

Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018 laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps and amending Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013, Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Subject-matter

1 This Regulation lays down the legal framework for the European Solidarity Corps, which shall enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities with a view to contributing to strengthening cohesion, solidarity and democracy in Europe, with particular effort to the promotion of social inclusion.

2 The European Solidarity Corps shall pursue its objectives through solidarity activities and quality and support measures. Solidarity activities shall be implemented in accordance with specific requirements laid down for each type of solidarity activity carried out in the framework of the European Solidarity Corps as well as with applicable regulatory frameworks in participating countries.

3 The European Solidarity Corps shall support solidarity activities which present a clear European added value, for example by virtue of their:

- a transnational character, particularly with regard to learning mobility and cooperation;
- b ability to complement other programmes and policies at local, regional, national, Union and international level;
- c European dimension with regard to the topics, aims, approaches, expected outcomes and other aspects of those solidarity activities;
- d approach with regard to involving young people from different backgrounds;
- e contribution to the effective use of Union transparency and recognition tools.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

- (1) ‘solidarity activity’ means a high-quality temporary activity that does not interfere with the functioning of the labour market; that addresses important societal challenges to the benefit of a community or society as a whole, thereby contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps; that takes the form of volunteering, traineeships, jobs, solidarity projects and networking activities in various fields; that ensures a European added value and compliance with health and safety regulations, includes a solid learning and training dimension through relevant activities that can be offered to participants before, during and after the activity; that takes place in a broad range of areas, such as in the fields of environmental

protection, climate change mitigation and greater social inclusion, but does not include activities that are part of curricula in formal education, vocational education and training systems and activities for emergency response;

- (2) ‘registered candidate’ means an individual aged between 17 and 30 years who is legally residing in a participating country and has registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal for the purposes of expressing interest in engaging in a solidarity activity but who is not yet participating in a solidarity activity;
- (3) ‘participant’ means an individual aged between 18 and 30 years who is legally residing in a participating country, has registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal and takes part in a solidarity activity;
- (4) ‘young people with fewer opportunities’ means individuals aged between 18 and 30 years who need additional support due to the fact that they are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because of various obstacles, for example disability, health problems, educational difficulties, cultural differences or economic, social or geographical obstacles, including young people from a marginalised community or at risk of facing discrimination based on any of the grounds enshrined in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- (5) ‘participating organisation’ means any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit-making, local, regional, national or international, that has been attributed the quality label, either in a host function, or in a supporting function, including a sending function, or both, which ensures that this entity is able to implement the solidarity activities in accordance with the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, and that offers a volunteering, traineeship or job opportunity to a participant or implements and supports other activities in the framework of the European Solidarity Corps;
- (6) ‘volunteering’ means a solidarity activity that takes the form of a voluntary unpaid activity for a period of up to twelve months; that provides young people with the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations in solidarity activities to the ultimate benefit of the communities within which the activities are carried out; that takes place either in a country other than the country of residence of the participant (cross-border) or in the country of residence of the participant (in-country); that does not substitute traineeships or jobs and, therefore, is in no case equated with employment and that is based on a written volunteering agreement;
- (7) ‘activities by volunteering teams’ means volunteering that allows teams of participants from different participating countries to volunteer together for a period of between two weeks and two months and that especially contributes to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the European Solidarity Corps or is justified due to its specific aims, or both;
- (8) ‘traineeship’ means a solidarity activity that takes the form of a work practice for a period of between two and six months, renewable once, and for a maximum duration of 12 months within the same participating organisation; that is offered and paid by the participating organisation hosting the participant, either in a country other than the country of residence of the participant (cross-border) or in the country of residence of the participant (in-country); that includes a learning and a training component to help the participant gain relevant experience with a view to developing competences useful for the participants' personal, educational, social, civic and professional development; that is based on a written traineeship agreement concluded at the beginning of the traineeship in accordance with the applicable regulatory framework of the country where the traineeship takes place, as appropriate, indicating the educational objectives,

the working conditions, the duration of the traineeship, the remuneration of the participant and the rights and obligations of the parties and taking into account the principles of the Quality Framework for Traineeships and that does not substitute jobs;

