

Gender Dimensions in the Implementation of the MEDICRIME Convention

10th Plenary Meeting
Committee of the
Parties



Why a Gender Perspective is Important

- **Women of all ages use more prescribed and non-prescribed medicines than men in the EU.**
- **Women spend more money** than men in medicines.
- Women experience **more chronic or mental health conditions** and need **longer**, often **more expensive treatments**.
- Women face **higher poverty rates, unequal access to healthcare**, education and employment, and to gendered household roles. These vulnerabilities make them **more prone to buying from illegal markets**, often because they offer more affordable options.



The Council of Europe Gender Equality Approach

Gender Equality Strategy

Equal rights, visibility, empowerment, and access to resources for all.



Two complementary approaches:

1) Gender mainstreaming

Integrating a gender perspective at all stages of policy-making.

2) Specific measures

Targeted actions to promote equality.

Gender mainstreaming tools

- **Gender analysis:** study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. between women and men and their assigned gender roles.
- **Gender impact assessment:** estimation of the different effects (positive, negative or neutral) of any policy or activity implemented to specific items in terms of gender equality.

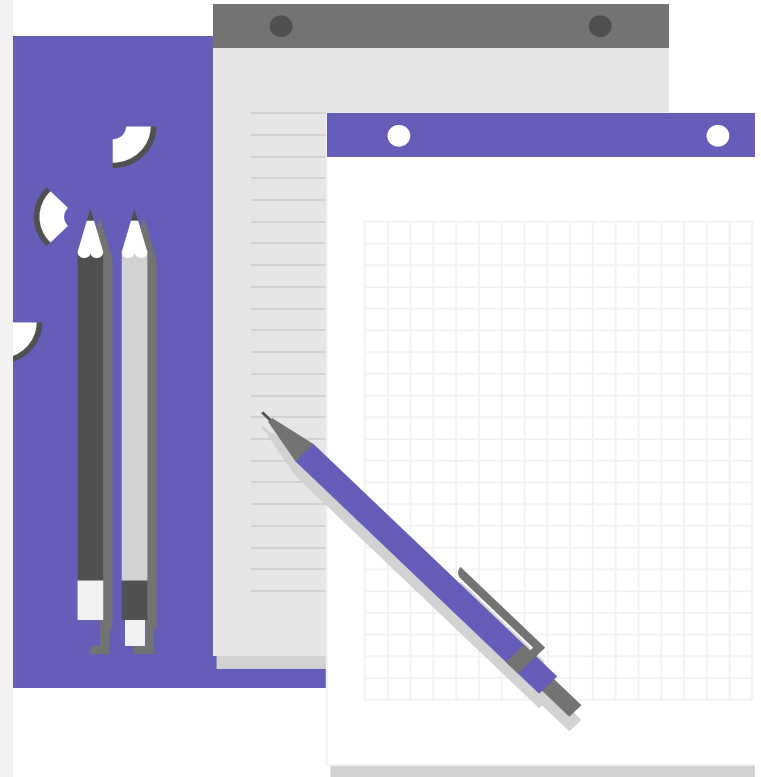
The Proposal

General objective

To strengthen the **protection of women** from the risks associated with counterfeit medical products **by applying a gender equality approach** within the framework of the **MEDICRIME Convention**.

Specific objectives

1. *Assess Gendered Vulnerabilities. Collect and analyse gender disaggregated data.*
2. *Integrate Gender Mainstreaming approach into MEDICRIME Implementation. Develop recommendations to incorporate a gender perspective.*
3. *Ensure Coherence with Council of Europe Gender Policies.*



The Questionnaire

Designed to develop a **baseline study**, the questionnaire aim is to collect data disaggregated by gender on:

- Incidence and types of falsified/counterfeit medical products,
- Current policies or practices addressing gender-specific risks,
- Existing mechanisms for victim assistance and access to justice.

Some preliminary notes

1) Publicity and data protection: Replies are public unless confidentiality is requested (Art. 26.3 RoP). Personal data of contact persons remain confidential.

