



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2012/0245(COD)

22.2.2013

OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on Development

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps
(COM(2012)0514 – C7-0303/2012 – 2012/0245 (COD))

Rapporteur: Philippe Boulland

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments into its report:

Amendment 1

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 2

Text proposed by the Commission

(2) Volunteering is a concrete and visible expression of solidarity allowing individuals to dedicate their knowledge, skills and time to the service of fellow human beings, without a primary concern for financial gain.

Amendment

(2) Volunteering is a concrete and visible expression of solidarity allowing individuals to dedicate their knowledge, skills, ***experience*** and time to the service of fellow human beings, without a primary concern for financial gain ***and also a wish to cope with additional humanitarian needs emerging in humanitarian crises, both man-made and natural disasters.***

Amendment 2

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 2 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(2 a) While volunteering is on the rise for many activities there is still further need for awareness raising and also a significant potential for further developing solidarity among Union's citizens with victims of crises and disasters in third countries.

Amendment 3

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 3

Text proposed by the Commission

(3) The Union's vision of humanitarian aid, including a common objective, principles and good practice and a common framework to deliver the Union's humanitarian aid, is set out in the 'European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid'. The European Consensus underlines the Union's firm commitment to upholding and promoting the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The actions of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as the 'EU Aid Volunteers') should be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

Amendment

(3) The Union's vision of humanitarian aid, including a common objective, principles and good practice and a common framework to deliver the Union's humanitarian aid, is set out in the 'European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid'. ***There is a need to raise both awareness levels and its visibility among Union's citizens because European humanitarian aid is often overshadowed by that of other international organisations.*** The European Consensus underlines the Union's firm commitment to upholding and promoting the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The actions of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as the 'EU Aid Volunteers') should be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

Amendment 4

**Proposal for a regulation
Recital 5**

Text proposed by the Commission

(5) The number, scope and complexity of humanitarian crises worldwide have increased significantly over the years leading to a rising demand on humanitarian actors to provide an effective, efficient and coherent response and to support third country local communities in order to make them less vulnerable and to strengthen their resilience to disasters.

Amendment

(5) The number, scope and complexity of humanitarian crises worldwide ***both natural and man-made*** have increased significantly over the years ***and this trend is unfortunately likely to continue*** leading to a rising demand on humanitarian actors to provide an ***immediate***, effective, efficient and coherent response and to support third country local communities in order to make them less vulnerable and to strengthen their resilience to disasters.

Amendment 5

Proposal for a regulation
Recital 6

Text proposed by the Commission

(6) Volunteers can strengthen humanitarian aid operations and contribute to the professionalization of humanitarian aid when they are adequately selected, trained and prepared for deployment so as to ensure that they have the necessary skills **and competences** to help people in need in the most effective way.

Amendment

(6) Volunteers can strengthen humanitarian aid operations and contribute to the professionalization of humanitarian aid when they are adequately selected, trained and prepared for deployment so as to ensure that they have the necessary skills, **competences and abilities** to help people in need in the most effective way, **provided that they can count on sufficient on-site support or supervision**.

Amendment 6

Proposal for a regulation
Recital 7

Text proposed by the Commission

(7) Volunteering schemes exist in Europe and worldwide focusing on third country deployment. These are often national schemes which focus mainly or exclusively on development projects. The EU Aid Volunteers should, therefore, avoid duplication and should add value by providing opportunities to volunteers to jointly contribute to humanitarian aid operations thus reinforcing active European Union citizenship **and by** fostering transnational cooperation of implementing organisations participating in the actions of the Corps.

Amendment

(7) Volunteering schemes exist in Europe and worldwide focusing on third country deployment. These are often national schemes which focus mainly or exclusively on development projects. The EU Aid Volunteers should, therefore, avoid duplication and should add value by providing opportunities to volunteers to jointly contribute to humanitarian aid operations thus reinforcing active European Union citizenship, fostering transnational cooperation of implementing organisations participating in the actions of the Corps, **therefore projecting a positive image of the Union in the world and fostering interest for pan-European humanitarian projects**.

Amendment 7

Proposal for a regulation
Recital 9

Text proposed by the Commission

(9) Security and safety of the volunteers should remain of paramount importance.

