

The Council of Europe's Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) expresses concerns about the law on the amendment of certain acts, recently adopted by the Hungarian Parliament, on the treatment of unaccompanied minors

The Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (CCJ) shares the concerns expressed by the Chairperson of the Council of Europe' [Lanzarote Committee](#), Claude Janizzi, on 24 March 2017 regarding a law that was recently adopted by the Hungarian Parliament "*On the amendment of certain acts related to increasing the strictness of procedures carried out in the areas of border management*". The CCJ shares the concerns that the amendments have a negative impact on the situation of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum.

The amendments enable the government to consider children aged between 14 and 18 as adults during the current emergency crisis which the Hungarian government has extended for another six months. These amendments prevent vital child protection measures from reaching the children in question, including their access to a legal guardian. They also allow for the placement of these children in transit zones, which we fear will increase the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation as well as limit their personal development.

The CCJ emphasises that the amendments will have a negative impact on the children involved, whose best interests must be promoted in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). They also fail to protect unaccompanied children who are at particular risk of being exposed to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, as highlighted by the Lanzarote Committee.

The CCJ recalls Resolution 1996 (2014) and Resolution 2136 (2016) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) which state that "*children should be considered as children first and foremost*". On that ground, the CCJ urges the Hungarian government to reconsider the amendments and to comply with its international obligations to protect the rights of the child.

The Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) is a Council of Europe body made up of 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks in Europe which provides opinions and input on all youth sector activities. It also ensures that young people are involved in other activities of the Council of Europe. The CCJ works in a co-management structure with the Steering Committee for Youth of the Council of Europe (CDEJ), together they form the Joint Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (CMJ).

Marko Grdošić



Chair of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe

¹ The opinions expressed in this statement are the responsibility of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Council of Europe.