

# Traineeships and Jobs in the European Solidarity Corps programme

Besides well-known international volunteering, which was long supported by previous EU programmes (Youth, Youth in Action, Erasmus+), European Solidarity Corps programme now offers a new type of activities, “Traineeships and Jobs”.

These activities expand the options for young people to engage in international volunteering and offer an opportunity to acquire new skills, competencies and work experience on both the national and international level. Such experience will improve their employability and position on the labour market and will provide a unique opportunity for personal as well as professional growth.

Participating organizations from EU member states involved in the programme will receive support in finding and integrating trainees from their home country and other EU member states, while benefiting from new motivation, new insights and innovative approaches brought in by the young person involved. If they choose to hire someone from another country, they will also have a chance to try working with an international team and develop communication skills. At the same time, involvement of young people in traineeships and jobs is likely to raise various social challenges and should observe the principle of solidarity (regardless of the sector/topic/type of activity).

## Traineeships

This type of activity represents a full-time job (40 hours per week) for 2 to 6 months with a possible extension to up to 12 months. The young trainee should receive compensation under applicable laws of the host country. The traineeship has strong teaching and training elements, helps the trainee to acquire relevant experience for personal, educational, social and professional growth and develop his or her competences in the field of active citizenship. A traineeship should never substitute a regular job and should be clearly separated from volunteering.

The project can take place in the trainee’s home country, at the national level. Such so-called “in-country” projects are intended primarily for young people with fewer opportunities, with the aim to encourage their active participation and motivate them to be active in a familiar environment, society and culture. Such EU-backed projects offer participation even in countries without their own national schemes.

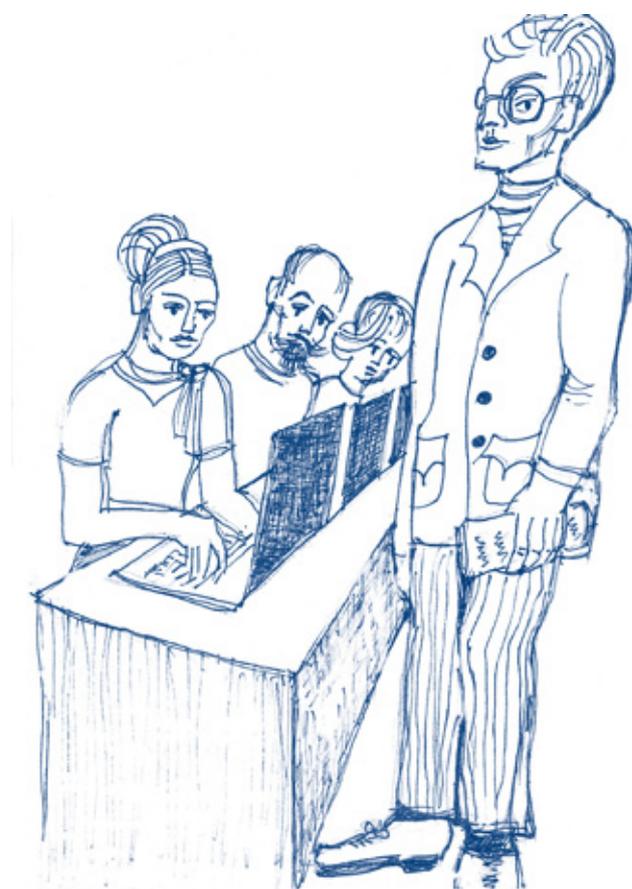


Traineeship projects at the international level taking place in other EU countries are called “cross-border” projects. If an organization wants to send or receive trainees within the home country (“in-country” projects), it is necessary to clearly and comprehensively describe the European added value, the European dimension and the aspect of solidarity in the project idea (in the Quality Label form and subsequently in the Application form). Similarly, it is necessary to justify the benefits of the project for the existing national schemes that support traineeships and volunteering (if existent). For “cross-border” traineeships, the vision of the organization must be clearly and comprehensively associated with the principle of solidarity. This must be clearly explained in both the Quality Label application and in a grant application within a specified deadline.

It is also necessary to specify the educational level of all actors involved in the planned activities, with a clear link to the principle of non-formal education (knowledge of the concept of non-formal education and how non-formal education will be implemented in the activities, methodology, and approach to trainees and the organization’s team; specific approach at the local and regional level...).

