

2026 MEDICRIME Conference: Call for Wider Accession to the MEDICRIME Convention

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News

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On 28 April 2026, high-level representatives from health, law enforcement, customs, and judicial authorities, as well as from international organisations and the private sector [adopted conclusions on the MEDICRIME Convention](#). The Council of Europe's MEDICRIME Convention is the only international criminal law instrument aimed at preventing and combating threats to public health. It identifies activities endangering public health as criminal offences, protects victims' rights, and provides the basis for efficient national and international cooperation. It entered into force on 1 January 2016 (→[eucrim 2/2016](#), 84-85; see also [eucrim 1/2025](#), 40-41 and [eucrim 4/2021](#), 233).

At a conference in Chişinău, organised by the Council of Europe together with the Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices of the Republic of Moldova's Ministry of Health, participants acknowledged the growing global threat posed by the falsification of medical products and related crimes. They pointed out that criminal networks are increasingly exploiting online sales, social media, encrypted apps, and e-commerce platforms to distribute falsified products. Of particular concern are lifestyle products, such as weight-loss and performance-enhancing drugs, which promise high profits for organised crime. At the same time, emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, are being used to generate fake endorsements and testimonials. Other concerns include the falsification of veterinary medical products and the increasing circulation of illicit medical products in sports.

Against this backdrop, the conclusions include a number of recommendations for future actions, among other things:

- Strengthening the promotion of further accessions of State Parties to the MEDICRIME Convention;
- Strengthening the 24/7 Network on cooperation and information exchange;
- Addressing emerging threats through guidance and monitoring;
- Enhancing national multi-agency cooperation and expanding international partnerships.

Other priority areas include raising public awareness, particularly about the risks associated with online purchases, and strengthening victim protection and access to justice.

At the conference in Chişinău, the committee of parties to the MEDICRIME convention also adopted a [new report on "The Medicrime Convention in the age of AI: challenges and opportunities"](#). This report was prepared by Prof. *Fernando Miró Llinares* from the University Miguel Hernández of Elche (Spain). It evaluates the impact of AI on the applicability and relevance of the MEDICRIME Convention, and reflects on the need to

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update, reinterpret, or strengthen the provisions of the Convention considering the emerging challenges associated with AI.

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