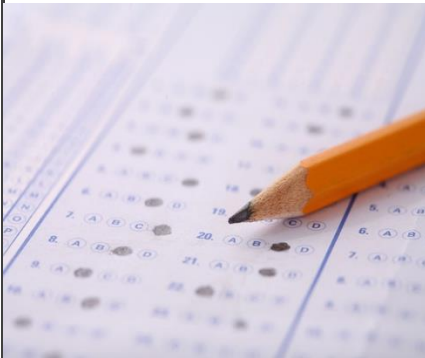
2) Complementarities with MEDICRIME questionnaires: Previous responses will be considered in assessment.

3) The term “counterfeit” as used in the MEDICRIME Convention is synonymous with “falsified”, as employed by other international and regional organisations in relation to medical products (Guidance Note No. 1, adopted by the MEDICRIME Committee at its 7th Plenary Meeting, 28–29 November 2023).

Questionnaire structure and format

Thematic sections

- 1) Incidence and types of counterfeit medical products
- 2) Prevention and awareness
- 3) Detection and alert mechanisms
- 4) Protection of victims and access to justice
- 5) Co-operation, Reporting and data collection
- 6) Good practices
- 7) Toolkit for strengthening gender-responsive implementation



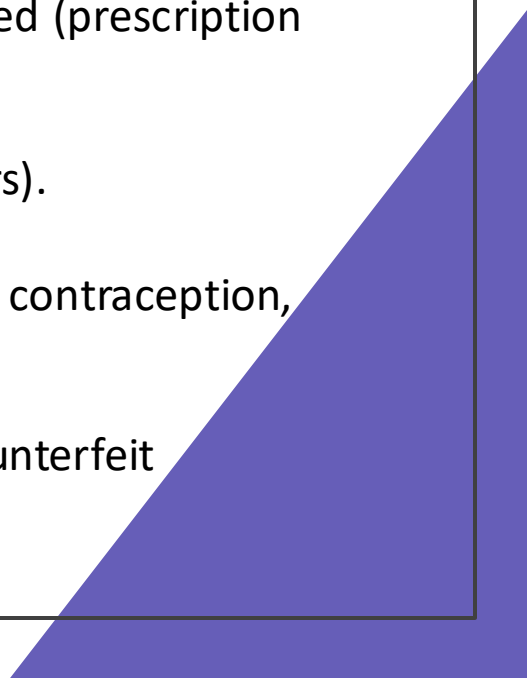
Questions: Mix of closed, multiple-choice and short descriptive questions.

Reference annexes for definitions and list of women-specific products (non-comprehensive).

Section 1 - Incidence and Types of Counterfeit Products

This section aims to collect factual information about cases identified in the State Parties to better understand if there are any differences in impact among men and women.

This section explores:

- **Number and types** of counterfeit medical products identified (prescription medicines, OTC, devices, cosmetics, supplements).
 - **Sales channels** (online pharmacies, cosmetic centres, others).
 - Counterfeit medical products **mainly used by women** (e.g., contraception, pregnancy, menopause).
 - Sales channels through which women tend to purchase counterfeit medicines.
- 

Section 2 – Prevention and Awareness

This section seeks to gather information on preventive measures taken by State Parties and whether vulnerable populations and gender differences were considered in their design and implementation.

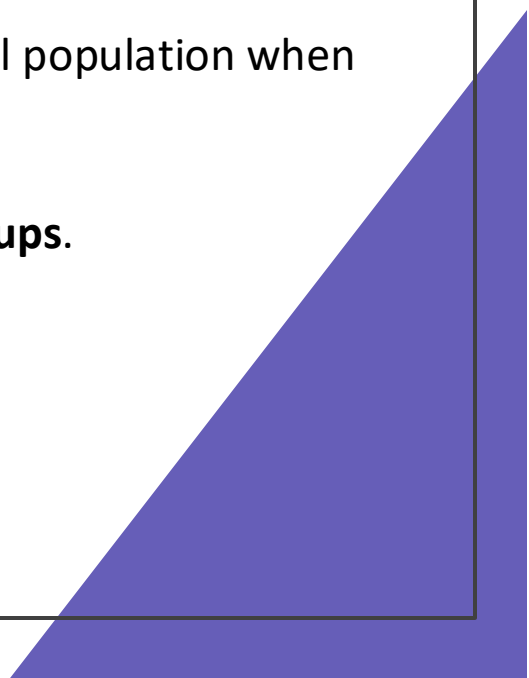
This section explores:

- **Public awareness campaigns** (general and targeted groups, including vulnerable groups).
- **Involvement of women's organisations**, equality bodies, and health NGOs in prevention.
- **Training** for decision makers, healthcare professionals, law enforcement officers, NGOs or regulators to prevent, prosecute and protect the victims that includes a **gender-sensitive perspective**.

