Basic information

1996/0318(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Decision	Procedure completed
European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002 **Subject** 4.40.10 Youth	

Key players

European Parliament	**Former committee for opinion**	**Former rapporteur for opinion**	**Appointed**
	BUDG Budgets	GHILARDOTTI Fiorella (PSE)	26/02/1997
	DEVE Development and Cooperation	DIMITRAKOPOULOS Giorgos (PPE)	26/02/1997

Council of the European Union	**Council configuration**	**Meetings**	**Date**
	Agriculture and Fisheries	2115	1998-07-20
	Environment	2062	1997-12-16
	Youth	2036	1997-10-28

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/12/1996	Legislative proposal published	COM(1996)0610	Summary
15/01/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
22/05/1997	Vote in committee, 1st reading		Summary
22/05/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A4-0182/1997	
12/06/1997	Debate in Parliament		Summary
23/07/1997	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1997)0347	Summary
16/12/1997	Council position published	11851/1/1997	Summary
15/01/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
26/02/1998	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary

26/02/1998	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A4-0077/1998	
12/03/1998	Debate in Parliament		Summary
07/04/1998	Parliament's amendments rejected by Council		
23/06/1998	Formal meeting of Conciliation Committee		
23/06/1998	Final decision by Conciliation Committee		Summary
30/06/1998	Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs	3613/1998	
08/07/1998	Report tabled for plenary, 3rd reading	A4-0274/1998	
14/07/1998	Debate in Parliament		Summary
20/07/1998	Decision by Council, 3rd reading		
20/07/1998	Final act signed		
20/07/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
31/07/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1996/0318(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 126
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CODE/4/10001

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0182/1997 OJ C 182 16.06.1997, p. 0003	22/05/1997	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0334/1997 OJ C 200 30.06.1997, p. 0105-0183	12/06/1997	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A4-0077/1998 OJ C 104 06.04.1998, p. 0006	26/02/1998	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T4-0145/1998 OJ C 104 06.04.1998, p. 0197-0206	12/03/1998	Summary
Report tabled for plenary by Parliament delegation to Conciliation Committee, 3rd reading		A4-0274/1998 OJ C 292 21.09.1998, p. 0005	08/07/1998	
Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading		T4-0422/1998 OJ C 292 21.09.1998, p. 0053-0063	15/07/1998	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	11851/1/1997 OJ C 043 09.02.1998, p. 0035	16/12/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1996)0610	23/12/1996	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1997)0347 OJ C 320 21.10.1997, p. 0007	23/07/1997	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(1997)2288	11/12/1997	Summary
Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading	COM(1998)0201	30/03/1998	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2001)1621	09/10/2001	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0191/1996 OJ C 042 10.02.1997, p. 0001	13/11/1996	
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0324/1997 OJ C 158 26.05.1997, p. 0012	19/03/1997	Summary
CSL/EP	Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs	3613/1998	30/06/1998	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 1998/1686
OJ L 214 31.07.1998, p. 0001 Summary

