



Feedback from:

EuroHealthNet

Feedback reference

F13368

Submitted on

25 July 2018

Submitted by

Cathrine Hernández FESTERSEN

User type

Other

Organisation

EuroHealthNet

Organisation size

Small (10 to 49 employees)

Transparency register number

[48562122691-12](#)

Country of origin

Belgium

Initiative

[Multiannual Financial Framework: Establishment of the European Solidarity Corps programme](#)

EuroHealthNet welcomes the proposed fund to support the European Solidarity Corps (ESC), but important considerations are necessary to take into account.

The ESC will create opportunities for young people aged between 17 and 30 to support communities and people in need through work or volunteering and has the potential to improve health and well-being. Whilst opportunities exist, the implementation of the scheme needs to be carefully managed to ensure it is equitable and gives tangible benefits. The promotion of health and health equity is inextricably linked to the notion of solidarity. It requires collaboration with those less able to reach good levels of health and wellbeing, and partnership with young people in designing engagements. Health and social work are fields in which young people, with a wide range of backgrounds and skills, can provide valuable support in both care and prevention; not all roles in the health sector require specific medical training. This type of work not only develops

solidarity with those in need, but will equip young people with skills which will help them into employment. Many people in the ESC target age range have many skills that can be contributed alongside learning gains including creativity, initiative, innovation, adaptabilities and IT-literacy. However, genuine equal opportunities for all should be guaranteed or inequalities will be exacerbated.

► The programme should not be cut from otherwise good and effective projects, such as Employment and Social Investment (EaSI) and the Erasmus+ programme. The recent MFF proposals indicate an increased imbalanced attention to Erasmus+ and the Solidarity Corps vis-à-vis the Employment and Social Investment (EaSI) and the Health Programme, which also play important roles in achieving similar objectives e.g. social inclusion through employment and skills development.

► The ESC should not become an 'elite club' where only the best university students are picked as volunteers or interns for career progression, while others are abused to substitute volunteering for employment. In addition, the Corps should avoid fuelling the 'Generation Intern' debate which is associated with social dumping problematics and low levels of qualification and career development.

► The specific focus is to build EU solidarity. Addressing poverty and social inclusion should be a key priority both in the training, treatment and in the work of the volunteers. To avoid overlaps with the existing EU Programmes, such as Erasmus +, Youth Guarantee, etc., the Corps should work in new fields and with clear engagement of local communities. The EVS and the ESC overlap: there is a need for a clearer distinction or collaboration.

► The ESC should take care not to abuse young people. The Programme may grant valuable new and exciting opportunities to young people and could help to alleviate the suffering of many Europeans. It cannot, however, replace work or allow organisations to offer low-quality working and living conditions, nor should it be perceived to be doing so by those already facing financial and work insecurity.

► The ESC will require alignment of national intern and volunteering laws in order to be effective, plus significant opportunities for cross-border placements where an ESC participant could enjoy placement within several Member States, helping to foster European values, language skills and dialogues, cultural understanding and strengthen the social fabric of the EU.

[Report an issue with this feedback](#)

[All feedback](#)

The views and opinions expressed here are entirely those of the author(s) and do not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. The Commission cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information contained in them. Neither the Commission, nor any person acting on the Commission's behalf, may be held responsible for the content or the information posted here. Views and opinions that violate the Commission's feedback rules will be removed from the site.