Section 3 – Detection and alert

This section aims to determine which mechanisms exist to alert professionals, the general public, and vulnerable populations about counterfeit medicines.

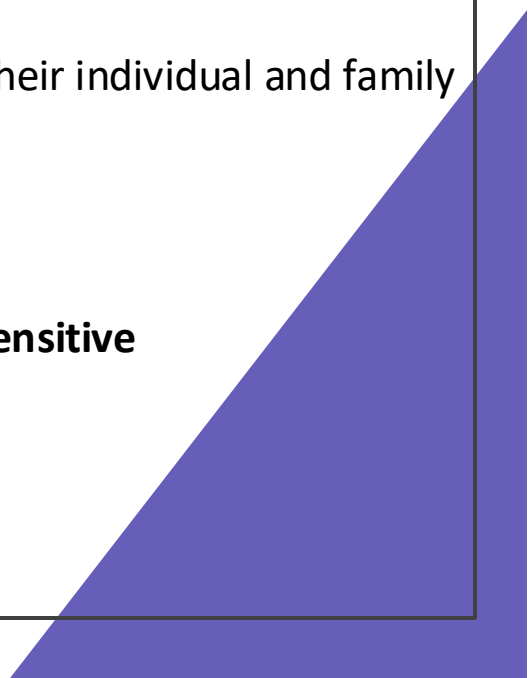
This section explores:

- **Mechanisms and information provided to alert** the general population when counterfeit products are detected.
 - Channels and communication strategies for **vulnerable groups**.
 - Alerts for **healthcare professionals / pharmacists**.
- 

Section 4 – Protection of Victims and Access to Justice

This section seeks to gather information on measures protecting victims and access to justice with a gender-sensitive approach.

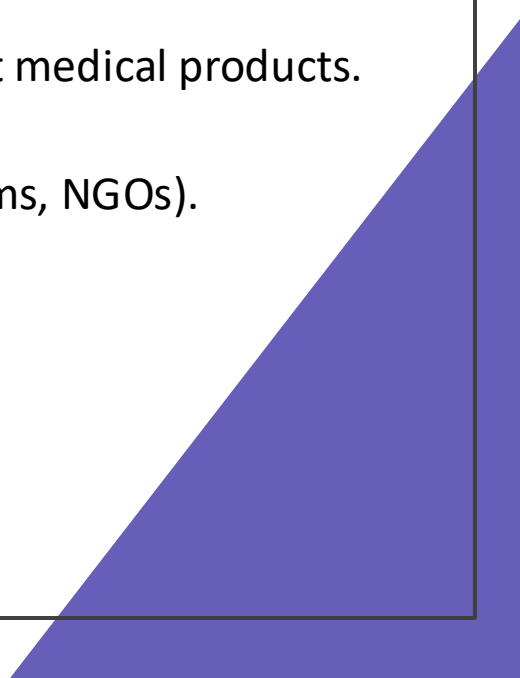
This section explores:

- **Gender-sensitive measures** in investigations and proceedings.
 - **Victim assistance** (physical, psychological, social) considering their individual and family needs.
 - Role of **NGOs** in supporting victims.
 - **Training programmes** for justice professionals with a **gender-sensitive approach**.
 - Collection of **gender-disaggregated judicial data**.
- 

Section 5 – Co-operation, Reporting and Data Collection

This section seeks to collect information about the data collection process and whether any gender-disaggregated data are used to analyse the impact of counterfeit medical products.