Amendment

(9) ***Appropriate training***, security and safety of the volunteers should remain of paramount importance, ***therefore inexperienced volunteers should not be sent to projects where security is a concern.***

Amendment 8

Proposal for a decision

Recital 10

Text proposed by the Commission

(10) The Union carries out its humanitarian aid operations in partnership with implementing organisations. These organisations should play a significant role in implementing the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative to ensure ownership of the actors in the field and to maximise the potential uptake of the Voluntary Corps' actions. The Union should entrust implementing organisations notably with the identification, selection, preparation and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in accordance with standards established by the Commission. The Commission should, in addition, be able to draw upon successfully trained and prepared volunteers for deployment, where appropriate.

Amendment

(10) The Union carries out its humanitarian aid operations in partnership with implementing organisations. These organisations should play a significant role in implementing the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative to ensure ownership of the actors in the field and to maximise the potential uptake of the Voluntary Corps' actions. The Union should entrust implementing organisations notably with the identification, selection, preparation and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers, ***as well as with follow-up during and after assignments***, in accordance with standards established by the Commission. The Commission should, in addition, be able to draw upon successfully trained and prepared volunteers for deployment, where appropriate.

Amendment 9

Proposal for a regulation

Recital 12

Text proposed by the Commission

(12) Volunteering in humanitarian aid could help maintain young people active,

Amendment

(12) Volunteering in humanitarian aid could help maintain young people active,

contribute to their personal development and intercultural awareness, and improve their competences and employability in global economy. It would, thus, contribute to the ‘Youth Opportunities Initiative’ and to a range of other key objectives of the Union such as social inclusion, employment, active citizenship, education, and skills development .

contribute to their personal development and intercultural awareness, and improve their competences and employability in global economy. It would, thus, contribute to the ‘Youth Opportunities Initiative’ and to a range of other key objectives of the Union such as social inclusion, employment, active citizenship, education, and skills development *as well as in upholding volunteering as a concrete expression of European solidarity with people affected by crises, thus promoting the Union's values and principles.*

Amendment 10

Proposal for a regulation Recital 15 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(15 a) Underlines that such voluntary aid corps should be cost effective, compliment existing national and international voluntary schemes without duplicating them, and be focused on addressing concrete needs and gaps in the humanitarian field;

Amendment 11

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

1. This Regulation establishes a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as ‘the EU Aid Volunteers’) as a framework for joint contributions from European volunteers in humanitarian aid operations of the Union.

1. This Regulation establishes a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as ‘the EU Aid Volunteers’ *initiative*’) as a framework for joint contributions from European volunteers in humanitarian aid operations of the Union.

Amendment 12

Proposal for a decision Article 4 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. The safety and security of volunteers shall be a priority.

Amendment

3. The **training**, safety and security of volunteers shall be a priority.

Amendment 13

Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

4. The EU Aid Volunteers shall promote common activities and participation of volunteers from different countries and foster joint projects and transnational partnerships between implementing organisations as referred to in Article 10.

Amendment

4. The EU Aid **Volunteers' initiative** shall promote common activities, **close cooperation** and participation of volunteers from different countries and foster joint projects and transnational partnerships between implementing organisations as referred to in Article 10; **ensuring coordination, complementarity, coherence and cost effectiveness between the variety of existing EU voluntary schemes for crisis situations in third countries, without duplicating them.**

Amendment 14

Proposal for a regulation Article 5 – paragraph 1 – point a

Text proposed by the Commission

(a) 'volunteer' means a person who chooses, out of free will and motivation and without a primary concern for financial gain, to engage in activities that benefit the community, **him or herself**, and society at large.

Amendment

(a) 'volunteer' means a person who chooses, out of free will and motivation and without a primary concern for financial gain, to engage in activities that benefit the community and society at large **and possibly additionally him or herself.**

Amendment 15

Proposal for a regulation
Article 5 – paragraph 1 – point c

Text proposed by the Commission

(c) an ‘EU Aid Volunteer’ means a candidate volunteer that has been selected, trained, assessed as eligible and registered as available for deployment in humanitarian aid operations in third countries.

Amendment

(c) an ‘EU Aid Volunteer’ means a candidate volunteer that has been selected, ***adequately*** trained, assessed as eligible and registered as available for deployment in humanitarian aid operations in third countries.

Amendment 16

Proposal for a decision
Article 5 – paragraph 1 - point c a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

c a) ‘volunteer leader’ means a person who supervises or manages volunteers, and who draws on experience to educate and train them before, during, and after their assignment.

