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## **Council of Europe: Pompidou Group, ministerial conference on drugs and drug addiction policies**

The promotion of “sustainable drug policies respectful of human rights” will be the focus of the 18th Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group – the main European forum on drug policies – that will take place in Lisbon on 13-14 December. Ministers, government representatives, drug policy experts, law enforcement officials, health and justice workers, and civil society representatives will meet in the Portuguese capital to “assess the impact of current trends in drug use and other addictions, including online addictions, such as online betting and gambling”, a statement reads. The Conference will also mark the handover of the Presidency from Portugal to Italy, which will be represented by Under-Secretary Alfredo Mantovano. The Ministers will adopt a final declaration which will indicate the Group’s general political direction for the coming years. The Group was founded in 1971 by former French President Georges Pompidou, who in August of that year had shared with some European prime ministers his concerns about the dramatic increase in drug addiction.

Sarah Numico