at national level in Lebanon in 2008 and Morocco in 2009.

■ In 2013, the MedSPAD survey was repeated in Morocco and a first MedSPAD survey was carried out in Tunisia, thus demonstrating the importance of this instrument as a means of assessing drug use and attitudes towards it among young people attending school. In 2015, it was Egypt's turn to launch this survey, followed in 2016 by Algeria.

■ **MedNET's objective is to promote co-operation and a two-way transfer of knowledge between European and Mediterranean countries (North-South and South-North exchanges) as well as within the Mediterranean region (South-South).**

■ **The ultimate objective is to develop and implement coherent, balanced drug policies which respect human rights and address gender equality issues, based on evidence gathered by national observatories.**

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

■ MedNET action helps to reinforce the political and democratic process in the region by promoting the right to health of drug users and supporting the necessary legislative reforms. Lebanon and Morocco were the first countries to introduce opioid substitution treatment, in 2009 and 2011 respectively, thus offering drug users the possibility of rehabilitation. Algeria decided in 2016 to introduce it 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 countries concerned and through regional seminars: in Lebanon in 2010, on synthetic drugs, precursors and supply indicators, and in Strasbourg in 2012, on the fight against drug trafficking in airports.

■ The MedNET countries have participated regularly since 2014 in the meetings of the Pompidou Group's "Co-operation Group of Drug Control Services at European Airports and in General Aviation" (airports group) and since 2015 in the precursors network.

■ The network has expanded regularly and now has 12 member states. Lebanon, Italy and Portugal joined in 2007, Tunisia in 2009, Jordan, Egypt and Cyprus in 2010, Greece in 2011 and Turkey in 2016.

■ In 2015, the Palestinian National Authority participated in the network's activities.

■ Some MedNET non-member countries also contribute to its activities: Belgium, Croatia, Ireland, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

■ The EMCDDA has participated in MedNET's activities on a regular basis since 2012. The European Commission has participated in MedNET's annual committee meetings since 2015.

■ At a high-level conference in 2009, the MedNET countries committed themselves to setting up national observatories/resource centres on drugs and drug addiction in collaboration with the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). The first national observatory on drugs and drug addiction was set up in 2011 in Morocco. In the same year Morocco also became the first Council of Europe non-member country to join the Pompidou Group. Egypt set up an observatory in 2011 and, at the initiative of Italy, round tables on this subject were held in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia in 2013 and 2015. These were followed by the production of "country profiles" describing the drug situation, the legal and law-enforcement system, prevention and treatment and care programmes, and international co-operation.

■ **MedNET's target groups** are professionals: medical personnel, social workers, representatives of NGOs, researchers, officials responsible for prevention, health, research and law enforcement, and policy-makers.

■ **MedNET's work programme** is adopted annually by all the members of the network on presentation of national proposals for activities, including activities at regional level.

■ **Funding of the network:**

- ▶ Voluntary contributions 2006-2016, notably from France and Italy
- ▶ South Programmes I and II (2012-2017), funded by the EU and implemented by the Council of Europe
- ▶ Since 2016, funding from Norway for Morocco and Tunisia

■ MedNET is co-ordinated and run by the Secretariat of the Pompidou Group at the Council of Europe.

Added value of the network

- ▶ Adapting recognised methods and tools to the southern Mediterranean cultural context, e.g. MedSPAD
- ▶ Supporting the launch of national surveys
- ▶ Supporting the implementation of and/or changes in legislation by means of legal opinions
- ▶ Training in the health field
- ▶ Supporting the setting up of treatment and care centres
- ▶ Exchanging qualitative and quantitative information in various fields with a view to developing a comprehensive approach to the drug problem
- ▶ Playing a bridging role between the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean
- ▶ Exchange of experience between countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, and initial assessment of the situation in each country, in the context of MedSPAD
- ▶ Supporting the introduction of different treatment and care methods, including opioid substitution treatment
- ▶ Taking account of needs expressed by stakeholders in the countries concerned when drawing up and implementing the work programme of activities
- ▶ Factoring gender into care services: women's specific needs in access to care
- ▶ Developing awareness and skills in the drugs field through multi-agency meetings bringing together the prevention, treatment and care and law-enforcement sectors
- ▶ Flexibility in programme implementation to meet emerging needs
- ▶ Evaluation of MedNET activities by the stakeholders
- ▶ Cost-effectiveness

