

## **Work Programme of the Pompidou Group** **(2026-2029)**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Recent developments show that drug manufacturing and market evolution as well as the spread of digital related addictions entail unprecedented risks and harms for society and individuals. The rapid emergence of synthetic drugs--often produced by criminal networks--introduces unknown health risks and places additional strain on healthcare systems. The spread of addictions generating algorithms in internet-based applications have led to a new wave of behaviour induced dependencies. These trends are frequently exploited by commercial and criminal interests, and organised crime, often targeting vulnerable individuals drawing them into criminal activities.

States are constantly faced with the need to have a multi-faceted approach in the context of biomedicine, health, drugs and addiction policies. The Pompidou Group's theory of change is already built upon a comprehensive four-pillar framework: prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery, and supply reduction. That is, in ensuring that its policies remain firmly grounded in respecting human rights and rule of law principles and builds on preparedness to address public health and security challenges related to drugs and addictions.

This approach acknowledges the nature of drug policies, emphasising not only the harm reduction and treatment of addictions but also aims at proactive prevention strategies and through a responsible and well-orchestrated supply control. This is expected to lead to tangible improvements in national policies, including enhanced legal safeguards, reduced harm, increased access to treatment and more effective supply control mechanisms in place.

By integrating these elements, the Pompidou Group aims to uphold human dignity while addressing the complex challenges posed by substance use and addiction[s].

### **II. PILLARS**

During the 2023-2025 work programme, the Pompidou Group continued to contribute to support the development of drug policies that strike a critical balance between safeguarding public health safety and security while upholding the protection of the individuals' rights. It promotes humane and sustainable drug policies by providing multidisciplinary responses to address problems resulting from substance use and addictive behaviours.

Given the global nature of drug problems, Pompidou Group has established itself as a bridge between Europe and other continents. It provides a forum for open debate to discuss different approaches to drug policy, offers innovative solutions, facilitates capacity building across disciplines to enhance knowledge for better informed and evidence-based drug policy choices.

From here on, it has embarked on a new chapter, focusing on policy development in the form of standards and future instruments for the Council of Europe member States. This undoubtedly,

will enhance the guidance and resources for policymakers, managers, and practitioners working in the realm of drug policy sectors. This will be thereby fostering a more informed and strategic approach to drug policy making and management.

The Pompidou Group's approach, grounded in a clear **four pillar basis**, aims to ensure that the legal and policy framework is aligned with the Council of Europe's core values--that is the Organisation's theory of change.<sup>1</sup> The intervention's logical framework would require to further be focused on developing standards and tools through evidence-informed recommendations for drug and addiction policies.

Cooperation facilitates capacity-building and cross-sector collaboration through training, policy guidance, networking and resource provision would allow for immediate outcomes. Only on such basis, member States will be able to develop informed, human rights-compliant strategies and policies related to drugs, illicit activities and addictions. Over time, states adjust legislation and practices to reflect these principles, creating a tangible impact where individuals benefit from enhanced protection, harm reduction, treatment and recovery and supply reduction.

**These pillars** will serve as integral part of the intervention framework, ensuring a comprehensive, sustainable, transversal and inclusive approach to drug and addiction policy. They will enrich the direction of the work programme, adding framework to strategic elements while supporting a well-informed and structured implementation over the next four years.

#### Prevention:

- ☐ **Evidence-informed and inclusive** prevention programmes for substance use and addictions (high risk population, youth, vulnerable adults).
- ☐ Effective **policies addressing risks associated** with online gambling and gaming.

#### Harm Reduction:

- ☐ Effective **harm reduction initiatives and services** addressing adverse health and social consequences of use of drugs and addictions.
- ☐ **Therapeutic communities** for substance use disorders and addictions

#### Treatment and Recovery:

- ☐ **Evidence-based treatment** approaches for substance use disorders and addictions,
- ☐ **Accessible, specialised and humane treatment** for individuals involved in drug-related violence.

#### Supply Reduction:

- ☐ **Drug Precursors, production and distribution chain.**
- ☐ **Law enforcement and Customs:** strategies, capacities and networks (air, maritime, land).
- ☐ **Organised crime, drug trafficking and drug related offences**

**Target Groups:** shall include education establishments, penitentiary and incarceration institutions, social and community centres, public national authorities, professional environments and society as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe programme and budget 2024-2027.

