



**PICUM**

For undocumented migrants,  
for social justice.



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# SUPPORTING CONFIDENCE AT 18



A seminar on sharing practices of projects and initiatives in support of Young Refugees and Migrants in transition to adulthood.

- On the occasion of the World Refugee Day -

**20-21 June 2024**

European Youth Centre Budapest

**Deadline to apply: 5 May 2024**

CONCEPT NOTE

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS



Organised by the Council of Europe Youth Department and [PICUM \(platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants\)](#), in cooperation with VOICIFY, VYRE (Voices of Young Refugees in Europe) and the [Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees](#)

## Background

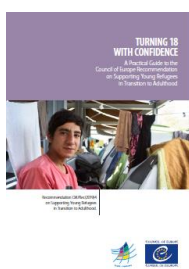
Transition to adulthood is a phase in a young person's life marked by milestones and achievements, such as that of one's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, for all young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers turning 18 means an overnight loss of the rights and protection that they previously enjoyed as children, especially if they were unaccompanied. What should be a moment of celebration, can instead mean a sudden lack of access to basic human rights, such as housing or education. For some, it means becoming undocumented, excluded from most necessary services.

Human rights protection and inclusion is key for the cohesion of European societies and deserves a special focus. At the Council of Europe level, the protection of young migrants and refugees transitioning into adulthood has long been identified as a priority area for its work.

On 24 April 2019, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4: Supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood ([the Recommendation](#)). The Recommendation asks governments of member states to adopt measures to ensure that "young refugees receive additional temporary support after the age of 18 to enable them to access their rights, and at recognising and strengthening the role of youth work and the youth sector in promoting better access to these rights, including through their work to build social cohesion and inclusion."<sup>1</sup>

The Recommendation offers guidance to member states on several crucial aspects related to the transition to adulthood, including access to social services, housing, and society; educational opportunities, vocational training, and integration into the job market; as well as access to healthcare and psychological support.

In May 2021, the Committee of Ministers approved the Council of [Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe \(2021-2025\)](#), outlining initiatives aimed at implementation of the Recommendation. Additionally, the Joint Council on Youth devised a roadmap to support it. As part of this, the Youth Department crafted the Guide [Turning 18 with Confidence](#) launched at a public event in April 2023. Turning 18 with Confidence presents the Recommendation in a practical manner and includes a collection of examples, questions and guidelines that can assist policymakers, youth organisations, young people, researchers, and other actors in promoting the implementation of the Recommendation.



*Access to adequate housing and the job market is key for integration and inclusion in the medium- and long-term, which is still a big issue for many young people. The new crises worsened the vulnerability of refugees in Europe in general, it exacerbated already existing problems, and highlighted the most urgent areas for taking action on.*

From Guide "Turning 18 with Confidence"

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<sup>1</sup> The Recommendation defines "young refugees in transition to adulthood" as young people having reached the age of 18 who arrived in Europe as children and have obtained or qualify for refugee status under the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, or for subsidiary protection under European Union or national legislation.

## **The seminar**

Five years after adoption of the recommendation on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood, it would be wrong to pretend that the issues that the Recommendation addresses have been resolved or overcome. PICUM's report, [Turning 18 and undocumented: Supporting children in their transition into adulthood](#), highlights the challenges migrant young people continue to face when transitioning into adulthood: a lack of adequate support services that prepare children for the changes that come with adulthood and accompany young people into young adulthood, the difficult access to a secure residence status in many countries, and the fact that support is too often based on the person's age rather than their need for it.

This takes place in a broader, overall deterioration of vulnerable people's access to rights, protection and, for migrants, a secure residence status. This seems to accompany a general backsliding of democracy and human rights values in many countries and is certainly aggravated by the return of war to the European continent.

It is in times of crisis that the values and principles that unite us must be protected and upheld, as recalled by the Council of Europe Summit in the [Reykjavik Declaration](#), in its commitment to:

continuing to protect the victims and respect the human rights of migrants and refugees, as well as supporting frontline States, within the existing Council of Europe frameworks.

There is thus a need for those advocating for the rights of young migrants and refugees, for local actors providing support to them, and for young people transitioning into adulthood to reassess the challenges and opportunities today while, at the same time, to share examples of practice that can inspire other practitioners and public authorities in member states. The Youth Department of the Council of Europe has thus teamed with PICUM to pool these experiences from practitioners and to share them with other practitioners, including young migrants and refugees themselves, to exchange experiences and practices, learn from each other and identify priorities for action.

The seminar will consist of plenary sessions, working groups and sessions where participants can share their experiences with each other. It will also serve as a moment to reflect on the status of the implementation of the Recommendation five years after its adoption.

## **Aim and objectives**

The seminar SUPPORTING CONFIDENCE AT 18 aims at reassessing the current needs and situations faced by young refugees and migrants in transition to adulthood and supporting advocacy and practice to implement the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood.

### **Objectives**

- To collect experiences in the implementation of the guidelines of the Recommendation on Supporting Young Refugees in Transition to Adulthood and share current challenges faced by practitioners and young people themselves;
- To identify priorities for action and advocacy by young people and human rights organisations and by youth policy and youth work actors in the further promotion of the Recommendation.

- To raise awareness about the plight of young people affected by migration and refugee policies on the World Refugee Day (20 June)
- To reinforce cooperation and support among youth-, migrant- and refugee-led organisations and support the inclusion of a youth perspective in migration and refugee-related policies and programmes which affect their transition into adulthood.

### Draft programme structure

	Thursday 20 June	Friday 21 June
<i>Morning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opening and setting the stage</li> <li>- Recalling the Recommendation, the guide and relevant frameworks</li> <li>- Presenting PICUM's research and giving an overview of reality in different countries</li> <li>- Celebrating World Refugee Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Challenges faced by young people transitioning into adulthood, human rights actors and advocates working to ensure a safe transition into adulthood</li> <li>- Reassessing the relevance, priorities and scope of the Recommendation</li> </ul>
<i>Afternoon</i>	Sharing experiences and good practices on transition to adulthood in different working groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to a secure residence permit</li> <li>- Education</li> <li>- Housing</li> <li>- Youth work and non-formal education</li> <li>- Preparing for the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday</li> <li>- Financial independence and employability</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reporting findings in plenary</li> <li>- Conclusions and priorities for further action and</li> <li>- Evaluation and closing.</li> </ul>

A detailed and updated programme will be made available at a later stage and shared with the participants of the seminar.

### Participants

The participants of the seminar will be practitioners, experts or youth workers who work to ensure a safe transition into adulthood of young migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and those who transition into undocumented adulthood, in a variety of projects and institutions. All participants are also expected to be:

- resident in one of the state parties to the European Cultural Convention<sup>2</sup> (exceptions can be made if justified).
- committed to uphold and advocate for the rights of young migrants and refugees;
- be knowledgeable and motivated to share practices with other actors in the field.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/state-parties-european-cultural-convention>

- d) be under 30 years of age (for youth leaders only - exceptions can be made in justified cases).
- e) able to work autonomously in English.
- f) affiliated with a relevant youth organisation, youth centre, NGO or public institution.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of participants irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

## **Financial and practical conditions of participation**

### **Travel expenses**

Travel expenses and visa fees for the training seminar in Budapest will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe. Only the participants who attend the entire seminar can be reimbursed.

### **Accommodation**

Board and lodging for the seminar will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre Budapest. The European Youth Centres are accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for any access needs of participants in this respect. Please provide the necessary information in your application form.

### **Working languages**

English will be the working language of the seminar. Participants are required to be able to express themselves autonomously in English.

## **How to apply**

Everyone interested in taking part in the seminar must apply by filling in the online form at <http://youthapplications.coe.int> before **5 May 2024**.



## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For any questions, please write to the Youth Department of the Council of Europe at [eyc.programme@coe.int](mailto:eyc.programme@coe.int) .



## Partners

Founded as an initiative of grassroots organisations, the **Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)** represents a network about 160 member organisations working with undocumented migrants in more than 30 countries. With two decades of evidence, experience, and expertise, PICUM promotes recognition of undocumented people's human rights and provides an essential link between local realities and the debates and decisions taking place at policy level. PICUM is dedicated to the rights of undocumented children and young people and to supporting undocumented and formerly undocumented young people advocating for change at local, national or regional level. Visit [www.picum.org](http://www.picum.org) for more information.

**VOICIFY - The European Forum for Youth with Lived Migration Experiences** is the first-ever European self-representative structure for organisations led by young people with lived migration experiences. VOICIFY develops the capacities of its member organisations, and advocates for their rights and interests at the European and International level.

Established by, with, and for refugees, **VYRE (Voices of Young Refugees in Europe)** is a network of grass-root refugee-led organisations across Europe. Through capacity-building and advocacy, VYRE is committed to promoting (young) refugees' rights and agency and empowering them to actively participate in society.