

European Solidarity Corps

2017/0102(COD) - 07/03/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the report by Helga TRÜPEL (Greens/EFA, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps and amending Regulations (EU) No 1288/2013, (EU) No 1293/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1305/2013, (EU) No 1306/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU.

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, exercising their prerogatives as associated committees under [Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure](#) of the European Parliament, have also expressed their opinions on this report.

The committee recommended that the position of Parliament adopted in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

European Solidarity and Voluntary Service (ESVS): Members proposed changing the name from European Solidarity Corps to European Solidarity and Voluntary Service, keeping the notion of solidarity as an essential part of the programme but deleting corps.

The ESVS should support placements in solidarity activities in the form of volunteering, internships or jobs, networking projects. Its aim should be to promote solidarity as a value and volunteerism in Europe and beyond to build an open society, by involving youth and non-profit organizations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities in Europe with the aim of contributing to strengthening cohesion and citizenship.

It should complement existing actions and structures in organisations that support local communities, especially the most vulnerable, and respond to societal challenges, and contribute to environmental protection, climate change mitigation and the need to strengthen social integration.

The specific objectives are, inter alia:

- provide young people, with the support of participating organisations, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity and voluntary activities while improving their skills, competences and knowledge, including by supporting the mobility of young volunteers, which can also lead to improved employability, while ensuring that the substitution of paid work for unpaid labour is avoided;
- increase the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the ESVS by creating adapted formats and promoting special guidance and support measures;
- strengthen a common European perspective among EU citizens through participation in solidarity activities;
- ensure that the knowledge, skills and competencies that constitute the learning outcomes are well defined, documented, evaluated and certified. As recognition, the Youthpass certificate should be used to describe and validate non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained through the experience of ESVS.

The Commission should take the initiative to develop an EU programme for volunteering to ensure recognition of and respect for the rights of volunteers and voluntary organisations and to reduce administrative and legal barriers to volunteering and volunteering organisation throughout the Union.

ESVS Charter: Members proposed that participation in solidarity placements shall be governed by an ESVS Charter setting out the rights and obligations of participating organisations and participants and indicating the basis for the quality label certification process for participating organisations. In developing the ESVS Charter, the Commission shall take into account the Charter of the European Voluntary Service.

Separate quality labels and monitoring frameworks should be put in place for volunteering on the one hand, and for traineeships and jobs on the other

Budget: a financial envelope of EUR 341.5 million will be allocated for the period 2018-2020. The financial envelope should include the amount of EUR 197.7 million that was originally earmarked to finance the intra-Union European Voluntary Service activities under the Erasmus+ programme for the financial years 2018, 2019 and 2020, given that those activities are to be transferred to the ESVS programme.

The financial support to solidarity placements and projects shall indicatively be 95% (rather than 80%) for volunteering placements and solidarity projects and 5% (rather than 20%) for traineeship placements and for job placements.

Participation: young people aged 17 to 30 years shall be able to participate in the ESVS. Young people of 17 years of age willing to participate in the ESVS may register in the ESVS Portal or apply for a solidarity placement via application processes provided by a participating organisation holding the quality label.

The target group of young people should be as broad and inclusive as possible, so that young people with different backgrounds, levels of education, skills, capabilities, knowledge and experience participate in the ESVS.

Members insisted that disadvantaged people, such as people with disabilities, people from isolated or marginalized communities, LGBT people or young people with learning or health difficulties, should have easy access to the programme. Any additional costs incurred by the participation of people with special needs should be covered at a rate of 100%.

Particular attention should be paid to multilingualism, as some of the placements in solidarity activities will be transnational in nature.