Amendment 17

Proposal for a regulation
Article 6 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

1. In implementing the Regulation, coherence shall be ensured with other areas of Union's external action and with other relevant Union policies. Particular attention shall be given to ensure smooth transition between relief, rehabilitation and development.

1. In implementing the Regulation, ***coordination, complementarity and*** coherence shall be ensured with other areas of Union's external action and with other relevant Union policies. Particular attention shall be given to ensure smooth transition between relief, rehabilitation and development ***and synergies with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.***

Amendment 18

Proposal for a regulation
Article 6 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. The Commission and the Member States shall cooperate to improve the consistency and coherence between relevant national volunteering schemes and the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Amendment

2. The Commission and the Member States shall cooperate to improve the consistency and coherence between relevant national volunteering schemes and the actions of the EU Aid ***Volunteers' initiative in order to ensure higher cost efficiency. The Commission should make use of the existing European networks, which are efficient.***

Amendment 19

**Proposal for a regulation
Article 6 – paragraph 3**

Text proposed by the Commission

3. The Union shall foster cooperation with relevant international organisation, in particular the United Nations, and other humanitarian aid partners in implementation of the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Amendment

3. The Union shall foster cooperation with relevant international organisation, in particular the United Nations, and other humanitarian aid partners ***and stakeholders in the regions*** in implementation of the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Amendment 20

**Proposal for a regulation
Article 7 – paragraph 1 – introductory part**

Text proposed by the Commission

1. The EU Aid ***Volunteers*** shall pursue the following operational objectives:

Amendment

1. The EU Aid ***Volunteers' initiative*** shall pursue the following operational objectives:

Amendment 21

**Proposal for a regulation
Article 7 – paragraph 1 – point b – indent 1**

Text proposed by the Commission

– the number of volunteers trained and the quality of the training on the basis of the reviews and level of satisfaction;

Amendment

– the number of volunteers trained and the quality of the training on the basis of the reviews and level of satisfaction ***and performance***;

Amendment 22

Proposal for a regulation

Article 7 – paragraph 1 – point b – indent 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

- an evaluation of new skills and competences acquired based on existing EU tools such as the Skills Passport or the European Qualifications framework

Amendment 23

Proposal for a regulation

Article 7 – paragraph 1 – point e – introductory part

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(e) Enhancement of coherence ***and consistency*** of volunteering across Member States in order to improve opportunities for Union citizens to participate in humanitarian aid activities and operations. Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

(e) Enhancement of coherence, ***consistency and reliability*** of volunteering across Member States in order to improve opportunities for Union citizens to participate in humanitarian aid activities and operations. Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

Amendment 24

Proposal for a regulation

Chapter 2 – title

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

ACTIONS OF THE EU AID

ACTIONS of THE EU AID

VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS' *initiative*

Amendment 25

Proposal for a regulation

Article 8 – title

Text proposed by the Commission

Actions of the EU Aid Volunteers

Amendment

Actions of the EU Aid Volunteers'
initiative

Amendment 26

Proposal for a regulation

Article 8 – paragraph 1 – introductory part

Text proposed by the Commission

The EU Aid *Volunteers* shall pursue the objectives referred to in Articles 3 and 7 through the following types of actions:

Amendment

The EU Aid *Volunteers' initiative* shall pursue the objectives referred to in Articles 3 and 7 through the following types of actions:

Amendment 27

Proposal for a decision

Article 9 – paragraph 1 – point a

Text proposed by the Commission

a) the identification, selection and preparation of candidate volunteers for deployment in humanitarian aid operations;

Amendment

a) the identification, *briefing – both before and after the assignment* – selection and preparation of candidate volunteers for deployment in humanitarian aid operations;

Amendment 28

Proposal for a regulation

Article 9 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. These standards shall ensure duty of care

Amendment

2. These standards shall ensure duty of care

and cover notably the responsibilities of the sending and hosting organisations, minimum requirements on the coverage of subsistence, accommodation and other relevant expenses, insurance coverage, security procedures and other relevant elements.

and cover notably the responsibilities of the sending and hosting organisations, ***the supervision, ongoing training and management of the volunteers***, minimum requirements on the coverage of subsistence, accommodation and other relevant expenses, insurance coverage, security procedures and other relevant elements, ***such as the provision of meals and accommodation, transport from the international airport to the place of work, medical, travel and cancellation insurance, social security coverage during the service and 24-hour support and assistance for the team both on-site and at headquarters, as well as coverage of other costs depending the country of action, the type of humanitarian aid and the terms under which the volunteer and/or the hosting or sending organisation may cancel.***

Amendment 29

Proposal for a regulation Article 10 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

1. The Commission shall establish a certification mechanism ensuring that sending organisations comply with the standards referred to in Article 9 and a differentiated certification mechanism for hosting organisations.

