

RESOLUTION (66) 25

(Adopted by the Ministers' Deputies on 30th April 1966)

**SHORT-TERM TREATMENT
OF YOUNG OFFENDERS OF LESS THAN 21 YEARS**

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering the importance of developing effective measures against criminality manifested by young people;

Welcoming the attempts of Governments to effect the reformation of young offenders under the age of 21 years without recourse to sanctions involving deprivation of liberty whenever that appears possible;

Recognising that nevertheless certain young offenders have to be detained in order to provide adequate treatment or a sanction appropriate to the offence;

Considering that certain young offenders need only a short period of treatment or that certain offences do not merit more than a short period of deprivation of liberty;

Recognising the serious disadvantages there can be when young offenders are required to serve short sentences of detention or imprisonment in establishments for adults,

Recommends that :

(a) Whenever appropriate and possible, short-term methods of institutional treatment for young offenders should be used in preference to long-term methods;

(b) Special establishments for such offenders should be set up which will provide a positive and suitable treatment for them, taking account of their age, stage of

development, and individual needs so far as is possible in the limited time available;

(c) Short-term treatment in special establishments for young offenders might be an alternative to or a complete substitute for ordinary short-term imprisonment. The choice made will influence the possibility of a special selection of offenders for this measure and affect the regimes to be adopted. Whatever conclusions are come to, care should be taken to exclude those offenders who, by reason of serious personal maladjustment, appear unsuitable for short-term methods of treatment;

(d) Whatever balance between punitive and non-punitive approaches may be adopted as a starting point, there should be flexibility and experimentation in the regimes used in these establishments. The staff, which should include qualified social workers, should be specially selected for their capacity to work positively with young people. The possibility of providing post-institutional assistance should always exist;

(e) In order to promote the most efficient systems, it is desirable that basic statistical information be kept on offenders treated and that whenever possible research investigation should be used to evaluate the methods employed;

(f) Member States should consider the possibility of making arrangements which avoid so far as possible the serving of short prison sentences by young offenders in penal establishments taking adult offenders;

Invites the Governments to send reports to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe every three years informing him of the steps taken to implement these recommendations.