

Conclusions and recommendations of the review process of Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3

On 21 January 2015, the Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, also known as the Enter! Recommendation.

In March 2016, the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) adopted an implementation strategy (roadmap) for the Enter! Recommendation. On the same occasion, the CMJ adopted the principle of instigating a first review of the Recommendation's implementation in 2019. This review, to be carried out under the authority of the CMJ, was to cover measures taken by the member States and, where possible, the results achieved; projects and initiatives of youth organisations; plans and/or projects carried out by or with local authorities; and an analysis of the practices and projects shared in the database of good practices.

The review was therefore carried out in accordance with the above-mentioned principles. The full report of the review process is available on the restricted website of the Youth Department.¹

The main conclusions and recommendations of the review process are summarised below, so that the Committee of Ministers may examine them as necessary:

Conclusions

1. A majority of member States and a very large number of youth organisations took part in the review. Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods were also directly involved in the review process. The patterns of participation respect the philosophy of youth participation and the co-management of the Council of Europe and of the Enter! Recommendation. A higher level of participation would have been preferable, even if the overall results would probably not have changed.
2. The Council of Europe youth sector has been the core, the successful promoter and the driving force of the Enter! Recommendation since its adoption, notably through the long-term training courses for youth workers. A considerable number of partners (NGOs, national youth policy authorities, local authorities) have taken ownership and contributed to its implementation.
3. The multiplication of training and peer education activities on social rights at local, regional and national levels were the most important strategies in terms of follow-up to the international ones. Advocacy and campaigning activities or support to people in need were clearly less relevant strategies for the multiplication and further commitment beyond the activities.
4. The recommendation has created a shared understanding of the importance of social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, especially their access to services. This has been accompanied by an important growth of all kind of activities (promoted by the youth sector, in co-operation with NGOs, with local authorities or supported by the European Youth Foundation) focusing on social rights and young people.
5. A consistent approach and attention to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods had been missing in many projects, notably those supported by the European Youth Foundation (in favour of a generic interest in social rights).
6. The creation of a new format of activities (support measures) in relation to social rights and disadvantaged neighbourhoods having as unique partner the local authorities has been particularly innovative.
7. The survey research results reveal that the representatives of local and regional authorities, members of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), youth workers and young people themselves, evaluated the impact of the Enter! Recommendation (very) positively. Young people and youth workers are also critical of shortcomings in many areas and regions (cf. Message of the Enter! Youth Week).
8. The strongest impact of the ENTER! Recommendation has been on national level youth work and youth policy development. It has had less impact on local/regional policies.
9. The Enter! Recommendation has been useful for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in improving access to education and training, improving living conditions, information and counselling, etc.

¹ If they have not already done so, the Permanent Representations wishing to have access to this restricted website are invited to request their personal login and password from Gabriella Tisza: gabriella.tisza@coe.int.

10. The Enter! Recommendation was mainly applied in the fields of education and training, employment and, to a lesser extent, in the fields of housing, health, sports, leisure and culture, which are particularly important for young people in extreme situations of social exclusion and discrimination.

11. The Enter! Recommendation is taken into account in the process of drafting public policy documents, research and analysis. It is a document that proposes priorities; this is helpful when developing programmes and strategies, in preparing strategic documents that incorporate the focus on young people with fewer possibilities and at risk of poverty.

12. All priority fields of the Enter! Recommendation remain valid in all contexts and to different actors (national, regional and local authorities, NGOs, civil servants).

13. Co-operation with municipalities is important and is taking place in various instances; still, the main challenge to the further implementation of the Enter! Recommendation is that it is poorly known by local and regional authorities.

Recommendations for further action

The issues affecting young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods that prompted the preparation and adoption of the Enter! Recommendation have not disappeared. As pointed out by the participants in the Enter! Youth Week, the Recommendation needs to be further implemented and applied – possibly better, more extensively and in partnership with young people. The recommendations below are not listed in any order of priority.

1. To continue the current activities with local authorities as specific partners of the Council of Europe for the Enter! Recommendation.

2. In the assessment of project proposals for the European Youth Foundation (EYF) and for educational activities in the Youth Department, to be clearer about linking activities related to the Enter! Recommendation to the social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This could be done by defining criteria and indicators on the core elements of the Recommendation to be explored during these activities.

3. To develop and make available specific educational materials or session outlines based on the Enter! Recommendation in order to support all actors/partners interested in its implementation. These educational materials should be used, or at least offered to the trainers' team in all the activities of the European Youth Centres (EYCs) and also those supported by the EYF which aim to contribute to the implementation of the Enter! Recommendation.

4. To set up a simple mechanism of online reporting of activities and action so that every actor contributing to the implementation of the Enter! Recommendation can share their experiences, inspire others and provide evidence of the impact or results.

5. To improve dissemination and promotion of the Enter! Recommendation, especially towards local and regional authorities, including regional offices, youth centres and other youth spaces.

6. To support/motivate local and regional authorities to consult and involve young people in identifying priorities for action for the implementation of the Enter! Recommendation.

7. To motivate policymakers to reference the Enter! Recommendation and the measures it proposes when developing youth policies and strategies.

8. To prepare a group of specialists/trainers to provide advice and advocacy on implementing the Enter! Recommendation at national and local levels.

9. To collect, disseminate and exchange good practices between member States on implementation and some specific programmes/projects connected to the Enter! Recommendation.

10. To support further youth work projects and activities, including training for youth workers active in local authorities and projects relevant to the Enter! Recommendation.

11. When developing youth work policies and practices, to consider new factors which deteriorate the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, such as climate change, populism, nationalism and hate speech.

12. For the next implementation and review “cycle”:
- a) Housing should be a priority, particularly in relation to young people facing extreme exclusion or poverty (homeless, victims of violence, those with drug addiction-related issues);
 - b) Mental health of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should also deserve more attention;
 - c) Public transportation (availability, access, affordability) should be looked into, especially its impact on access to and the exercise of social rights, as well as on services;
 - d) Member States could prepare and share national action plans on the implementation of the Enter! Recommendation, with specific reference to the stakeholders involved, which could be used for the next review;
 - e) Simple and efficient indicators should be set up to facilitate the monitoring of progress.