

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

RECOMMENDATION No. R (94) 4

OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES

ON THE PROMOTION OF A VOLUNTARY SERVICE

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 May 1994,
at the 513th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members;

Having regard to the relevant conclusions (Recommendation 20.b.iii) of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Vienna, 13-15 April 1993);

Considering that voluntary service is an important part of governmental policies affecting young people and constitutes for young people an opportunity for learning and solidarity as well as a service to society;

Aware of the difficulties of young volunteers from central and eastern Europe when they want to perform voluntary service abroad;

Considering that, if the voluntary service, carried out abroad or with other young Europeans, contributes to civic education, to intercultural exchanges and to the acquisition of a European consciousness, it is necessary to promote youth mobility, especially for the youth of central and eastern Europe, by reducing obstacles to this mobility;

Considering that voluntary service should be open to all young people independently of their financial resources,

I. Recommends that the governments of the member states:

a. define voluntary service at national level, emphasising its educational aspects and its importance for society;

b. seek, within the framework of their respective legal provisions in vigour for foreigners, possibilities to establish voluntary service at national and European level, clarifying the role of this service and establishing rules regarding its conditions of exercise;

c. develop and promote voluntary service, under all its forms, at national and European level;

d. and to achieve this:

i. reduce the obstacles to free circulation of young volunteers, especially those from central and eastern European countries;

ii. provide appropriate financial support, within the framework of their respective legal provisions and policies, to the organisations or groups of young volunteers who do not have proper resources to achieve their aims, individually or in groups, in order that the promotion and expansion of voluntary service may concern all European countries;

iii. encourage increased co-operation between the European Union and the Council of Europe, in order to create an appropriate political, legal and financial framework of support for voluntary service in all European countries;

II. Instructs the Secretary General to transmit the text of this recommendation to the governments of the non-member states which are parties to the European Cultural Convention.