

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

Background information

The European Solidarity Corps is the new European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects that benefit communities and people around Europe.

It was announced by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, during his annual State of the European Union speech in September 2016, and officially launched in December 2016.

After completing a simple registration process, participants could be selected to join a wide range of projects. These projects will be run by organisations which have been checked and authorised to run European Solidarity Corps projects.

When you register, your details will be held in the European Solidarity Corps system, and organisations will be able to search the database for people for their projects. Organisations will then ask selected participants to join these projects.

The European Commission will invite organisations to apply for funding or other support for projects which fit with the Mission and Principles of the European Solidarity Corps. After their projects are approved, these organisations will be able to access the pool of participants to select young people that could be best suited to join the project. The organisations will then contact the potential recruits and make a final choice.

All organisations will undergo checks before they are authorised to run projects for the European Solidarity Corps, and before they are allowed to search for and recruit participants for their projects.

Depending on the type of project, and your existing knowledge and experience, you may receive training from the European Solidarity Corps before starting the project.

You can register for the European Solidarity Corps when you are 17 years old, but you cannot start a project until you are over 18. You must also complete the European Solidarity Corps project before you turn 31.

Also you must be legally resident in or have the nationality of one of the European Union Member States, or of the following countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Whilst you can join the European Solidarity Corps if you meet these criteria, some projects may have additional restrictions on ages, legal residency or nationality, depending on the type of project and how it is funded.

Examples of what you could be asked to do include:

- helping rebuild a school or community centre that has been devastated following an earthquake
- providing support to newly arrived asylum seekers
- clearing vegetation from forests to help prevent wildfires
- working with disabled people in a community centre.

You will not be asked to provide any services related to the immediate response to disasters. These types of tasks will continue to be performed by those with the specialist training and experience to operate safely in these dangerous environments.

More information:

<https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity>