



Strasbourg/Yerevan, 16 July 2019

**Council of Europe's youth policy advisory mission to Armenia
(16-18 July 2019)**

Concept note and draft programme

1/ Background

At the invitation of the national authorities, a Council of Europe's expert team will visit Armenia on 16-18 July 2019 in order to advise the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia (Youth Policy Department) on the revision of the national youth strategy, in line with the Council of Europe's standards in the field of youth.

This mission will be organised at a crucial juncture in the national political context, which might entail significant changes in the national youth policy.

This advisory mission is part of the package of [intergovernmental assistance measures to member states](#) in the field of youth proposed by the Council of Europe. It is organised under the aegis of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ).

The Council of Europe's [youth policy advisory missions](#) aim at providing targeted expertise and advice from international experts to the requesting authorities. A team of up to five independent experts will visit the country to conduct the assessment and prepare their recommendations according to Council of Europe norms and standards. The team will be supported by a representative of the national authorities with relevant language and thematic expertise.

A concise report containing concrete and practical recommendations pertinent to the youth policy development issues of concern to the country will be produced for the authorities after the advisory mission, for possible follow-up in the immediate and medium terms.

More background information can be found on the Council of Europe's [youth portal](#).

2/ Overall aim of the youth policy advisory mission

The overall aim of this advisory mission is to prepare **recommendations** to the authorities (Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport) on the **revision of the national youth strategy of Armenia**, notably on the basis of the Council of Europe's norms and standards in the field of youth.

A written report summarising the Council of Europe expert team's recommendations will be addressed to the authorities after the advisory mission.

3/ Objectives

The **objectives** of the youth policy advisory mission are to provide **practical advice** to the authorities of Armenia, so that the **national youth strategy** (provisions, mechanisms and instruments) can be:

- **relevant** and meaningful;
- **participatory** (involvement of the major stakeholders);
- **sustainable** (capacity-building for its effective implementation);
- **values-based** (on the basis of the Council of Europe standards in the field of youth).

To this end, the youth policy advisory mission will **focus on some of the following aspects** or themes:

- The **contents of the national youth strategy**: main provisions; rationale underpinning the strategy; roles, responsibilities and mandates of key stakeholders; how it is envisaged to work/be implemented.
- **Achievements and challenges**: what has been done so far (successes); what is proving to be most problematic (barriers to implementation); lessons learned.
- The **principles and practices of good governance** to be followed in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national youth strategy:
 - participatory approach: why and how to engage youth and youth organisations in the national youth strategy (barriers, challenges and possible solutions)
 - strategy development process: how was the national youth strategy drafted? who was involved?
 - cooperation between key stakeholders of the youth sector for effective youth policy implementation;
 - local experiences of national youth policy implementation (what can we learn from such experiences for the process going forward);
 - effort to enhance the coherence, transparency, information flow and sharing in implementation of the national youth strategy.
- How to design and implement a **values-based** national youth strategy?
 - main Council of Europe standards in the field of youth;
 - how to integrate them in the national youth strategy and implement them.

4/ The Council of Europe's expert team

In accordance with standard practice, the delegation will be composed of a member of the [European Steering Committee for Youth](#) (CDEJ), a member of the [Advisory Council on Youth](#) (CCJ), a representative of the [European Youth Forum](#) (YFJ), a youth-policy expert/general rapporteur, as well as a representative of the Council of Europe's secretariat.

The Council of Europe's expert team will be composed as follows:

- CDEJ representative: **Ivan Hromada** (vice-chair of the European Steering Committee for Youth)
- CCJ representative: **Andrea Ugrinoska** (Bureau member of the Advisory Council on Youth)
- YFJ representative: **Ville Majamaa** (Vice President of the European Youth Forum)
- General rapporteur: **Howard Williamson** (Professor of European Youth Policy)
- Secretariat's representative: **Florian Cescon** (Head of the Youth Policy Division, Council of Europe)

5/ National representatives and stakeholders

Throughout the youth policy advisory mission, the Council of Europe's expert team will have an opportunity to exchange views with representatives of some of the following stakeholders, involved in the national youth policy:

- Ministries (Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia; other key line Ministries with an active involvement in youth related policy implementation)
- key youth organisations involved in the national youth strategy
- Key partners of governmental authorities engaging with youth related issues
- Key development actors or non-governmental organisations engaging with youth related issues (such as youth centres, local and regional authorities, research institutions active on youth policy related issues, etc.)

