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**Press release: European Solidarity Corps: Adoption of the legislative proposal**



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**CEV welcomes the proposal for the establishment of a European Solidarity Corps announced by the European Commission on 30th May 2017 and is proud to be hosting two of the very first ESC participants in 2017.**

**The following elements of the proposal are considered particularly positive:**

- ESC will enable in-country placements and offer possibilities for part-time volunteering. This makes the programme more accessible to young people with fewer opportunities and to be responsive to needs for solidarity and support to solutions for common challenges as they occur at the local level.
- The explanation of solidarity activities and the clear distinction between volunteering and occupational placements in terms of focus and primary purposes of each.
- The opportunities offered for European networks to contribute to the development of the ESC through the provision of 'networking activities' for ESC participants and organisations.
- The openness for synergies with existing opportunities offered by volunteering and solidarity focussed organisations at the local and member state level.
- That the opportunities for non-EU programme countries to participate in EVS projects will continue after the establishment of the ESC.

**CEV will contribute to the process to develop the final legal basis for the ESC and will explore in particular the following aspects of the proposal with EU Policymakers and other concerned stakeholders.**

- How does the development of the ESC fit into the wider EU volunteering policy strategy, the strategy for youth and the promotion of intergenerational solidarity?
- How will the ESC contribute to strengthening the volunteering and solidarity / NGO sector that has been so badly impacted on by increased need and demands and reduced budgets and grants from public funds due to austerity measures?
- What are the requirements for organisations offering placements to prove that what they are doing, and what the ESC participant will do, is on the basis of solidarity and not for example profit-making or PR.
- How will the total numbers of placements be divided between Volunteering and Occupational strands? Do they correspond to the split of budget i.e 80/20?
- How will the quality and sustainability be ensured in the 'Own initiative' projects where an organisation is not required to be involved?
- How it will be possible for recipients of other EU funds to offer ESC placements and opportunities. Eg from the Europe for Citizens programme or funds managed by the Member states?
- What will be the role of volunteering infrastructure organisations (volunteer centres and support agencies) in ensuring the success of the initiative.

The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) is the European network of over 70 national, regional and local volunteer centres, organisations, networks and volunteer support agencies across Europe.