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 19/03/1997 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Committee welcomes the Commission proposal. Voluntary service, by providing young people with special opportunities for integration into active life and the acquisition of specific vocational and workplace experience could contribute to action designed to combat exclusion and unemployment among the young, while generating Community added value and the desired multiplier effects for the Member States' youth policies. The Committee also feels that it should be able to participate in monitoring the programme's progress and assessing the results. With the aim of strengthening partnership schemes, the Committee requests the Commission to ensure that cooperation with NGOs encompasses charitable associations as well as involving regional and local authorities. The Committee reiterates the need to avoid any distortion of the labour market. The Committee hopes that it will be financially possible in future to extend the programme further to non-EU countries.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 20/07/1998 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to establish a Community Action Programme 'European voluntary service for young people' for the period from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Decision 1686/98/EC of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the community action programme 'European voluntary service for young people'. SUBSTANCE: The programme, which has been allocated ECU 47.5 million for the period 1998- 1999, is based on closer cooperation between the Member States. It aims to offer young people aged 18 to 25 (in principle) an attested informal educational experience at transnational level, involving both the acquisition of skills and abilities and the demonstration of responsible citizenship. The programme concerns voluntary service activities within the Community and in third countries for young people legally resident in a Member State. Within the general framework of the Community's youth policy, it is designed to encourage mobility and solidarity among young people and to promote, through their participation in transnational activities of benefit to the Community, an active contribution on their part to the ideals of democracy, tolerance and solidarity in the context of European integration. Specifically, the programme aims to: - support long-term or short-term transnational activities of benefit to the Community within the Community and in third countries, - support activities intended to foster partnerships based on European voluntary service and innovative network activities, - support projects intended to further the follow-up of young volunteers, to build on the experience required and to promote their active integration into society, - develop and support appropriate preparation, particularly linguistic and intercultural, and the integration of young volunteers, mentors and project leaders, - support the quality of all the programme's activities and the development of their European dimension by supporting Member States' efforts to improve services and measures related to European voluntary service (actions to provide more information on the programme, studies, evaluation etc.). An annex provides more details on the four sections which make up voluntary service (i.e. intracommunity transnational projects; transnational projects with third countries; follow-up, spirit of initiative and creativity of young people; complementary measures to underpin the programme). The Member States and the Commission are to facilitate access to the programme in particular for young people who experience difficulties in being included in Community programmes for cultural, physical, social or geographical regions. They are to take the necessary steps to develop structures to implement voluntary service and to ensure that volunteers are well informed on the rights and obligations resulting from their participation in the programme. Complementarity with comparable national activities is always to be sought. In addition, each Member State is to endeavour to adopt such measures as are necessary to limit legal and administrative obstacles to the access of young people to the programme (in a unilateral declaration annexed to this decision, the Commission emphasises that it attaches great importance to eliminating all the legal and administrative obstacles hampering volunteers' transnational mobility and that it will take the appropriate initiatives to fulfil this objective). The programme is open to participation by associated Eastern European countries, Cyprus, Malta and the EFTA countries on the basis of procedures and agreements (particularly financial) to be agreed. It is to be consistent and complementary with other relevant Community and Member States' programmes (in particular 'Youth for Europe III') and with programmes implemented by the Council of Europe. The Commission is responsible for managing the programme. It is to be assisted by a committee made up of representatives of the Member States who will take decisions in various ways depending on the topic (the Commission will report annually to Parliament on measures taken to implement the programme). The Commission is also to monitor and continuously evaluate the programme. At the appropriate time it is to submit a report to Parliament and the Council on implementation of the programme, with relevant proposals on the future of the Community's youth- related measures looking forward to the year 2000. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 31.07.1998.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 15/07/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Nicole FONTAINE (EPP, F) on the European Voluntary Service Parliament approved the joint text, even though it considered the text to be unsatisfactory. Parliament considered that funding for this programme was very inadequate for implementing all the measures planned. However Parliament, rather than disappointing the young people for whom this programme was intended, accepted, rather than seeing the whole programme placed in jeopardy, the budgetary funding of ECU 47.5 million provided for 1998-1999. Parliament hoped that the success of the programme would, as had already been the case for other initiatives, break the budgetary constraints placed by the Council on the European voluntary service scheme for young people.