Amendment

1. The Commission shall establish a certification mechanism, ***developed in close cooperation with NGOs renowned for humanitarian work***, ensuring that sending organisations comply with the standards referred to in Article 9 and a differentiated certification mechanism for hosting organisations.

Volunteer representatives shall be consulted when updating such mechanisms.

Amendment 30

Proposal for a regulation Article 12 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

1. The Commission shall establish a training programme in order to prepare the candidate volunteers for undertaking humanitarian activities and for deployment in humanitarian aid operations.

Amendment

1. The Commission shall establish a training programme ***based on the expertise of renowned humanitarian aid organisations*** in order to prepare the candidate volunteers for undertaking humanitarian activities and for deployment in humanitarian aid operations, ***notably by providing necessary background information on the Union's role and values regarding humanitarian issues.***

Amendment 31

Proposal for a regulation

Article 12 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. Candidate volunteers who have been identified and selected in accordance with Article 11 shall be eligible to participate in the training programme. The individual scope and content of the training each candidate volunteer needs to accomplish shall be determined on the basis of his or her needs taking into account prior experience.

Amendment

2. Candidate volunteers who have been identified and selected in accordance with Article 11 shall be eligible to participate in the training programme. The individual scope and content of the training each candidate volunteer needs to accomplish shall be determined on the basis of his or her needs, taking into account prior experience. ***Prior to their deployment, the EU aid volunteers shall received additional training specifically tailored to the needs and special circumstances of the country and of the project to which they are sent.***

Amendment 32

Proposal for a regulation

Article 12 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. As part of their training and notably their preparation for deployment candidate volunteers ***may undertake*** apprenticeship

Amendment

3. As part of their training and notably their preparation for deployment candidate volunteers ***should be offered the***

placements in certified sending organisations, where possible in a country other than their country of origin.

opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship placement in certified sending organisations, where possible in a country other than their country of origin.

Amendment 33

Proposal for a decision Article 12 – paragraph 4

Text proposed by the Commission

4. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, candidate volunteers who have not benefited from an apprenticeship placement may be given, where appropriate, additional pre-deployment preparation by certified sending organisations. This preparation and the apprenticeship placement shall comply with the standards for preparation referred to in Article 9(1)(a).

Amendment

4. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, candidate volunteers who have not benefited from an apprenticeship placement may be given, where appropriate, additional pre-deployment preparation by certified sending organisations. This preparation and the apprenticeship placement shall comply with the standards for preparation referred to in Article 9(1)(a). ***Candidate volunteers who have not benefited from an apprenticeship and those being sent to a foreign country must be given additional training.***

Amendment 34

Proposal for a regulation Article 12 – paragraph 5

Text proposed by the Commission

5. The training programme shall include an assessment of the candidate volunteers' readiness to be deployed in humanitarian aid operations.

Amendment

5. The training programme shall include an assessment of the candidate volunteers' readiness to be deployed in humanitarian aid operations ***and to help ensure security and safety when deployed.***

Amendment 35

Proposal for a regulation Article 12 – paragraph 5 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

5 a. If the training programme is longer than 3 months, the candidate volunteer should receive a monthly grant to cover the costs of accommodation at the place of training, including during the time of the apprenticeship if no gratification is foreseen.

Amendment 36

Proposal for a decision Article 13 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

1. Candidate volunteers who have successfully passed the assessment referred to in Article 12(5) shall be considered EU Aid Volunteers. They can be as such included in the Register of EU Aid Volunteers (hereinafter referred to as 'the Register') and shall be eligible for deployment.

1. Candidate volunteers who have successfully passed the assessment referred to in Article 12(5) shall be considered EU Aid Volunteers. They can be as such included in the Register of EU Aid Volunteers (hereinafter referred to as 'the Register') and shall be eligible for deployment ***for a period of no more than two years, after which they must be reassessed.***

Amendment 37

Proposal for a regulation Article 13 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

2. The Commission shall establish, maintain and update the Register and shall regulate the access and the use of it.

2. The Commission shall establish, maintain and update the Register, ***notably by keeping track of the number of volunteers deployed in countries hit by disasters*** and shall regulate the access and the use of it.

