



DDP-YD/ETD (2021) 89

Strasbourg, 21 June 2021

CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG REFUGEES

Luncheon meeting
on the occasion of the World Refugee Day 2021
23 June 2021, 12:00-13:00 CEST, online

Bluejeans: <https://bluejeans.com/467386753/6481>

PROGRAMME

Background

Being among the most vulnerable, young refugees [have been a priority group of concern](#) for the Council of Europe youth sector for several years. The Council of Europe youth sector recognised that young refugees experience violence, exploitation, and trauma, as well as continuing risk of violation of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also noted that by reaching the age of majority, being no longer under the protection of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, young refugees no longer have access to rights and opportunities previously held as children. As adults, many of them are likely to face an abrupt change in the possibility of accessing services and support across many sectors including welfare, education, health care and psychosocial support, leisure and recreational activities, housing and special accommodation, information on relevant administrative procedures, and other essential services. It also recognized that the lack of support and difficulties in accessing their rights may lead young refugees to go into hiding, thus putting their safety at risk, exposing them to violence, exploitation, and/or trafficking in human beings.

Noting the challenges above, the youth sector engaged in discussions with the Council of Europe member states on how to address these challenges by means of setting and promoting new policy standards. As a result of this work, the Committee of Ministers adopted in 2019 the

[Recommendation on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood - CM/Rec\(2019\)4](#). This recommendation asks the Council of Europe member states to ensure that young refugees receive additional temporary support in the process of their transition to adulthood, after reaching the age of 18, to enable them to access their rights. It calls for recognition and strengthening the role of youth work and youth sector in promoting better access to these rights, including through their work to build social cohesion and inclusion.

Later the same year, the Joint Council on Youth adopted a roadmap for the implementation of the Recommendation inviting member states, youth organisations and the Council of Europe youth sector to work within their roles and means to make the Recommendation relevant.

In 2021, works began on developing a youth and user-friendly version of the CM/Rec(2019)4. This version will make the recommendation more accessible to a wider audience and will support different groups involved in the field of youth policy to be associated with the process of implementation of the recommendation.

In June 2020, a [consultative meeting with young refugees and refugee-led youth organisations](#) was organised in order to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on young refugees and the implementation of the CM/Rec(2019)4. Attendees found that during COVID-19, young refugees and newcomers encountered a range of barriers to accessing rights and services and faced increased vulnerabilities. The pandemic revealed many structural shortcomings in responses for young refugees and newcomers in different member states. Often issues have been identified as complex and multi-faceted, requiring a multi-faceted and multi-stakeholder response. Already marginalised and among the hardest hit, migrant and refugee children and young people have been often forgotten in national responses to COVID-19. For the particularly marginalised of these young refugees, the impact of the pandemic was even more damaging. According to the attendees, there was hence a need to recognise the rights of young refugees and to strengthen the youth sector to support these rights. The best interest of young people, and human rights principles and frameworks were considered crucial to underpin all responses and the important contributions that young refugees have made in their communities during the pandemic needed to be recognised.

THE LUNCHEON MEETING

As a follow-up to this work, the Council of Europe Youth Department is organising an informal luncheon meeting with young refugees and refugee-led youth organisations on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the World Refugee Day. The aim of the meeting is to discuss the current priorities and agendas of the youth/refugee-led organisations on social inclusion of young refugees and reinforce cooperation with the Council of Europe.

What is a luncheon meeting?

- A luncheon meeting is an informal meeting that generally occurs around lunchtime. The meeting is characterised by an informal atmosphere and participants are invited to bring their lunch.

We expect a meeting with some 20 participants which will be conducted in a friendly and informal atmosphere. Participants are invited to bring their sandwiches or other lunch food.

Objectives of the meeting

- To reconnect with young refugees and youth/refugee-led organisations in Europe on the occasion of the World Refugee Day
- To gain an improved understanding of the current work of the youth organisations tackling the challenges faced by young refugees, in particular in connection to Covid-19 pandemic and the post-Covid recovery
- To reconnect with the refugees and refugee-led youth organisations about the work currently done by the Council of Europe and its youth sector to support young refugees, in particular the state of play of the implementation of the CM/Rec(2019)4 and the preparation of the user-friendly guide on the CM/Rec(2019)4
- To encourage youth and refugee-led organisation to further develop cooperation with the Council of Europe on social inclusion of young refugees in particular through the means of the study sessions, grants of the European Youth Foundation and affiliation with the work of the Special Representative on Migration and Refugees.

DRAFT AGENDA

12:00 - 12:10 - Opening of the meeting by Zuzana Pavelkova, Advisory Council on Youth

- Introduction of the participants
- Introductions of the goals and aims of the meeting
- Reminder of the [findings of the consultative meeting of 2020](#)
- Recapitulation of the work currently undertaken by the youth sector

12:10 - 12:40 - Priorities and agendas of the youth and refugee-led organisations after the Covid-19 Pandemic, round of sharing

- What are the issues and challenges that young refugees involved in your work face now? with **Amy Stapleton from Voices of Young Refugees in Europe, Ntobuah Julius Mvenyi from Caritas Sweden and Saleh Sherif Deen (tbc), refugee**
- How do your activities respond the needs of young refugees resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic, and if at all, are young refugees involved in the Covid-19 response and the post-Covid recovery? with **Ilse Derluyn, full professor at Ghent University and director of the Centre for the Social Study of Migration and Refugees**
- What are the plans, priorities and agendas 2021/2022 in the work with young refugees? With **Adam Elsod and Zaher Barood, the Young Republic**

12:40 - 12:55

The role of the Council of Europe and, in particular, the youth sector

- The Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe with **Anne Kayser, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees**
- Opportunities within the programme of the Youth Department, including the European Youth Foundation with **Rui Gomes and Natalia Chardymova, Youth Department of the Council of Europe**

12:55-13:00 - Conclusions of the meeting

DRAFT LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Fanny Georges	European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)
Prof. dr. Ilse Derluyn	Horizon2020 RefugeesWellSchool program, ERC ChildMove
Cihan Kilic	VYRE Board Member
Amy Stapleton	Project officer VYRE, Consultant on the use-friendly guide on CM/Rec(2019)4
Adam Elsod	The Young Republic
Zaher Barood	The Young Republic
Linos Vigklas	Second Chance School of Volos – Greece
Ntobuah Julius Mvenyi	Refugee, Caritas Sweden
Pantea RAUFI	International Lawyer, private practitioner
Saleh Sherif Deen	Refugee
Mehmet Gokay Ozerim	Consultant on the use-friendly guide on CM/Rec(2019)4
Lydia Siapardani	Advisory Council on Youth
Pegah Moulana	Advisory Council on Youth
Zuzana Pevlkova	Advisory Council on Youth
Anne Kayser	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees
Rui Gomes	Head of the Education and Training Division of the Youth Department
Natalia Chardymova	Youth Department of the Council of Europe