

European solidarity corps programme 2021–2027

2018/0230(COD) - 15/02/2019 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the report by Michaela ŠOJDROVÁ (EPP, CZ) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Solidarity Corps programme and repealing [European Solidarity Corps Regulation] and Regulation (EU) No 375/2014.

The Committee on Development and the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, exercising their prerogatives as associated committees in accordance with [Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure](#), also gave their opinions on the report.

The relevant committees recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Objectives

The general objective of the programme is to promote solidarity as a value, mainly through volunteering, enhance the engagement of a generation of young people more likely to engage in solidarity activities and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities as a means to contribute to strengthening social cohesion, solidarity, democracy, European identity and active citizenship in the Union and abroad, to support communities and respond to societal and humanitarian challenges on the ground, with particular effort to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities.

The programme seeks to provide young people to validate their competences for personal, educational, social, cultural, civic and professional development, as well as facilitating their continuous engagement as active citizens, employability and transition into the labour market.

Solidarity activities

These would be high quality, inclusive and adequately funded activities (i) aimed at addressing societal challenges to the benefit of a community or society as a whole, (ii) contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, (iii) with European added value and (iv) respecting health and safety regulations and international human rights standards. They may take the form of volunteering, traineeships, jobs, solidarity projects and networking activities in various fields.

Members have clarified the following terms:

- **‘volunteering’** means an optional solidarity activity consisting in the performance of an activity for the public benefit that contributes to the achievement of public welfare, which a participant performs in his or her free time and of his or her free will, without an entitlement to remuneration, for a period of up to 12 months;
- **‘traineeship’** means a paid solidarity activity that takes the form of work practice within a participating organisation for a period from three to six months, renewable once and for a maximum duration of 12 months, that is offered and paid by the participating organisation hosting the European Solidarity Corps participant and that involves a learning component to gain relevant skills and experience;
- **‘job’** means a decently paid solidarity activity for a period from three to 12 months, which includes a learning and training component, is based on a written agreement and is offered and paid by the

participating organisation employing the European Solidarity Corps participant, not replacing or substituting an existing employment opportunity.

Stakeholders, especially youth networks and participating organisations, should be consulted regularly throughout the implementation of the programme.

Common actions

These actions should also facilitate the access of people with disabilities to all proposed activities and provide opportunities to provide feedback on solidarity activities and promote the programme as an ambassador. Support measures should also aim to:

- protect beneficiaries of solidarity activities, including the targeted training of participants who undertake their solidarity activities for the benefit of vulnerable groups, including children, and background checks of participants working with children;
- promote social inclusion and equal opportunities, in particular for the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, such as appropriate formats of solidarity activities and personalised support;
- ensure capacity building and administrative support for participating organisations;
- encourage social enterprises to support programme activities or to allow employees to engage in volunteering activities under the programme.

Members introduced amendments to ensure a higher visibility of the European Solidarity Corps.

Budget

The financial envelope for the implementation of the programme for the period 2021-2027 shall be EUR 1 112 988 000 in 2018 prices [EUR 1 260 000 000 in current prices]. An adequate amount of the budget shall also be dedicated to the exchange of best practices among Member States and the development of youth networks.

The indicative breakdown would be as follows: (i) volunteering for solidarity activities and projects: 86 %; (ii) traineeships and jobs: 8 %; and (iii) volunteering in support of humanitarian aid operations: 6 %.

Participation, quality labels, annual programmes

The European Solidarity Corps shall be open to the participation of public or private entities, whether non-profit or profit making, and international organisations, including youth organisations, religious institutions, charity associations, secular humanistic organisations, NGOs or other actors from civil society, provided that they offer solidarity activities, that they have legal personality under the law of the country in which they are registered and provided that they have received a European Solidarity Corps quality label.

The specific requirements to be fulfilled in order to obtain a quality label shall vary depending on the type of solidarity activity and the function of the entity. Participating organisations that have been attributed a quality label shall have access to a platform to easily search for suitable applicants.

The operational objectives and corresponding policy priorities of the actions to be implemented through the activities under the strands shall be specified in detail in the annual work programmes to be adopted by means of delegated acts.