

The European Solidarity Corps beyond 2020: Questions and Answers

[IP/18/4035](#)

What is the objective of the European Solidarity Corps?

Solidarity is a shared value within the European Union – between its citizens, Member States, and in its action inside and outside the Union.

As President Juncker said in his [2016 State of the Union address](#) announcing the creation of the European Solidarity Corps: *“We often show solidarity most readily when faced with emergencies. When the Portuguese hills were burning, Italian planes doused the flames. When floods cut off the power in Romania, Swedish generators turned the lights back on. When thousands of refugees arrived on Greek shores, Slovakian tents provided shelter. In the same spirit, the Commission is proposing today to set up a European Solidarity Corps.”*

The aim of the European Solidarity Corps is to give young people the chance to take part in a range of solidarity activities that address challenging situations across the EU and abroad through volunteering, traineeships and jobs. Taking part not only benefits young people’s personal development, active involvement in society and employability, but also helps communities in need and assists non-governmental organisations, public bodies and companies in their efforts to cope with societal and other unmet needs.

What is new in this proposal, compared to the legal base governing the European Solidarity Corps until 2020?

According to the new proposal, the Solidarity Corps will become a single entry point for young people willing to engage, by integrating the [EU Aid Volunteers](#) scheme. This scheme will add new opportunities to volunteer in support of humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries where humanitarian aid activities and operations take place. This will create a true one-stop-shop for young people willing to engage in solidarity activities in the EU or abroad.

What will be the budget of the European Solidarity Corps?

The European Commission proposes to set the overall budget for the European Solidarity Corps at €1.26 billion in current prices, for the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2027. This would allow for about 350,000 young people to participate between 2021 and 2027, in addition to the 100,000 participants the Commission aims to support by the end of 2020.

Who can register for the European Solidarity Corps?

The eligibility criteria for young people to participate remain the same: Anyone who is between 17 and 30 years old, and who is a national or legally

residing in a participating country can register for the European Solidarity Corps. The minimum age to participate in one of the Corps' activities is 18.

Young people who register for the European Solidarity Corps will need to subscribe to the European Solidarity Corps [Mission Statement and its Principles](#). Registration is easy and can be done on a dedicated webpage via the [European Youth Portal](#). In case of participation of non-EU nationals, they may not necessarily have all the rights or permissions needed to reside in another EU country to participate. It is the responsibility of the participating organisation to ensure that such rights and permissions are in place for any person that they wish to engage in one of the Corps' activities.

Where will the activities take place?

Already today, the European Solidarity Corps activities will be implemented throughout the European Union; volunteering activities will also reach out to other countries members of the European Economic Area and pre-accession and neighbouring countries.

For the budgetary period 2021 – 2027 the Commission proposes a wider geographical scope for volunteering activities and accompanying measures, including volunteering activities to support humanitarian aid operations. These will take place in non-EU countries receiving Official Development Aid. Young people will not engage in professional emergency aid or dangerous tasks and will not be part of activities in countries affected by an ongoing armed conflict.

Will the registration guarantee participation in an activity?

All registered young people may take part in a general online training and in community-building activities online or in their own communities. Registering, however, does not guarantee the ability to participate in an activity. This depends on the budget, the availability of projects and the specific interest of the candidates.

Under the Commission's proposal to equip the European Solidarity Corps with its own legal framework and budget, put forward in May 2017, the programme will also foresee solidarity projects, allowing young people who have registered to take action themselves and implement their ideas for solidarity at local level, instead of waiting to be offered an opportunity by an organisation.

What are the requirements for organisations?

Here too the requirements remain unchanged. Participating organisations will be carefully assessed (by the National Agencies implementing the Erasmus programme or by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, depending on their profile). And they must commit to respecting the principles and objectives of the European Solidarity Corps. This means that they undertake to foster the personal and professional development of European Solidarity Corps participants, guarantee safe and decent conditions,

provide adequate training and support to equip participants with the skills needed to carry out their activity. Organisations active in offering opportunities within the European Solidarity Corps will have to obtain a new quality label.

How does the matching process work?

When young people register for the European Solidarity Corps via the European Youth Portal, beyond providing information about their education and employment experience and personal interests, they will also be able to provide further information: indicating which type of activities they would like to be involved in, which countries they would like to go to and when they are available. They can choose between the types of activities and can express their interest to be involved in specific solidarity areas.

When registering, young people can also highlight the specific experience and knowledge they would bring to the European Solidarity Corps, for example in working with refugees, children, elderly or disabled people, teaching, in media, music, arts, building/construction, engineering, project management or other fields.

Organisations will have the possibility to choose from candidates whose motivation, interests and skills correspond most closely to their needs. In addition to consulting vacancy notices on the European Youth Portal and respond to them, participants can apply for them or accept or decline any offer made by an organisation.

What costs are covered by the different types of activities?

For a volunteer, living expenses such as food, accommodation and pocket money of up to €155 per month, as well as travel and insurance will be covered.

Jobs will be based on an employment contract and wages will be set in accordance with national laws, regulations and collective agreements in force in the country where the job is carried out.

Traineeships will be based on a written traineeship agreement and remunerated by the hosting organisation. The principles outlined in the [Quality Framework for Traineeships](#) will guide the traineeships offered under the Corps.

In addition to remuneration, financial support for travel is foreseen both for jobs and traineeships.

A financial top-up is foreseen for disadvantaged young people to cover any necessary additional expenses. The Corps will also cover certain costs incurred by participating organisations. This may include a financial contribution to specific training and mentorship.

Can organisations charge participants money for taking them on?

No. No individual or entity may request any financial contribution or fee from a participant, related to being selected for participation in a project.

What about insurance and social security coverage?

The proposal foresees that participants receive complementary health and accident insurance for insurance-related expenses which are not already covered by the [European Health Insurance Card](#) or other insurance schemes in which participants may be enrolled.

With regard to jobs and traineeships and the related social security provisions, certain specificities apply in accordance with the national laws, regulations and collective agreements of the country where the activity is carried out.

Will there be language support?

Yes. European Solidarity Corps participants who accept an offer for a cross-border activity will be given access to an online language course allowing them to assess and improve their competences in the foreign language they will use to carry out their activity abroad.

What kind of certificate will participants receive?

Participants in the European Solidarity Corps will receive the European Solidarity Corps certificate once they have completed the activity. Furthermore, tools such as Youthpass and Europass will be used to identify and document the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the activity.