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 12/06/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Nicole FONTAINE (EPP, F), Parliament approved the proposal for a decision establishing a European Voluntary Service with the following changes: - the financial framework for the first two years (1998-99) must be increased from the ECU 60 m proposed by the European Commission to ECU 80 m, - the service must contribute to the development of the ideals of democracy, tolerance and cohesion of European integration, - information on the rights and obligations of the volunteers must be provided at European, national and local levels, - the Member States must take measures to ensure that this service is compatible with national civilian services and that it does not serve to restrict potential or existing paid employment, - the Member States must take measures in respect of the right of residence, social protection and tax exemption for the allowances received by young volunteers during their period of service for their travel, accommodation and subsistence, - as regards the age of the volunteers, priority must be given to those between 18 and 25 years of age, but for missions to third countries, particularly developing countries, that may be extended to 29 years, - with particular reference to voluntary service in the developing countries, measures must be taken to ensure that the service gives rise to a real transfer of expertise to the countries concerned, that it tallies with the Union's development cooperation objectives and that the projects can be extended to two years in certain cases, - post-activity follow-up must be provided in order to ensure that the experience acquired does not go to waste, - a European statute for young volunteers must be established at Member State level, valid in the volunteer's home country and host country, so as to ensure that volunteers enjoy the same mobility as other EU citizens. In addition Parliament calls for: - proper coordination with the Youth for Europe programme, - the utmost transparency in the selection of projects, not least in connection with the committee procedure (with Parliament kept regularly informed about decisions taken in the committee), - an annual assessment, in conjunction with support associations, in order to identify the obstacles to the participation of young people in the programme, - the volunteers to be properly supervised in their host country, whether by community or institutional organizations, - consideration to be given to the possibility of involving young nationals from third countries in voluntary service in the Community, - cooperation with NGOs and civil society, - the young people participating in the programme to be given adequate language and cultural training, - a report to be drawn up before 31 December 1998 on the main priorities for European youth policy, - a decision on a possible change to the financial framework for the service to be taken after the Commission has submitted its final report and in accordance with the codecision procedure.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 23/12/1996 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE : the establishment of a Community action programme 'European voluntary service for young people', for the period 1 January 1998 to 31 December 2002. SUBSTANCE: - The programme, based on increased cooperation between the Member States, offers young Europeans a recognized educational experience, at transnational level, involving both the acquisition of skills and abilities and the demonstration of responsible citizenship. To meet this objective the Member States and the Commission are to establish structures at European, national, regional or local level to facilitate access to the programme. The Member States are required, in particular, to facilitate the granting of the right of residence in the host Member State for the period of voluntary service and to maintain their entitlements in the Member State of origin, in particular those linked to their social protection. Specifically the programme seeks: . to support long-term or short-term transnational activities of benefit to the community, within Europe or a third country, . to support networks of innovative initiatives, particularly in the social, environmental and cultural fields and with regard to the fight against different forms of exclusion, . to support projects that help these young people to build on the experience acquired and are intended to further the follow-up, . to develop and support the preparation, particularly linguistic and intercultural, and the supervision of young volunteers, in particular mentors and project leaders, . to support the quality of all the programme's activities (in particular the development of the European dimension and improvement of the national support structures for voluntary service, studies and evaluation of the programme). - An annex gives details on the five sections of the voluntary service programme: . section 1 : long-term (six months to one year) or short-term (three weeks to three months) transnational intra-Community projects allowing young people aged between 18 and 25 to participate in social, environmental etc. projects in another Member State; . section 2 : long-term and short-term transnational projects in third countries (basically the same objective as section 1); . section 3 : innovative networks: assistance for the setting up of networks in the social field etc. in the European Union and third countries; . section 4 : support for a sense of initiative and enterprise : assistance for launching complementary training projects, developing initiatives following on from their voluntary service and launching economic activities (including business creation); . section 5 : complementary measures : actions intended to underpin the work of mentors and European project leaders. - Validation : Young volunteers will receive a European certificate attesting to their participation in voluntary service and the skills they have acquired. - Total funding : ECU 60 million for the period 1998-1999 (for the last three years proposals should be drawn up on the basis of the evaluation report on the voluntary service). - Access to the programme : all young people must be able to have access to the programme without discrimination (with special efforts being made for young people who experience the most difficulties in being included in Community or national programmes). - Scope of the programme : the programme is open to the associated countries of central and eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta and the EFTA countries. - Complementarity : the programme is to be compatible with and complementary to other actions undertaken for young people by the Member States and the Community and with the activities undertaken by the Council of Europe. - Commitology : the Commission is responsible for the management of this programme. It will be assisted by a committee composed of representatives of the Member States. - Monitoring and evaluation : the Commission is to take the necessary measures to ensure the monitoring and continuous evaluation of the programme. Two years after the implementation of the programme it will present to the European Parliament and the Council an evaluation report which will serve to define any new guidelines (including budgetary) for the final three years of the programme.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 12/03/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