### III. PRIORITIES

Promoting human rights and the rule of law in drug and addiction policies is essential for upholding individual dignity. This approach ensures that interventions respect the dignity of individuals affected by substance use, while integrating medical, social, and psychological support systems, rather than simply treating them as problems to be solved. By integrating medical, social, and psychological support systems, we can break the cycle of addiction and provide a more comprehensive response to the issue. Moreover, this approach can also build in disrupting and combating organised crime and drug trafficking, which often exploit vulnerable individuals for financial gain.

Addressing the link between mental health and substance use disorder calls for specialised interventions for complex co-occurring conditions. Adapting to emerging challenges, such as synthetic drugs and societal changes, enhances policymaking. Strengthening civil society's role encourages diverse perspectives in policy design, while improving international cooperation facilitates effective cross-border action against drug-related issues such as organised crime, drug trafficking and drug production.

A holistic approach to drug and addiction policies will require integrating medical, psychological, social, and legal frameworks for sustainable solutions. Further, it will require person-centered interventions that address root causes rather than symptoms. So, prioritising will ensure a balanced approach between measures concerning public health and public safety and security. Thus, collaboration and support among member States, civil society, and communities will further enhance inclusivity, reduces stigma, uphold human rights and strengthen rule of law.

Based on the proposed themes, actions, activities, interventions and needs presented by member States, six identified strategic priorities for Pompidou Group for the period of 2026-2029 has been drawn up, addressing drug and addiction policies through a human rights-based and rule of law balanced approach.

Each priority contributes to a broader vision, emphasising prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and supply reduction.

<b>Priority 1:</b>	<b>Promoting human rights in drug and addiction policies</b>
<b>Priority 2:</b>	<b>Supporting a comprehensive approach to addictions</b>
<b>Priority 3:</b>	<b>Addressing the intersection between mental health and substance use disorders</b>
<b>Priority 4:</b>	<b>Reinforcing international cooperation</b>
<b>Priority 5:</b>	<b>Enhancing the role of civil society in drug and addiction policy design</b>
<b>Priority 6:</b>	<b>Responding to the emerging challenges</b>

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#### IV. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK: ACTIONS & DELIVERABLES

Pompidou Group' Statutory Programme Interventions (2026-2029)					CoE/EBR <sup>2</sup> Relevant Cooperation Support / Interventions
Expected Results /Outcomes		Deliverables / Actions	Budgetary Reference	Proposed <sup>3</sup> Timeline	
ER. 1 Integration of Human Rights in Drug and Addiction Policies					
1.1	Available <u>policy guidelines</u> bringing <u>human rights</u> to the heart of drug and addiction policies	1.1.1 States engage to implement comprehensive policy guidelines that embed human rights' principles at the core of drug and addiction policies, ensuring ethical and rights-based approaches in legislation and practice		Q1-Q4 2026  Q1-Q4 2027	
		1. Support member States to develop and disseminate policy frameworks that integrate human rights protections into drug and addiction policies.			
		2. Enhance further application of policy guidelines based on good practices and international standards while providing capacity-building support to policymakers and practitioners for effective implementation and adherence to human rights principles.			
1.2	Effective assessment of the alignment of state's <u>drug and addiction policies</u> with human rights standards	1.2.1 Engagement and use of Human Rights Assessment (IT)Tool		2026-2029	
		3. Ensure consistency and effectiveness of the tool and that it meets its end objective as well as levelling the alignment of drug and addiction policies with international human rights standards.			
		4. Recommendations on the optimisation and future improvements of HR Assessment IT Tool.			
1.3	Introduced <u>standards on Integrating human rights</u> in	1.3.1 Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Human rights on Drug Policies		Q1-Q4 2026 2026-2029	

<sup>2</sup> External Budgetary Resources of Council of Europe: [link](#)

<sup>3</sup> Time-linen to be finalised by end of October2025 – prior to submission, followed by budgetary references.