Co-operation with Jordan

2009

- ▶ Participation of Jordan took place in the high-level MedNET conference in Strasbourg

2010

- ▶ Participation of Jordan in the regional seminar in Cairo on the treatment of addiction and the treatment demand indicator
- ▶ Jordan became a member of the MedNET in May 2010 following a field visit to Jordan to identify the opportunities for co-operation with this country
- ▶ Jordan hosted a regional seminar on the collection of data
- ▶ Participation in the regional seminar in Beirut on supply indicators, synthetic drugs and precursors and in the seminar held in Morocco (November 2010) to prepare the foundations for the establishment of national observatories/resource centres

2011

- ▶ Jordan took part in a field visit to France in June on treatment and care centres
- ▶ A two-week training course in occupational therapy at the University of Malta for four people: two from the Anti-Narcotics Department Treatment Centre and two from the National Centre for Rehabilitation of drug users
- ▶ To optimise training and work on the collection of treatment demand data, the Director of the National Centre for Rehabilitation of drug users visited the national drugs observatory in Malta

2012

- ▶ Launch of a project on collecting information on treatment demand to enable each treatment and care centre to manage its operations more effectively and supply data on the individuals undergoing treatment at a given time
- ▶ Participation in the regional seminar on the use of drug research in policies in the Mediterranean region, Rabat
- ▶ Participation on regional seminar on airports, Strasbourg

2013

- ▶ Follow-up of the project to collect data on treatment demand: elaboration of a first contact form

2014

- ▶ Participation in the workshop on the fight against drug trafficking in airports, Strasbourg

2015

- ▶ Participation in the Pompidou Group's international seminars:
 - 30th annual meeting of the cooperation group of drug control services at European Airports and in General Aviation, Strasbourg
 - International network on control of precursors, annual meeting, Prague (Czech Republic)

2016

- ▶ Participation in the Pompidou Group's international seminars:
 - 31st annual meeting of the cooperation group of drug control services at European Airports and in General Aviation, Strasbourg
 - International network on control of precursors, annual meeting, Warsaw, (Poland), 10-14 October
 - Participation to the « 5^e colloque international francophone sur le traitement de la dépendance aux opioïdes », Rabat, November 30th, December 1st and 2nd 2016

Impact of MedNET in Jordan by the Anti-Narcotics Department

■ Jordan joined MedNET end of 2009. Since then, Jordan participated in several events organised by MedNET (workshops, seminars, meetings, visits, etc.) through which Jordan benefited through the exchange of information and experience with other member and non-member countries.

■ Jordan carried out an important project by funding and advice of MedNET: the data collection project which is expected to provide Jordanian strategy planners and decision makers with the necessary analysis for data and figures on addiction and abuse trends in order to design effective strategies and research to deal with drug abuse problems.

■ Unfortunately, MedNET rejected another project proposal on occupational therapy for drug users in Jordan to be developed in two treatment and care centres in Jordan to enhance treatment and rehabilitation and treatment and care programmes by acquiring fruitful skills and a profession that would have helped them to avoid drug relapse. This was due to MedNET policy of not funding equipment for these units.

The 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. Formed at the suggestion of the French President Georges Pompidou in 1971, it has become a Council of Europe partial agreement in 1980. In 2016, it gathers 38 countries: 36 among the 47th Member States of the Council of Europe and Morocco and Israel.

MedNET

MedNET is the Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addictions of the Pompidou Group. Created in 2006, it aims to foster co-operation, exchanges and mutual transfer of knowledge between the countries on both sides of the Mediterranean Basin. It supports the development of drug policies which respect health and human rights and address gender equality issues, based on evidence gathered by national observatories. In 2016, twelve countries are members of the network.



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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