



TURNING 18 WITH CONFIDENCE

SUPPORTING MIGRANT AND REFUGEE CHILDREN
IN TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

International Launching Event

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg (France)
and online

18 April 2023
9:00 am – 17.00 pm

CONCEPT NOTE

Co-organised by the Council of Europe's Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, the Youth Department and the Co-operation Programmes Division (DGI), with the support of the Icelandic Presidency of the Council of Europe and the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) ⁱ

Interpretation in English and French will be provided

Background

Young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants after the age of 18 are particularly vulnerable, because of the overnight change in their legal status and the loss of the rights and protection that they previously enjoyed as children.

Their human rights protection and inclusion is key for the cohesion of the host societies and deserves a special focus. At the Council of Europe level, the protection of this group has long been identified as a priority area for the Organisation's work.

Building on the Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)9 on [life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors](#), adopted in 2007, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe issued in 2014 the report [Migrant children: what rights at 18?](#) In 2015, the Joint Council on Youth issued a Statement on the refugee crisis in Europe, which highlighted this particular vulnerability and led to further debate on addressing existing challenges in the field. On 24 April 2019, the Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4: [Supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood](#). It provides, among others, guidance to member states on various key areas related to transition to adulthood including access to social services, accommodation and welfare benefits; access to education, vocational training and the labour market; and access to health care and psychological support. The adoption of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 was among the priorities of the Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019), coordinated by the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG).

In May 2021, the Committee of Ministers adopted the [Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe \(2021-2025\)](#), which foresees activities to promote the practical implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 and highlights the important role cooperation projects can play in the field. Likewise, the Joint Council on Youth adopted a roadmap to support the implementation of the recommendation in October 2019. As part of this roadmap, the Youth Department developed a Guide which simplifies the language of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 and aims to assist different actors to develop a better and clearer understanding of the proposals and policy measures. The Guide provides, among others, clear indications and a checklist for different actors with specific guidelines on how to implement Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4.

In parallel with the work of the Youth Department, in January 2022, the Council of Europe started implementing the multilateral project "[Building Futures. Sharing Good Practices: Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood - UACFutures](#)", which aims to foster long-term improvements in the quality of support provided to unaccompanied migrant children during their transition to adulthood. In line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4, the Project addresses four key areas of particular importance regarding transition to adulthood: (a) psychological impact and support; (b) legal support and access to basic rights; (c) access to education and the labour market; and (d) access to accommodation.

The Project is funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Council of Europe and is implemented jointly with the Special Secretariat for

the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum of Greece,

SolidarityNow (Greece), Stichting Nidos (Netherlands) and Fundación Cepaim (Spain). Various tools such as a Compendium of Good Practices, a Toolkit on Transition and a Roadmap to Adulthood are also being developed in the framework of this Project, complementing the work of the Youth Department in the field.

The comprehensive tools developed by the Council of Europe create, therefore, the circumstances and open space for dialogue and exchange on effectively supporting the transition of young refugees and migrants to adulthood.

Objectives of the international event

The Council of Europe is organising, with the support of the Icelandic Presidency of the Council of Europe, an International Launching Event on *"Turning 18 with Confidence: Supporting Migrant and Refugee Children Transitioning to Adulthood"* on 18 April 2023.

The aim of the event is to raise awareness and improve the knowledge and capacities of relevant professionals in supporting young refugees and migrants in their transition to adulthood, inter alia by:

- Presenting and launching the Guide for the implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on transition to adulthood in the context of asylum and migration.
- Presenting the findings and launching the tools developed in the framework of the multilateral project "Building Futures, Sharing Good Practices: Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood - UACFutures".
- Presenting the other Council of Europe tools to support the effective transition of young refugees and migrants to adulthood including the [website on transition to adulthood](#).
- Engaging in dialogue with partners and other relevant stakeholders, including young refugees and migrants, to identify areas where further support is needed.
- Fostering exchanges of good practices, lessons learnt and know-how in the field.

Target audience

Public authorities, institutions, international organisations, youth and non-governmental organisations, social and legal professionals, academia and other relevant professionals involved in the protection of migrant children and young refugees and migrants.

ⁱ "This Event is co-funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Council of Europe. The content of this concept note represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for the use that may be made of the information it contains."