
Parliament expands scope of the EU Solidarity Corps programme

- Volunteering outside country of residence at the core of the new programme
- Humanitarian aid outside EU now part of the programme
- In-country and part-time activities are allowed for people with fewer opportunities

The new 2021-2027 programme will include volunteering for humanitarian aid outside EU and offer more opportunities for disadvantaged young people.

On Tuesday, MEPs adopted the new European Solidarity Corps programme for the 2021-2027 period, the single entry point for solidarity-related activities across and beyond Europe. Traineeships, jobs and network activities in areas related to solidarity are also part of the programme.

Humanitarian aid in non-EU countries is now included as a new strand of the programme. Volunteering in this field is open to young people and experienced participants, from the age of 18, highly qualified and highly trained, who have undergone a background check, especially those working with vulnerable people and children.

More opportunities for disadvantaged young people

The new programme will focus on young people with fewer opportunities, people from remote regions or with a migrant background, ensuring more opportunities for them to access this European scheme: personalised guidance, help with registration, option of participating on a part-time basis, etc. Participating in in-country activities will now be possible for people with fewer opportunities, but the activity should have a trans-border dimension and include participants from other countries.

Distinct strands of budget

A clear division of the programme budget for each strand was also voted on by the Parliament, allowing 86% of the overall budget for volunteering, 8% for traineeships and jobs and 6% for humanitarian aid activities.

The new programme will continue to allow individuals and organisations to participate in activities carried out for a period up to 12 months. The participating organisations are subject to a quality label differentiated by type of activity and regularly re-evaluated.

For better security at work, all individuals participating in the programme will sign a written volunteering agreement in accordance with national laws.

The text drafted by Michaela Šojdrová (EPP, CS) was adopted by 513 to 95 against, with 64 abstentions.

Next steps

The final text must be negotiated and agreed with the Council under the next parliamentary term.

Background

The first European Solidarity Corps, which started in 2018, finances volunteering activities, traineeships and jobs in solidarity related areas until the end 2020. Volunteering activities financed by EU funding should be carried out in a country other than the country of residence of participants and have a solidarity dimension. The maximum duration of volunteering activities is 12 months; traineeships can be for a period from three to six months, renewable once and for a maximum duration of 12 months; and jobs include a paid solidarity activity for a period from three to 12 months.

All participants should register in the Solidarity Portal, available in all EU languages and which should make available web-based tools to train participants (e.g. online language courses), as well for evaluation and feedback.

Organisations participating in the programme can be private or public entities, non-profit or profit making organisations, but only non-profit activities can be funded under the Solidarity Corps. These organisations must have the “Quality label”, ensuring they can offer the necessary quality of the activities. The quality label will be regularly re-evaluated and can be revoked if the quality criteria are no longer fulfilled; for organisations already participating in the humanitarian aid activities under the EUVA initiative, a simplified procedure to obtain the quality label should apply.

Further information

[Adopted texts will be available here](#)

[Video of the debate in plenary \(11.03.2019\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

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[Solidarity Corps webpage](#)

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