This section explores:

- Existence of a **central register** to collect data on counterfeit medical products.
 - **Sources of data** (police, judiciary, health authorities, customs, NGOs).
 - Whether the **data** is **disaggregated by gender**.
 - **Ratio of male to female victims**, where data are available.
- 

Sections 6 and 7 - Good Practices & Toolkit to improve the implementation of the MEDICRIME Convention with a gender equality perspective

These sections explore:

1) **Good practices**: space for Parties to **share good practices** in the design and implementation of gender-sensitive measures in prevention, detection or victim protection.

2) **Toolkit development**.

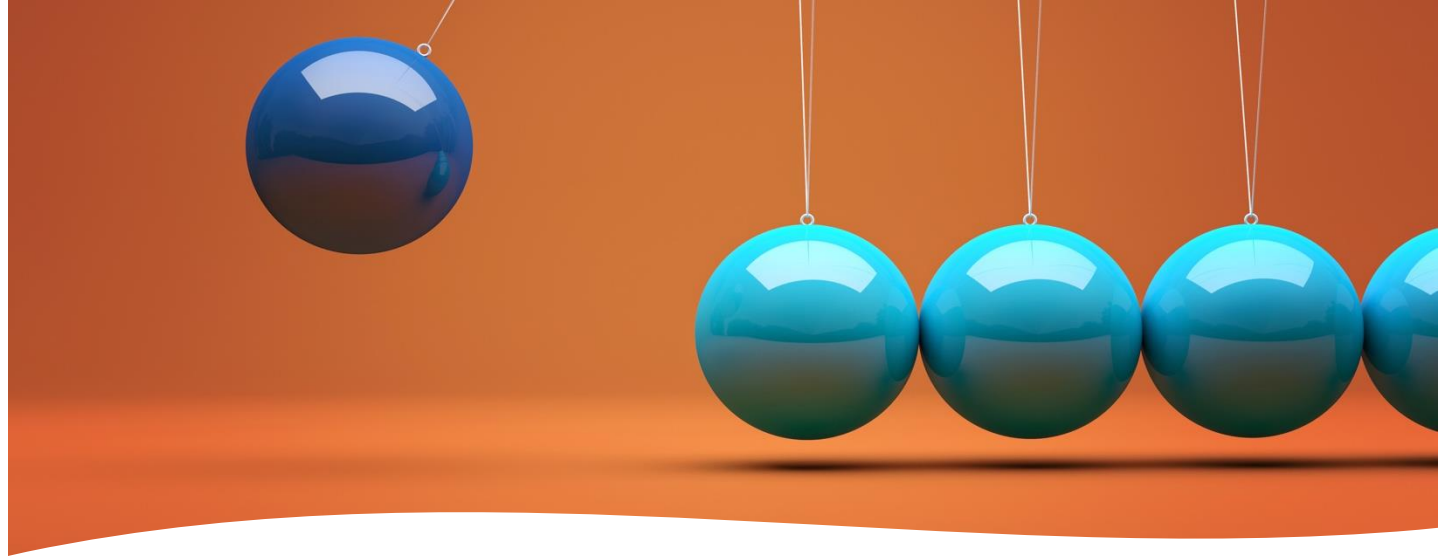
Consult the parties to see if it would be useful to them:

a) Guidelines to understand **gender differences** and design more targeted **prevention campaigns**.

b) Guidelines and/or initiatives aimed at **protecting victims and improving access to justice** through a gender-sensitive approach.

c) Guidelines and training materials on the **collection, recording and analysis of gender-disaggregated data** related to cases of counterfeit medical products.

Expected Outcomes and long-term impact of the proposal



Expected outcomes:

- Baseline study to understand gender dimensions in the implementation of the MEDICRIME Convention.
- Identification of **vulnerabilities and gaps** in prevention and victims' protection.
- **Recommendations** for State Parties.

Long term impact:

-  **More & Better Data** for informed decision-making.
-  **Smarter, More Efficient Policies** protecting all people.
-  **Lower Costs** for health systems and governments.
-  **Stronger Implementation** of the MEDICRIME Convention.

Timeline proposal 2026



January - June: Dissemination of the questionnaire and collection of replies.



July-September: In-depth analysis and drafting of the thematic report.



October-November: Consultation with the Committee of the Parties and Gender Equality bodies.



December (12th Plenary Meeting): Presentation of the thematic report.



Thank you

