European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (‘EU Aid Volunteers initiative')

2012/0245(COD) - 13/07/2015 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented the Annual report on the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers Initiative in 2014. It outlines the main activities and achievements in the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative in 2014 taking into account the specificity of the first year, which was dedicated to the adoption of the indispensable legal acts mapping out the next steps in the implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

The main elements of this implementing report may be summarised as follows:

- **Call for tenders**: an open call for tenders for insurance was published on 31 December 2014 aiming to ensure that the volunteers participating in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative are covered by a complete insurance plan specifically designed to protect them during the entire duration of their deployment (Action 3 under Annual Work Programme 2014). The Commission published:

- call for proposals for technical assistance for sending organisations and capacity building for humanitarian aid of hosting organisations (Action 1);
- call for applications for the certification of sending and hosting organisations wishing to participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative (Action 2) in early 2015.

- **Support measures**: the EU Aid Volunteers initiative provides an additional opportunity to highlight the value and impact of volunteering and show EU solidarity with communities in countries affected by disaster in action. Support measures for networking and communication (Action 4) aim to raise awareness, encourage participation, create new opportunities to take part and support networking between participants.

- **Information**: in 2014 Commission services and EACEA also prepared the Info and Networking Day that took place in January 2015. The aim of this public event was to explain to the future partners - implementing organisations the opportunities available under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and to launch the first activities of the initiative (the call for proposals for technical assistance and capacity building and the call for applications for the certification of sending and hosting organisations).

The web page for EU Aid Volunteers on the website of DG ECHO will continue to publish information on the initiative and communication products such as blogs from volunteers, articles and videos.

Main conclusions: 2014 was a very important year for the European Aid Volunteers initiative as the legal basis was adopted and administrative and organisational activities have followed creating the solid foundation and the favourable conditions for the initiative to be established and to grow up. Due to the need to adopt implementing and delegated acts, 2014 was mainly a year of legislative and preparatory measures.

The EU Aid Volunteers initiative is on course to meet its multiannual objectives.

All the actions have been prepared so as to kick-off in 2015 following the above mentioned adoption of the legal acts:

- certification of sending and hosting organisations wishing to participate in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative;
- capacity building of hosting organisations and technical assistance to sending organisations;
- a comprehensive insurance scheme for the volunteers;
- the pre-deployment training for all volunteers;
- deployment of volunteers by certified organisations.

The first vacancies for volunteers will become available by early 2016.

The Commission will continue to promote the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and to invest in fruitful communication in order to raise awareness and to gather lessons learnt. A number of activities are planned to take place among which a conference to mark the closure of the preparatory actions with the return of the volunteers from the final phase pilot projects and a high visibility event to launch the deployment phase of the volunteers.