In adopting the recommendation for second reading by Mrs Nicole FONTAINE (PPE, F) on European voluntary service, Parliament amended the common position of the Council, upholding 4 amendments which it regarded as fundamental. These concerned: -the budget for voluntary service: Parliament upheld its call for a budget of ECU 80 m rather than the ECU 35 m proposed by the Council, maintaining that its proposed figure was essential to enable young volunteers to be properly prepared, both culturally and linguistically, and to make support for individual mobility sufficiently attractive; -the social security and tax provisions applicable to young volunteers: Member States should adopt measures to remove obstacles to the satisfactory functioning of the programme by granting residence rights, maintaining their social security entitlements, and granting tax exemptions in respect of expenses and allowances received by young volunteers for their travel and accommodation. Parliament also called on the Commission to make proposals for introducing a European statute for young volunteers; -complementarity with national civilian services: Member States were called upon to facilitate the access of young European volunteers to national infrastructures, both material and organizational (moreover, Parliament wished to see the gradual integration of voluntary service into national civilian services in order to impart a transnational dimension to national volunteer work); -Parliament's right to be kept informed throughout the implementation of the programme and when it is evaluated.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 30/03/1998 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

In its opinion amending the proposal concerning European voluntary service, the Commission incorporates only two of the amendments adopted by Parliament at second reading. These are the amendments concerned with: - removing obstacles to the mobility of young volunteers, using a less strict wording and stressing young people's access to national infrastructures within the framework of voluntary service, - the composition of the committee, with minor changes to the text. The Commission has not, however, incorporated some amendments which Parliament considers fundamental; these are concerned with: - compatibility between European voluntary service and existing national civilian services, as this is within the exclusive competence of the Member States, - the budget for the service (Parliament has ECU 80 m whereas the Council has ECU 35 m); the Commission is keeping to its initial proposal of ECU 60 m, - informing and raising the awareness of volunteers with regard to their rights and obligations, - a state for young volunteers, - Parliament's right to information concerning the committee.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 11/12/1997 - Commission communication on Council's position

In its opinion on the common position of the Council on European voluntary service, the Commission takes the view that, on the whole, the Council text respects the broad outlines of its original proposal, and incorporates many amendments by the European Parliament, but that from the budgetary point of view it is unacceptable. The Commission cannot endorse the Council's proposal to limit the programme's funding to ECU 35 m for 1998 and 1999, and maintains that a budget of ECU 60 m should be allocated for the period in question, in view of the needs of the programme during its initial phase (preparation, follow-up, adjustment in relation to the needs of young people). To make the programme a success, a critical mass of young people participating in the programme needs to be attained. In the Commission's eyes, the target should be around 12 000 volunteers, which is not compatible with the budget proposed by the Council. The Commission expresses reservations about the way in which the Council's text deals with the mobility of young people (deleting certain references to freedom of movement for them).

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 09/10/2001

The Commission has presented an evaluation report on the third phase of the "Youth for Europe" Programme and the Community Action Programme "European Voluntary Service". In its conclusions, the report highlights that the launch of the YOUTH Programme provided the opportunity to simplify the procedures based on conclusions drawn from previous experience of the past years. These simplifications aim in particular to facilitate access to the Programme, to improve the transparency of financing and to speed up the transfer of payments. Moreover, the decentralisation of the implementation of the Actions has been increased. The development of enhanced methods of communication amongst the National Agencies themselves on the one hand and between the National Agencies and the Commission on the other, is foreseen for the year 2002. The evaluation of "Youth for Europe" stressed the weak development of multilateral exchanges, which play a more important role than others in incorporating the European dimension, and the reasons for this situation. Under the YOUTH Programme, a particular effort is being made with regard to multilateral activities. For instance, a target of at least 30% of decentralised funds allocated to multilateral projects has been set for the first year of implementation. A framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the YOUTH Programme is being developed based on some of the recommendations

