

PALESTINE and MedNET

**MedNET: the Pompidou Group's
network for cooperation
on drugs and addictions
in the Mediterranean region**

Council of Europe, Strasbourg

**Pompidou Group
Council of Europe
International Cooperation Group
on Drugs and Addictions**



Palestine



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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PALESTINE* AND MEDNET

Council of Europe

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

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MedNET: the Pompidou Group's network for cooperation on drugs and addictions in the Mediterranean region

MedNET is the Mediterranean cooperation network on drugs and addictions of the Pompidou Group. It promotes cooperation, exchange and reciprocal transfer of knowledge between countries on both sides of the Mediterranean, while respecting human rights and integrating the gender dimension.

■ Created in 2006 around 5 countries: Algeria, France, Morocco, Tunisia and the Netherlands, following a feasibility study carried out by France and the Netherlands, the network has undergone constant geographical and thematic development, contributing to the promotion of effective and adapted responses to the issue of addictions.

■ Prior to the creation of the MedNET network, the Pompidou Group held a conference in Malta in 1999 on "Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region on Drug Use". Several years later, in 2003, in Rabat, the MedSPAD project, an adaptation of ESPAD in Europe, was launched with the aim of conducting the first school surveys in the region that will provide an overview of drug use among young people in schools and their attitudes towards drugs.

■ This MedSPAD project has evolved, setting up a committee to share experiences between European and Mediterranean countries, revising its methodology in 2021 and adopting a new questionnaire with questions

common to the ESPAD 2019 questionnaire, broadening the questions to new psychoactive substances, gambling and the use of social media with the aim of achieving, in the long term, a level of comparability between the countries conducting the MedSPAD survey but also with the countries carrying out the ESPAD survey.

■ MedNET celebrated its 10th anniversary in Rabat in 2016.

■ At present the network has seventeen countries:

- ▶ Ten member countries of the Pompidou Group: Cyprus, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey.
- ▶ Seven non-Pompidou Group countries: Algeria, Egypt, Spain, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine*, Tunisia.

■ The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the European Commission and the WHO participate as observers in the meetings.

■ **The objective of MedNET is to promote cooperation and mutual exchange of knowledge between Mediterranean countries (North-South and South-North) as well as within Mediterranean countries (South-South).**

■ **The ultimate goal is to develop and implement coherent policies on addictive behaviours, based on scientifically validated knowledge.**

Priorities

- ▶ Prevention of addictive behaviour
- ▶ Promotion of the collection of reliable, objective, and comparable data and creation or consolidation of national observatories
- ▶ Development of balanced national strategies
- ▶ Socio-health care of addictive behaviours and risk and harm reduction
- ▶ Law enforcement and combating drug trafficking
- ▶ Training and research

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How the network works

Participation

■ Membership of MedNET is voluntary and based on mutual interest. Any country around the Mediterranean and any country interested in this cooperation can join the network. The membership procedure consists in the sending of a letter of commitment by the Minister in charge of drug policy to the Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group and the nomination of a national representative empowered to commit on behalf of his or her government.

Presidency

■ The Presidency and the Vice-Presidency are held for a period of one or two years in turn by a country from the northern shore and a country from the southern shore. In order to ensure the continuity of the work, the country in charge of the Vice Presidency assume the Presidency the following year. The election is by consensus.

Secretariat

■ The MedNET Secretariat ensures the implementation of the work program and the smooth running of the network, ensuring synergy with the work of the Pompidou Group and other Council of Europe entities.

■ It manages the MedNET budget, composed of voluntary contributions from member countries and other funding sources (Council of Europe, European Commission, etc.).

Meetings

■ The Steering Committee, composed of representatives of the participating countries, meets at least once a year to adopt the work program based on the projects submitted by each country, to review the implementation of ongoing projects and to discuss future activities.

■ The EMCDDA participates in the steering committee and shares its expertise, particularly in data collection and analysis, and in its support for national observatories.

Working methods

■ The MedNET network facilitates the recognition, dissemination and appropriation of good practices and proven experiences in partnership with

other key national and international actors working in the region. In this way, member countries, through their representatives, share and exchange their knowledge and know-how, making available to the network the evidence collected in all the identified areas.

■ They commit themselves to raise awareness of MedNET's actions among the relevant national authorities.

■ An annual activity report presents the national and regional projects implemented.

■ All the work of the MedNET network is subject to regular in-depth evaluation.

Financing

■ MedNET participating countries commit themselves to contribute to the network's budget, either financially or by making their resources available, in order to ensure the implementation of projects.

■ Each project is funded in part by the requesting country and by a financial or in-kind contribution.

- ▶ Voluntary contributions 2006-2021, notably from France and Italy,
- ▶ South Program (2012-2021) funded by the EU and implemented by the Council of Europe
- ▶ Council of Europe Neighbourhood Policy funding since 2016 for the Morocco and Tunisia Action Plans.
- ▶ Funding from the Pompidou Group's Ordinary Budget for MedNET Steering Committee meetings

Added value of the network

- ▶ Adaptation of the methodology and recognized tools to the cultural context of the Southern Mediterranean such as MedSPAD;
- ▶ Support for the launch of national MedSPAD school surveys;
- ▶ First assessment of the situation between the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean by MedSPAD;
- ▶ Support for the implementation and/or change of legislation;
- ▶ Training in the field of health;
- ▶ Support for the creation of care centres;

- ▶ Bridging role between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean;
- ▶ Support for the introduction of different treatment modalities, including opioid substitution therapy;
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming in health care services: women's specific needs in accessing care;
- ▶ Awareness raising and capacity building in the field of drugs through meetings of different agencies from different sectors of prevention, treatment and law enforcement;
- ▶ Flexibility in implementing programs to meet emerging needs;
- ▶ Evaluation of MedNET actions by stakeholders;
- ▶ Value for money and efficiency.