Pompidou Group' Statutory Programme Interventions (2026-2029)						CoE/EBR <sup>2</sup> Relevant Cooperation Support / Interventions
Expected Results /Outcomes		Deliverables / Actions		Budgetary Reference	Proposed <sup>3</sup> Timeline	
	drug and addiction policies (DH-PDA)	5.	Policy development of the CM subordinate body DH-PDA to draft a Committee of Ministers recommendation ( <i>standard setting procedure</i> ).			
		6.	Introduction, launching, implementation and monitoring of the newly adopted Committee of Ministers Recommendation.			
1.4	Incorporated <u>gender equality, children and anti-stigma components</u> into the design of drug and addiction policies	1.4.1	<b>Implementation of the Guide on integrating gender and children's rights in services for families affected by drug use at national level[s]</b>		Q4 2026- Q42028	
		7.	Develop Advisory Note[s] on trauma-informed approaches for youth and families, educators, healthcare providers and policymakers to integrate perspectives focusing on gender equality, children's rights and non-stigmatization.			
		8.	Facilitate and support inclusion of customised guidance non-stigmatising language tools for use and application by national authorities' policy makers and school curricula/establishments.			
ER. 2 Comprehensive Drug and Addiction Policies and Legal Frameworks						
2.1	Available <u>strategies at reducing risks and harms related to online addictions</u>	2.1.1	<b>Development of intervention strategies in preventing digital addiction while promoting the mental health of children and youth</b>		Q1 2026 – Q4 2029	
		9.	Support member States in designing and implementing cohesive addiction policies that integrate health, law enforcement, and social services.			
		10.	Continue to address new forms of addictions especially the new prevention practices for a digital world - exploring available on-line interventions and tools on self-help and treatment.			
		11.	Promote public awareness initiatives and evidence informed educational programmes (in cooperation with EUDA and WHO) that mitigate the impact of social media addiction among children and youth.			

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		<b>12.</b> Support design of national strategies to address digital and social media addiction in educational institutions (integrating preventive measures and intervention frameworks).			
2.2	Introduced Standards and regulatory options reducing risks and harms related to <u>online/digital addictions</u> linked to mental health	<b>2.2.1 Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Online/Digital Addiction</b>		Q1 2026 – Q4 2029	
		<b>13.</b> Addressing the Risks of Online Gambling and Gaming.			
		<b>14.</b> Policy development of the CM subordinate body CD-OnAD to draft a Committee of Ministers recommendation ( <i>standard setting procedure</i> ).			
		<b>15.</b> Introduction, launching, implementation and monitoring of the newly adopted Committee of Ministers Recommendation.			
2.3	Innovative approaches to <u>drug policy and legal frameworks</u>	<b>2.3.1 Available tools and advisory notes on comprehensive regulation of substances and on rights-based responses to drug-related offenses</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>16.</b> Provision of analysis of legal frameworks (concerning use of cannabis) on consumption patterns and risky use as well as their impact on consumption rates and related offences.			
		<b>17.</b> Encouraging the adoption of non-coercive alternatives to sanctions, in line with human rights standards; while conducting comparative analysis of the criminalisation of cannabis (and other substances) use vis-à-vis the overall consequences.			
		<b>18.</b> Development of comprehensive tools to enhance capacities of justice system professionals to apply rights-based approaches to drug-related offenses throughout all stages of the criminal justice process.			
2.4	Addressing diverse behaviours and emerging <u>substances</u>	<b>2.4.1 Expanded Focus on Diverse Addictive Behaviours/Addictions</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>19.</b> Studies on alcohol use, including risk-controlled consumption, alternative therapies and implications for responsible use and regulation.			

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		<b>20.</b> Research and review on whether to include products that mimic or are associated with illicit drug use—such as “energising powders” (e.g., “Sniffy”) and similar items—and consideration of related bans.			
		<b>21.</b> A comprehensive report identifying the risks and harms associated with addictions beyond illegal drugs (such as alcohol, tobacco, and vaping), developed in close collaboration with WHO to ensure alignment and prevent duplication of efforts, grounded in current scientific evidence and public health perspectives.			
2.5	Introduced evidence-informed <u>strategies for inclusive drug policies</u>	<b>2.5.1</b> <b>Research and policy development addressing the intersection of drug use and homelessness, emphasising human rights and social inclusion</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>22.</b> Studies and stakeholder consultations to inform strategies that integrate housing, addiction support, and social services, ensuring comprehensive and inclusive drug policies that address the social determinants of health.			
		<b>23.</b> Bridging housing, social services, and addiction support for marginalised communities.			
ER. 3 Enhanced Harm reduction and Treatment Strategies					
3.1	Intersection between <u>mental health</u> and <u>substance use disorder</u>	<b>3.1.1</b> <b>Enhanced harm reduction strategies and treatment tailored to national contexts, integrating mental health and addiction assessments to address gaps and propose effective solutions</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>24.</b> Explore harm reduction and treatment interventions, facilitating discussions on innovative approaches while assessing mental health and addiction interactions to strengthen policy responses.			
		<b>25.</b> Available guidance and strategies for national contexts.			

