

European solidarity corps programme 2021–2027

2018/0230(COD) - 11/06/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the European solidarity corps for the period 2021-2027.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the European Union is built on solidarity, a shared value which is strongly felt throughout European society. There are many young people who want to engage in solidarity activities, and there are many unmet needs in communities that could be addressed by involving young people in such activities.

The State of the Union address of 14 September 2016 emphasised the need to invest in young people and announced the establishment of a European Solidarity Corps with a view to creating opportunities for young people across the Union to make a meaningful contribution to society, show solidarity and develop their skills.

In its [communication](#) of 7 December 2016, the Commission launched the first phase of the Corps and reiterated the target of having 100 000 young Europeans taking part in it by 2020. During this initial phase, eight different EU programmes were mobilised to offer volunteering, traineeship or job opportunities to young people across the EU.

As there is potential to further develop solidarity with victims of crises and disasters in non-EU countries, this proposal provides for extending the scope of the European Solidarity Corps to **include support to humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries**, including those located in the EU outermost regions' neighbourhood.

The new programme shall allow at least 350 000 young Europeans to support communities in need between 2021 and 2027 through volunteering, traineeships and job placements.

CONTENT: the proposal for a Regulation - presented for a Union of 27 Member States - seeks to establish the **European solidarity corps** under the multiannual financial framework for the period 2021-2027. The [regulation](#) on the European solidarity corps shall be repealed with effect from 1 January 2021.

The European solidarity corps aims to **strengthen the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities**. It is a means to strengthen cohesion, solidarity and democracy in Europe and abroad and to address societal and humanitarian challenges on the ground, with a particular focus on promoting social inclusion.

It shall enable participants to strengthen and **validate their skills** and facilitate their integration into the labour market.

The programme shall offer activities that can be undertaken in a country other than the country of residence of the participants (cross-border activities and volunteering in support of humanitarian aid) and activities that can be undertaken in their country of residence (in-country). The programme shall be implemented under two strands of action:

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Strand 1: participation of young people in solidarity activities addressing societal challenges: the actions shall contribute in particular to strengthening cohesion, solidarity and democracy in the EU and beyond, while addressing societal challenges, with particular efforts to promote social inclusion;

- **Strand 2: participation of young people in humanitarian aid related solidarity activities (European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps):** these actions shall contribute in particular to providing needs-based humanitarian aid, aimed at preserving lives, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity, as well as strengthening the capacities and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-stricken communities.

Supported actions: the European solidarity corps shall provide young people with easily accessible opportunities to engage in **volunteering, traineeships or jobs in solidarity-related sectors**, such as the social economy, and to devise and develop solidarity projects at their own initiative. It shall also support networking activities for its participants and organisations.

Participation: the European solidarity corps targets **young people aged 18-30**, and participation in the activities offered by the European solidarity corps shall require prior registration in the European solidarity corps portal.

Any public or private entity established in a participating country as well as international organisations may apply for funding under the European solidarity corps. A **quality label** shall be obtained by the participating organisation as a pre-condition for receiving funding under the European solidarity corps.

Special attention shall be given to ensuring that the activities supported by the European solidarity corps are accessible to all young people, notably the most disadvantaged ones. Special measures shall be put in place to promote social inclusion, the participation of disadvantaged young people, as well as to take into account the constraints imposed by the remoteness of a number of rural areas and of the outermost regions of the Union and the Overseas Countries and Territories.

Proposed budget: in line with the Commission's [proposal](#) for the multiannual financial framework, the programme shall have an overall budget of **EUR 1.26 billion** at current prices for the period 2021-2027.