Cooperation with Palestine*

2016

- ▶ Accession of Palestine* to MedNET.

2017

- ▶ Seminar on "Women and Drugs: from policy to good practice", on 26-27 June 2017.
- ▶ Participation to the MedNET steering committee.

2018

- ▶ Field Visit – Evaluation of the Opioid Substitution Programme (OST) for Palestinian Authorities, on 29-31 May 2018 in Ramallah.
- ▶ Participation to the MedNET steering committee.

2019

- ▶ Study visit for a medical team in Lebanon, 28-30 May 2019.
- ▶ Participation to the MedNET steering committee.
- ▶ International Seminar on "Refugees and Drugs: estimating needs, support practice, preventing risks", 7-8 October 2019, Athens, Greece.

2020

- ▶ Training sessions on addictology and prevention, cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic.

- ▶ AIRPORTS GROUP MEETING of the Pompidou Group, 8 September 2020, Videoconference.
- ▶ GENERAL AVIATION MEETING, 9 September 2020, Videoconference.
- ▶ Participation to the MedNET steering committee.

2021

- ▶ Participation to the MedSPAD committee meeting.
- ▶ Implementation of Harm Reduction programme.
- ▶ Provide the Substance Use Disorders (SUD) facilities with Automated Liquid Methadone Dispenser Machines.
- ▶ AIRPORTS GROUP MEETING of the Pompidou Group, 15 June 2021, Videoconference.
- ▶ GENERAL AVIATION MEETING of the Pompidou Group, 16 June 2021, Videoconference.

Impact of MedNET in Palestine*

■ We appreciate the following:

1. Being part of MedNET means being a member of the MedNET steering committee with participation in all the meetings since 2016.
2. MedNET plays an excellent role in capacity building of our team working with SUD patients.
3. MedNET facilitates and supports implementation of several programs in our country such as the Harm Reduction Program.
4. MedNET strengthens the treatment protocols and strategies.
5. MedNET strengthens and supports the studies held in our country related to SUD.
6. MedNET gives us the chance to participate in international studies, and to take part in preparatory plans, participation, & data analysis of the studies
7. MedNET funded instruments and machines needed for the treatment and care of patients with SUD.

Flagship action by MedNET

- ▶ Financial & technical Support.

Role of MedNET in raising awareness, development and implementation of a drug policy in your country

- ▶ Providing the financial support for introducing new medicine, medication, tools & machines to use in treating patients with SUD.
- ▶ Providing financial & technical supports in strategy planning and programs implementation.

- ▶ Supporting team capacity building according to our demands and needs.
- ▶ Inviting & facilitating our participation in international drug meetings.

Role of MedNET in the potential changes of drug law

- ▶ Standing with us to cooperate with the Ministry of Justice to change the drug law in order to integrate human rights in Drug law.

Role of MedNET in research, collection, analysis and interpretation of information, in the setting up, support in the national drug observatory

- ▶ Supporting us and inviting us to take part in the studies, research and updates concerning SUD treatment.
- ▶ Providing us with technical support for data collection, analysis and reporting on national & international levels.

Role of MedNET in treatment and care in Palestine*

- ▶ Providing the required support for new treatment strategies and drug updates.
- ▶ Providing the financial & technical support to provide the required medications & machines that we need in SUD treatment in our centres.
- ▶ Providing financial & technical supports for implementation new programs such as Harm Reduction Program.

Role of MedNET in human rights and access to treatment and care in Palestine*

- ▶ Helping & supporting us to integrate Human Rights in the treatment and care of patients with SUD according to the international human rights declaration.

Role of MedNET in integration Human Rights and gender dimension in actions in the country?

- ▶ Providing us with information & updates concerning human rights for Patients with SUD.
- ▶ Supporting plans and activities related to human rights & gender dimension.
- ▶ Facilitating our participation in meetings & trainings concerning the issue of human rights & gender dimension.

*Role of MedNET in law enforcement in Palestine**

- ▶ Updating us with the international law enforcement procedures.
- ▶ Inviting us to attend & participate in the international meetings related to the law enforcement.
- ▶ Providing the needed support for law enforcement according to our needs.

Pompidou Group

The Pompidou Group is the Council of Europe's international cooperation group on drugs and addictions. It is a multidisciplinary forum at the wider European level where it is possible for policymakers, professionals, and researchers to exchange experiences and information on drugs and addictions. Formed in 1971 at the suggestion of the French President Georges Pompidou, it has become a Council of Europe partial agreement in 1980. In 2021, it gathers 41 countries: 38 among the 47th Member States of the Council of Europe as well as Morocco, Mexico and Israel.

MedNET

MedNET is Mediterranean network for cooperation on drugs and addictions of the Pompidou Group. Created in 2006, its objective is to promote cooperation, 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 2021, seventeen 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, including all 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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