6/ Draft programme

On this basis, the draft programme below was prepared jointly by the Council of Europe's Youth Policy Division and the Youth Policy Department of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia.

It might be modified or adapted during the visit itself, according to needs or circumstances.

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Monday 15 July 2019

- Throughout the day Arrival of the expert team at Yerevan "Zvartnots" Airport
Self-organised transfers from the airport to the hotel ("City" taxi service)
Check-in at [Best Western Congress Hotel](#)
- 19.00-21.00 **Preparatory dinner** between representatives of the Council of Europe's expert team and of the Youth Department

Tuesday 16 July 2019

- 10.00-10.15 Departure from Best Western Congress Hotel to Ibis Yerevan Centre
- 10.15-10.45 Registration (coffee break included)

Session I: Opening, welcome and objectives

- 10.45.-11.00 Welcome address from the Armenian authorities
Gevorg Loretsyan, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia
Arman Udumyan - Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia
- 11.00-11.30 Introduction of participants
- 11.30-12.00 Framework and objectives of the advisory mission: the Council of Europe's youth policy approaches and assistance to members states
Florian Cescon, Head of the Youth Policy Division, Council of Europe

Session II: the draft national youth strategy 2019-2023 - state of play and initial discussion

- 12.00-12.30 Presentation of the draft of the national youth strategy **2019-2023** (main provisions; rationale; roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders; implementation)
Tamara Torosyan, Head of Youth Policy Department, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia
- Initial feedback from the Council of Europe's expert team
- 13.00-14.00 Lunch

Sessions III: Achievements, challenges and key elements to consider

Exchange of views between:

- ✓ the Council of Europe's expert team
- ✓ representatives of national authorities (Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, Ministry of Justice)
- ✓ key organisations involved in the national youth strategy (organisations, partners, international organisations and donors)

14.00-15.00 → *Focus of the discussion: contents of the draft national youth strategy*

15.00 -16.00 → *Focus of the discussion: achievements and challenges*

- *what has been done so far? (successes)*
- *what is proving to be most problematic? (barriers to implementation)*
- *what are the lessons learned?*

16.00-16.30 Coffee break

16.30-17.30 → *Focus of the discussion: key elements to be considered in the national youth policy, for instance:*

- *participatory approach*
- *strategy development process*
- *co-operation between stakeholders*
- *coherence, transparency, information sharing*
- *capacity-building*
- *Council of Europe standards in the field of youth*

17.30-18.00 Conclusions of the day

19.00 Dinner

Wednesday 17 July 2019

Session IV: the national youth strategy in practice: a field visit to Gyumri

08.30	Departure from Yerevan
8.30-10.30	Travel from Yerevan to Gyumri
10.30-11.15	Meeting with Samvel Balasanyan, mayor of the city of Gyumri
11.45-13.00	Meeting with local youth organizations at Gyumri's Center for Youth Initiatives
13.30-15.00	Lunch at Florence Gyumri restaurant
15.00-16.00	Meeting with Tigran Petrosyan, governor of the Shirak province
16.00-17.30	Visit to Gyumri's "Youth House" Open Youth Center
17.30-18.30	Short tour of Gyumri (including Black Fortress)
18.30-20.30	Travel back from Gyumri to Yerevan
21.00	Free evening in Yerevan

Thursday 18 July 2019

10.00-10.15 Departure from Best Western Congress Hotel to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport

Session V: Preliminary conclusions and next steps

10.00-11.00 Exchange of views between the Council of Europe's expert team and the Deputy Minister on the preliminary conclusions

Including initial oral report of the General Rapporteur:
Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy

11.00-12.30 Exchange of views between the Council of Europe's expert team and the Youth Policy Department

→ *Focus of the discussion:*

- *feedback from the advisory mission so far (including field visit)*
- *discussion on preliminary recommendations and next steps*

12.30 **End of official programme** of the youth policy advisory mission

13.00 Lunch

14.00 - 18.00 **Starting to draft the recommendations**
[meeting open to Council of Europe's expert team only]

19.00 Dinner

Friday 19 July 2019

Throughout the day Check-out from [Best Western Congress Hotel](#)
Self-organised transfers from the hotel to the airport
Departure of the Council of Europe's expert team from Yerevan "Zvartnots" Airport