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		<b>26.</b> Public awareness and training/outreach strategies promoting understanding of the complex relationships (between mental health disorder, substance use disorder and other addictions).			
3.2	Supported innovative therapies and harm reduction strategies for poly-substance use	<b>3.2.1 New treatment and harm reduction approaches for poly-substance use</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>27.</b> Promotion, access and dissemination of scientific research on developments of psychedelic-assisted treatments and their model corresponding framework-conditions, including evidence-based approaches.			
		<b>28.</b> Balancing innovation with human rights and patient safety (linked to the Human Rights Self-Assessment Tool)			
ER. 4 Reinforced International and regional Cooperation and Networks					
4.1	Strengthened cooperation with international organisations: EU / EUDA, UNODC, OSCE, OCHR, CICAD/OAS and WHO promoting knowledge, research, data, practices and capacity building	<b>4.1.1 Enhanced co-operation in increasing knowledge and expertise to address emerging trends and challenges on drug and addictions policies</b>		2026-2028	
		<b>29.</b> Facilitate cross-border knowledge exchange and joint initiatives to enhance policy responses, tools and intervention strategies in SEE, MEDNET and CICAD regions			
		<b>30.</b> Reinforced Drug Policy Academy in cooperation with international stakeholders to enhance its policy development and knowledge building capacities.			
4.2	Re-enforced professional network (Medicine Protocols) platform on drug and addiction policies	<b>4.2.1 Available tools for policy formulation on controlled medicines like benzodiazepines and opioids to prevent misuse and inadequate prescriptions</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>31.</b> Platform for member States to share practices, research and policies on the risks of over-prescribing psychoactive medicines, promoting regulatory controls and addressing substance abuse and addictive behaviours.			



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		<b>32.</b> Policy recommendations for rational use of controlled medicines, including clear deprescribing protocols aimed at reducing misuse and promoting safer prescribing practices across Europe.			
		<b>33.</b> Create synergies between enhanced Controlled Deliveries (CD) with CoE tools on Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) in criminal matters			
<b>ER. 5 Strengthened Civil Society's role in Drug and Addiction Policy Design</b>					
5.1	Partnerships with <u>civil society</u> resulting to an increased capacity to engage in <u>advocacy</u> and policy work	<b>5.1.1 Enabled advocacy and policy engagement of civil society via structured exchanges and pilot initiatives</b>		2026-2029	
		<b>34.</b> Facilitate regular exchanges with up to four civil society organizations—including one representing people with lived experience—to discuss engagement criteria, collaborate on initiatives, and develop inclusive recommendations.			
		<b>35.</b> Piloting implementation of the study recommendations on Integrating "Gender and Children's Rights in Services for Families Affected by Drug Use", in particular through programmes for children and youth as well as people with lived and living experiences.			
5.2	Comprehensive and <u>inclusive</u> approach to <u>treatment and addiction policies</u> , developed in consultation with individuals with lived experiences and their families	<b>5.2.1 Expanded engagement of people who use drugs in policy discussions</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>36.</b> Awareness and consulting fora with international partners and NGOs advocating inclusive, and evidence-based and informed approaches highlighting the role of people with lived and living experiences during policy development processes.			
		<b>37.</b> Integration of gender-sensitive approaches and consideration of family, parental and workplace roles in prevention and responsible use strategies in line with Council of Europe equality standards.			

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ER. 6 Address Current and Emerging Challenges					
6.1	Addressing <u>organised crime</u> relating to <u>drug trafficking</u> as an on-going <u>threat to public health and security</u>	<b>6.1.1 Committee of Ministers Recommendation on policy guidelines in combating organised crime relating to drug trafficking (OC-DT)</b>		2026-2027	
		<b>38.</b> Background Study on policy guidelines required for combating organised crime relating to drug trafficking, based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.			
		<b>39.</b> Promotion of Policy Guidelines to combat organised crime relating to drug trafficking based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights			
		<b>40.</b> Introduction, launching, implementation and monitoring of the newly adopted Committee of Ministers Recommendation on combating organised crime as a form of drug trafficking.			
6.2	Addressing the <u>drugs and addictions</u> challenges as part of complex issues for vulnerable populations in <u>migration</u> contexts	<b>6.2.1 Available policy responses addressing addiction challenges among migrants and asylum seekers</b>		2028-2029	
		<b>41.</b> Assessment of gender equality perspective and of societal impacts <u>to</u> inform anti-discrimination efforts and tailored interventions for vulnerable migrant populations.			
		<b>42.</b> Advisory Note[s] / Policy development on tools for addressing addiction challenges among migrants and asylum seekers context.			
6.3	Comprehensive analysis addressing <u>recruitment of youth</u> and distribution of <u>illicit substances</u> by criminal organisation <u>targeting increasingly younger populations</u>	<b>6.3.1 Measures to address use of vulnerable group ages (minors/young adults) by criminal organisations, in drug-related crimes</b>		2026-2028	
		<b>43.</b> Develop and implement targeted intervention programmes that provide at-risk youth and young adults with education, mentorship, and alternative opportunities to prevent involvement, engagement, access and exploitation.			