of the evaluators. To this end the Commission is working out a series of regular indicators which will allow, with the assistance of the National Agencies, a more systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Programme. A reflection could also be done regarding the links between youth and culture: in 2000 almost 30% of the supported projects within the framework of the programme had a theme related to culture. Lastly, the new Youthlink database, which will integrate the existing systems, should be an appropriate tool responding to the needs of both the National Agencies and the Commission. It will be available before the end of 2001.

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 23/07/1997 - Modified legislative proposal

In its amended proposal the Commission adopted 18 of the 40 amendments proposed by Parliament on first reading, 14 in a slightly modified form. The Commission adopted the following amendments: - development of a cooperation policy among young people, - development, through 'voluntary service',of the ideals of democracy, tolerance and cohesion regarding the construction of Europe, - the submission before 31 December 1997 of a report setting out the main guidelines for young people between now and the year 2000, - coherence and coordination between this programme and the 'Youth for Europe Programme', - the participation of young people from third countries in activities under the programme in their country of origin and within the Union, - consideration of certain specific aspects relating to voluntary service in developing countries - the importance of linguistic and cultural preparation for young people, - measures to ensure that volunteers are properly informed and made aware of their rights and obligations, - a degree of flexibility concerning the upper age limit for involvement in the programme. However, the Commission rejected the notion of a European statute for young volunteers and the coordination of tax arrangements and social welfare. It opposed the integration of national civilian services into European voluntary service. In line with accepted policy and in the light of the annual financial perspectives, it also rejected an increase in the financial framework for the implementation of the programme for the first two years Concerning commitology, the Commission did not agree to the proposal to set up an advisory committee, taking the view that a joint committee was more suitable for this type of programme. In addition, it rejected other amendments regarding procedures to be followed by the committee (particularly information to be forwarded to Parliament).

European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 16/12/1997 - Council position

In its common position on European voluntary service, the Council incorporated in whole or in part 16 of the 40 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. In particular, these included the following: -reinforcing informal educational activities for the young as part of a policy of youth cooperation, and adopting a coherent approach to youth policy by the year 2000, -imparting added value to voluntary service in comparison with existing international exchanges in the Union (e.g. a stimulating framework for gaining broader experience, an active contribution to the ideals of democracy and tolerance in the context of European integration, opportunities for young people to play an active role in services of benefit to the community, etc.), -integrating activities with third countries wholly into the programme and ensuring complementarity with programmes under which projects for young volunteers from third countries may be financed, -linguistic and intercultural preparation of volunteers, -informing young volunteers about their rights and obligations, -monitoring the work of young volunteers in cooperation with local authorities, -ensuring that the activities of volunteers do not have the effect of restricting potential or existing paid jobs in the Member States, -the need for a certain amount of flexibility in the age range of volunteers, in certain justified cases. Those of Parliament's amendments which were not incorporated by the Council concerned, in particular: -instituting a specific budget heading for the programme as from 1996 and respecting the programme's budgetary compatibility with other Community youth measures, -the provisions designed to eliminate obstacles to the mobility of young volunteers, -commitology. Apart from general amendments intended to clarify the text of the basic proposal (particularly to reduce the number of sections in the annex from 5 to 4 while preserving the spirit of the original text and inserting an indicative definition of 'young volunteer'), the Council made two main changes to the text of the proposal: 1) the programme's duration and budget: the Council opted for a limited budget for the programme, namely ECU 35 m from 01.01.1998 to 31.12.1999. The Council brought the duration of the programme into line with that of the Youth for Europe programme, which expires on 31.12.1999; 2) the mobility of young volunteers: the Council did not wish to insert in the decision obligations which were more the responsibility of the Member States, particularly concerning the residence rights of volunteers or preservation of their social protection rights.