

DFD-YD/ETD (2026) 68 rev

Strasbourg, 21 April 2026



Building Futures: Legal Pathways and Psychosocial Support for Young Refugees and Migrants in transition to adulthood

*Seminar on strengthening the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on
Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood*



PROGRAMME

28-30 April 2026

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

Rooms 3.1 and 3.2

Organised by the [Council of Europe Youth Department](#) in cooperation with the [Council of Europe Division on Migration and Refugees \(DMR\)](#), and the [Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants \(PICUM\)](#)

Supported by the [European Forum for Youth with Lived Migration Experiences \(VOICIFY\)](#), the Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) and the Council of Europe project "[Strengthening the protection of unaccompanied migrant children in Türkiye](#)" funded by Sweden



Monday, 27 April 2026

Arrivals of participants

Tuesday, 28 April 2026

Arrivals of participants (continued)

13:30 – 14:15 Registration at the lobby area of the European Youth Centre
Lunch starts at 12:30 and ends at 14:15

14:30 Opening of the seminar with

- **Sophie KWASNY**, Head of the Education, Training and Cooperation Division, Youth Department, Council of Europe
- **Nikolaos SITAROPOULOS**, Head of the Division on Migration and Refugees, Council of Europe
- **Laetitia VAN DER VENNET**, Senior Advocacy Officer, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
- **Omid HOTAK**, VOICIFY and Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), Council of Europe

15:00 Getting to know each other and introduction to the seminar

16:00 Break

16:30 Supporting young refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in their transition to adulthood – Presentation of the work of partners from policy and grassroots perspectives with

- **Sulkhan CHARGEISHVILI**, Youth Department, Council of Europe
- **Viktoria KARPATSKYI**, Division on Migration and Refugees, Council of Europe
- **Angela GARABAGIU**, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- **Laetitia VAN DER VENNET**, PICUM
- **Omid HOTAK**, VOICIFY, Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), Council of Europe
- **Theodora KRISTOFORI**, Human Rights and Justice Cooperation Department, DGI, Council of Europe

Reflections and reactions from participants in the seminar

18:00 End of the day 1

Wednesday, 29 April 2026

- 09:30 Introduction to the day
- The Hurdles of Legal Transitions: What does it mean for young refugees and migrants?**
- Panel discussion moderated by Ana MORGADO, consultant, Council of Europe
- Speakers:
- **Elisa POTHÉE**, Kids in Need of Defense, France
 - **Father Thomas WENDER**, Centre Bernanos Strasbourg, France
 - **Haizea DEL CAMPO SAEZ**, Fundación Cepaim, Spain
 - **Kouame KOUASSI KAN ESAIE**, BreachBuilders e.V., Germany
 - **Mohammad Hadi MOHEBI**, Mentor of unaccompanied minors, Greece
 - **Georgia ANGELAKOUDI**, International Relations Unit, Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Greece
- Reactions and reflections from participants in the seminar
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 **Living with Uncertainty: Status, Access to Rights, and Daily Obstacles**
- Panel moderated by Mariana DIMOU, Youth Social Rights Network, Italy
- **Clyde BONNICI**, Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS), Malta
 - **Eirini GRAVANI** (tbc), VELOS YOUTH, Greece
 - **Laetitia VAN DER VENNET**, PICUM, Belgium
 - **Mariia BROVDI**, Gent University (Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy), Ukraine/Belgium
 - **Osman HALICI**, Network and Learning Opportunities (NLO), United Kingdom
- 13:00 Lunch Break
- 14:30 **Carrying a Lot: Talking About Mental Health**
- Panel moderated by Viktoria KARPATSKZI, Division for Migration and Refugees, Council of Europe
- **João MATELA**, Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth, Portugal
 - **Özge SILAV ÖZ**, Ministry of Family and Social Services, Türkiye
 - **Naila BELHAOUARI** (tbc), La Cimade, France
 - **Shinwari OBAIDULLAH** (tbc), SOS Children's Villages, Hungary
 - **Zia MOHAMMAD** (tbc), Sveriges ensamkommande förening, Sweden
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Exchange of practices

- 17:40 Presentation of the dedicated webpage developed by the Council of Europe Youth Department featuring promising practices and additional resources related to the transition to adulthood of young refugees and migrants with **Amy STAPLETON (online), Council of Europe expert**
- 18:00 End of the day 2
- 19:00-20:30 Dinner offered by association [Stamtish](#)
The Strasbourg-based non-profit organisation aims to facilitate the socio-professional integration of people with a migrant background and strives to combat the discrimination they face.

Thursday, 30 April 2026

- 09:00 **Introduction to the day**
 Interactive working groups exploring integrated responses combining legal and psychosocial support including presentations
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 **Discussion on strengthening cooperation across institutions.**
 Identification of follow-up actions and ideas for the future
- 13:00-14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 **Presentation by the groups and discussion in the plenary**
 15:30 Break
- 16:00-16:30 **Conclusions of the seminar and closure, with:**
- **Laetitia VAN DER VENNET**, Senior Advocacy Officer, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
 - **Omid HOTAK**, Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), Council of Europe
 - **João MATELA**, Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth, European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), Council of Europe

Departure of participants (after 16:30)

Friday, 1 May 2026

Departure of participants (continued)

About the seminar

Building on the findings of the first review of the implementation of the Recommendation, the 2026 seminar will focus on the interconnection between legal barriers and psychosocial support.

The Recommendation encourages Member States to reduce legal barriers by ensuring that residence permits and administrative procedures do not abruptly disrupt a young refugee's transition into adulthood. It emphasises the need for flexible and secure legal statuses so that access to education, employment, and housing is not jeopardised by uncertainty or delays. At the same time, the Recommendation highlights the importance of continuous psychosocial support, recognising that many young refugees face trauma, isolation, and stress during this transition. It is especially relevant for children who arrived in Europe as unaccompanied and separated children due to their vulnerability. As noted in the 2025 DMR Thematic Paper ["Vulnerability of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees: Council of Europe and European Union standards"](#), the European Court of Human Rights consistently recognises children as belonging to a category of vulnerable people, particularly in a migratory context. This applies even more strongly to unaccompanied or separated children, especially when they face detention or risks of violence and abuse. The intensifying focus on vulnerability, which is often multi-layered, in the context of migration presents a demanding challenge for Council of Europe member states: to take into account, in an individualised and contextualised manner, the fragility arising from characteristics pertaining to specific groups such as migrant children and those transitioning into adulthood.

The Recommendation calls for accessible, culturally sensitive mental health services and long-term support systems rather than short-term interventions. Together, these measures aim to create stability both in legal standing and emotional well-being, enabling young refugees to integrate more effectively into society.

The event will explore the above-mentioned themes and apply an inter-agency coordination approach, bringing together actors from legal, migration, youth, social, and health sectors representing governmental and non-governmental structures.

Seminar aims to promote coordinated responses that strengthen the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood focusing on legal barriers and psychosocial support measures.

Objectives of the seminar are:

1. Examine the psychosocial impact of legal insecurity, including the ways in which uncertainty and administrative obstacles affect the mental health and well-being of young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
2. Identify integrated approaches that combine legal support, youth work, and psychosocial or mental health services to better support young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
3. Facilitate exchange of practices and experiences among governmental institutions, civil society organisations, youth organisations, and service providers working with young refugees.
4. Contribute to strengthening inter-agency coordination between actors working in migration, youth, social, legal, and health sectors representing governmental and non-governmental structures including local authorities and youth organisations