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		<b>44.</b> Facilitate the exchange of good practices, emphasising pathways of rehabilitation-focused strategies that recognise vulnerable youth as both victims and perpetrators, while promoting comprehensive legal frameworks and justice systems that have shown evidence-based impact.			
6.4	Guidance in handling and exploring new <u>methods</u> vis-à-vis the growing threat of high-potency <u>synthetic substances</u> , new drug mixtures as well as evolving consumption patterns.	<b>6.4.1 Guidance on preventing and reducing illicit drug and precursor trafficking</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>45.</b> Networking and knowledge exchange among member states, promoting general health good practices that integrate law enforcement, social services, education, and mental health support.			
		<b>46.</b> Capacity building and access to advanced tools on the latest scientific discoveries aimed at the implementation of effective investigations on precursor research and search as well as the role of police in drug prevention.			
6.5	Enhanced capacities for <u>co-ordination</u> and <u>cooperation among law enforcement agencies</u> (including customs).	<b>6.5.1 Increased capacities of law enforcement authorities to prevent, combat, and dismantle drug production and trafficking (air, maritime and land domains)</b>		2027-2029	
		<b>47.</b> Evolving Law Enforcement conference into a platform – on exchange of views, patterns and trends while ensuring effective implementation and share of tools on drug-related strategies, improved operational capacities and strengthened international and interagency cooperation.			
		<b>48.</b> Facilitating access to frameworks and regulatory protocols for law enforcement and customs agencies across air, maritime, and land domains in Europe			

## V. ANNEX I. REFERENCE FROM THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET 2024-2027<sup>4</sup>

### Health and human rights / Sub-Programme (Pompidou Group)

*“The Council of Europe has played a pioneering role in developing standards in emerging and new policy areas and we underline our collective determination to address current and future challenges (...)”* [Reykjavik Declaration](#)

#### Main Output

**Standard Setting:** Recommendation[s] in the fields of drug and addictions policies. Reports.

**Cooperation:** Capacity-building activities, Legal, technical support, advice Policy papers, guidance documents on drugs and addictions Manuals, online resources, networks Training, seminars, workshops Publications, audiovisuals, interactive applications

**Immediate Outcome** Member States have increased their capacity to make informed and evidence-based drug policy choices in line with human rights standards and to effectively work across sectors and disciplines making efficient use of resources

**Intermediate Outcome** States change their drug and addiction policies, legislation and practice in line with Council of Europe core values to address the problems of drug use and addictions

**Impact** Member States fulfil their obligations to effectively protect human rights in the fields of biomedicine and health.

Persons enjoy their rights in the fields of biomedicine and health.

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<sup>4</sup> CM(2025)1, 1513<sup>th</sup> Meeting , 27 November 2024; publication of 16 December 2024 (2025 adjusted)

## **VI. ANNEX II: SAMPLE INDICATORS OF IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES**

Number of Policy and Advocacy documents produced, facilitated and introduced as Policy Guidance documents

Number of Policy Guidance documents provided

Number of guidance strategies developed for tackling mental health issues and SUD

Number of supported advised and developed strategies to disrupt trafficking of drugs

Number of partnerships with civil society and people who use drugs

Number of prevention programmes implemented

Number of harm reduction services established and supported

Number of individuals treated for substance use disorders

Reduction in substance use and related harm among high-risk populations

Number of law enforcement officials trained

Number of supported advised and developed strategies to combat trafficking of drugs

Number and Types of Employment and education trainings

Housing and stabilisation services

Improved (measured) Effectiveness of Drug Policies

Reduced substance use and related harm among high-risk populations

Increased access to harm reduction services

Improved treatment outcomes for individuals with substance use disorders

Enhanced collaboration and cooperation among Pompidou Group member countries

Reduced trafficking of drugs and related harm