Amendment 38

Proposal for a regulation

Article 14 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. The specific terms of deployment of volunteers shall be set-out in a contract between the sending organisations and the volunteer, including the duration and location of deployment and the tasks of the volunteer.

Amendment

3. The specific terms of deployment of volunteers shall be set-out in a contract between the sending organisations and the volunteer, including the duration and location of deployment and the tasks of the volunteer. ***The contract shall provide for, inter alia, payment of the volunteer's return air fare, the provision of meals and accommodation, transport from the international airport to the place of work, medical, travel and cancellation insurance and 24-hour support and assistance for the team both on-site and at headquarters, as well as payment of other costs depending the country of action, the type of humanitarian aid and the terms under which the volunteer and/or the hosting or sending organisation may cancel. The contract shall either specify the rights and obligations of the volunteer or indicate where the rights and obligations are documented.***

Amendment 39

Proposal for a regulation

Article 14 – paragraph 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

4 a. On the basis of a certificate issued by the Commission, the actual time of the EU aid volunteering period shall be counted in the length of professional experience when the contract between the sending and hosting organisations is longer than six months. For contracts shorter than six months, the experience gained as an EU Aid Volunteer can be recognised as a traineeship, on the basis of a certificate issued by the Commission.

Amendment 40

Proposal for a decision

Article 15 – paragraph 1 - point c a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

c a) protection of volunteers by all necessary means, including the provision of specific information to local parties and partners, especially in conflict zones

Amendment 41

Proposal for a regulation

Article 16 – paragraph 2 – point 1 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

1 a. The network can be used to set up a mechanism for the election of a volunteer representation of active volunteers, which will represent the volunteers in a similar manner as staff representatives. Volunteer representatives have to be consulted on changes addressing the rights and obligations of the volunteers.

Amendment 42

Proposal for a regulation

Article 16 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

3. The Network shall also provide and promote opportunities for on-line volunteering to complement and reinforce the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers.

3. The Network shall also provide and promote opportunities for on-line volunteering to complement and reinforce the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers.
The Commission should use existing European networks, which are efficient, such as the EURES network. The EURES network could be useful as, after six months of experience volunteers might want to use their humanitarian aid experience.

Amendment 43

Proposal for a decision Article 17 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. EU Aid Volunteers shall, ***where necessary*** with the assistance and direction of the sending and hosting organisations, participate in appropriate information, communication and awareness raising activities before, during and after deployment to promote the EU Aid Volunteers and their engagement therein. The Commission shall define those activities, which shall not impose disproportionate obligations on the volunteers.

Amendment

3. EU Aid Volunteers shall, with the assistance and direction of the sending and hosting organisations, participate in appropriate information, communication and awareness raising activities before, during and after deployment to promote the EU Aid Volunteers and their engagement therein. The Commission shall define those activities, which shall not impose disproportionate obligations on the volunteers.

Amendment 44

Proposal for a regulation Article 26 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. Sending organisations deploying volunteers in operations outside the Union shall be responsible for the monitoring of their activities and shall submit to the Commission monitoring reports on a regular basis.

Amendment

3. Sending organisations deploying volunteers in operations outside the Union shall be responsible for the monitoring of their activities and shall submit to the Commission monitoring reports on a regular basis ***safeguarding all rights of individual volunteers regarding personal data protection.***

PROCEDURE

Title	Establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps EU Aid Volunteers		
References	COM(2012)0514 – C7-0303/2012 – 2012/0245(COD)		
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	DEVE 22.10.2012		
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	EMPL 22.10.2012		
Rapporteur Date appointed	Philippe Boulland 27.11.2012		
Discussed in committee	14.1.2013	24.1.2013	20.2.2013
Date adopted	21.2.2013		
Result of final vote	+: 36 -: 2 0: 4		
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Heinz K. Becker, Jean-Luc Bennahmias, Phil Bennion, Pervenche Berès, Philippe Boulland, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Minodora Cliveti, Emer Costello, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Thomas Händel, Marian Harkin, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Jean Lambert, Patrick Le Hyaric, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Olle Ludvigsson, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Öry, Konstantinos Poupakis, Sylvana Rapti, Licia Ronzulli, Elisabeth Schroedter, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Jutta Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu, Inês Cristina Zuber		
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Georges Bach, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Csaba Sógor		
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Alexander Alvaro, Nirj Deva, Pat the Cope Gallagher		