- (9) ‘job’ means a solidarity activity, undertaken for a period of between three and twelve months, that is paid by the participating organisation employing the participant, either in a country other than the country of residence of the participant (cross-border) or in the country of residence of the participant (in-country). When the duration of the employment contract exceeds twelve months, financial support to participating organisations offering jobs shall not exceed 12 months. Such jobs shall include a learning and a training component and be based on a written employment contract which respects all the terms and conditions of employment as defined in the national law, applicable collective agreements, or both, of the country in which the job is being carried out;
- (10) ‘solidarity project’ means a an unpaid in-country solidarity activity, undertaken for a period of between two and twelve months, that is set up and carried out by a group of at least five participants, with a view to addressing key challenges within their communities while presenting a clear European added value, and that does not substitute traineeships or jobs;
- (11) ‘networking activities’ means an in-country or cross-border activity aimed at reinforcing the capacity of a participating organisation to offer quality projects to an increasing number of participants, to attract newcomers, both young people and organisations, and to provide opportunities for feedback on solidarity activities, that can also contribute to the exchange of experiences and strengthening the sense of belonging among participants and participating organisations and thus supports the wider positive impact of the European Solidarity Corps;
- (12) ‘quality label’ means the certification attributed to an organisation willing to provide solidarity activities, either in a host function, or in a supporting function, including a sending function, or both, that certifies that the organisation is able to ensure the quality of solidarity activities in accordance with the principles and objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, and that is attributed according to varying specific requirements depending on the type of solidarity activity and the function of the organisation;
- (13) ‘European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres’ means the additional functions performed by designated national agencies to support the development, implementation and quality of actions under the European Solidarity Corps as well as the identification of the competences acquired by the participants during their solidarity activities, including related training activities;
- (14) ‘European Solidarity Corps Portal’ means an interactive web-based tool, in all official languages of the Union, managed under the responsibility of the Commission, that provides relevant online services to support the quality implementation of the European Solidarity Corps, complementing activities of participating organisations, including providing information about the European Solidarity Corps, registering participants, searching for participants, advertising and searching for solidarity activities, searching for potential project partners, supporting contact making and offers for solidarity activities, training, communication and networking activities, informing and notifying about opportunities, providing a feedback mechanism regarding the quality of solidarity activities as well as other relevant developments related to the European Solidarity Corps;

- (15) ‘Union transparency and recognition tools’ means instruments that help stakeholders to understand, appreciate and, as appropriate, recognise non-formal and informal learning outcomes throughout the Union.

Article 3

General objective

The general objective of the European Solidarity Corps is to promote solidarity as a value, mainly through volunteering, enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities as a means to contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity, democracy and citizenship in Europe, while also responding to societal challenges and strengthening communities, with particular effort to promote social inclusion. It shall also contribute to European cooperation that is relevant to young people.

Article 4

Specific objectives

The European Solidarity Corps shall pursue the following specific objectives:

- (a) to provide young people, with the support of participating organisations, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity activities effecting positive societal change while improving their skills and competences for personal, educational, social, civic, cultural and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market, including by supporting the mobility of young volunteers, trainees and workers;
- (b) to ensure that the solidarity activities that are offered to participants are of high quality, properly validated and respect the principles of the European Solidarity Corps referred to in Article 13(2);
- (c) to ensure that particular efforts are made to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities, in particular for the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, through a range of special measures such as appropriate formats of solidarity activities and personalised support;
- (d) to contribute to European cooperation relevant to young people and to raise awareness of its positive impact.

Article 5

Coherence and complementarity of Union action

1 The actions of the European Solidarity Corps shall be consistent with and complementary to the relevant Union level policies, programmes, instruments as well as existing Union level networks pertinent to the activities of the European Solidarity Corps.

2 The actions of the European Solidarity Corps shall also be consistent with, and complementary to, the relevant national-level policies, programmes and instruments in the participating countries. To that end, the Commission, national authorities and national agencies shall exchange information on existing national schemes and priorities related to solidarity and

youth, on the one hand, and actions under the European Solidarity Corps on the other hand, with a view to build on relevant good practices and achieve efficiency and effectiveness.

3 Other Union programmes may also contribute to the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps by supporting activities within its scope. This contribution shall be financed in accordance with their respective basic acts.