## Jobs

The European Solidarity Corps programme also offers young people an opportunity to engage in long-term “jobs”. This type of activity lasts at least 3 months and is open to all young people who reside in the EU, including those with fewer opportunities. If necessary or desirable, this type of activity can last longer than 12 months (with no upper limit). However, the European Solidarity Corps programme will provide support only for 12 months. It is full-time work experience, fully paid according to labour laws and regulations applicable in the hosting country, with strong and well-planned teaching and training elements. An important aspect of the activity is gaining new experience, competencies and background in various fields according to the needs and interests of the young people, which will support their professional growth. Such a project can take place “in-country” (if young people with fewer opportunities are involved) or in other EU countries. The hosting organization is responsible for arranging for an employment contract and appropriate remuneration for the young person engaged in a “jobs” project.



## Ensuring support in Traineeships and Jobs

Young people going to participate in Traineeships and Jobs, like volunteers of the Solidarity Corps, need to receive continuous support in education, personal and professional development, and practicalities throughout the project. Specifically, participants should take part in training courses organized by the National Agencies and SALTOs Regional Centres (“On-Arrival” and “Mid-Term”), attend the “Annual Meeting” after returning home and receive further educational support. In particular, traineeships are expected to support trainees in developing expertise, skills and competences (e.g. by participation in a training course, seminar, long-term education in

a given field/ topic) arranged for by the hosting organisation. One of the key objectives of traineeship is to provide an opportunity to learn as much as possible – both personally and professionally – in a relatively short time span. While bringing their own experience, new ideas, innovative approaches and inspiration to the host organization, they take away new practices, inspirations, ideas, knowledge and skills when they return to their home country. At the same time, the host organization should ensure appropriate ongoing support in the work environment (job supervision, mentoring) and help the Traineeships and Jobs program participants integrate into the culture and local community (in particular, as regards deeper understanding of the culture and language of the country). Last but not least, the host organization is expected to handle the logistics of the project activity and support the trainee with practical arrangements (e.g. a residence permit, board and lodging, etc.).

## Traineeships and Jobs funding

The European Solidarity Corps programme will finance the following: travel costs, organizational support (participant support, project management costs), relocation allowance for participants, language support, inclusion support, insurance, additional costs (if applicable and needed). In order to be able to participate in these projects, the applicant organization must have an appropriate “Quality Label for Traineeships or Jobs” accreditation from the European Solidarity Corps programme. If an organisation already accredited for volunteering in the frame of European Solidarity Corps wishes to start offering Jobs and/or Traineeships to young people, it has to extend its accreditation to include these activities (through National Agencies/ SALTOs Resource Centres).

Young people express their willingness and interest to participate in a volunteer, trainee or job activity by registering in the [European Youth Portal](#), where registered organizations select suitable candidates for their activities and projects.

## Selection of candidates for Traineeships and Jobs

The organization is required to be open to all potential candidates, including those with fewer opportunities, and ensure transparency of the selection process (based on a clearly defined strategy for choosing suitable participants and an open internal and external communication about the procedure, selection criteria and the results including explanation of rejections). As opposed to Volunteering where the criteria must be open without any preference regarding language skills and/or professional or other expertise, the rules for Traineeships and Jobs allow to consider language proficiency, professional background and other skills and experience of potential candidates in the selection process.

When deciding on the type of activity to offer (Volunteering, Job or Traineeship), an organization needs to carefully consider the different requirements and characteristics:

- level of initial knowledge / skills / competencies,
- scope of responsibility and independence,
- level of knowledge / skills / competencies necessary to carry out the duties,
- types of contracts / financing mechanism,
- duration of activities (Traineeships: 2–6 months vs. Jobs: 3–12 months covered by the European Solidarity Corps programme vs. volunteering “LT-Term” 2–12 months, ST-Term for young people with fewer opportunities or groups of young people 2 weeks to 2 months).

We believe that organizations from across the EU will find the new perspectives and innovative methods that these new types of activities offer as attractive and inspiring.

## Resources

European Solidarity Corps Guide 2020

[https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/european-solidarity-corps-guide\\_2020\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/european-solidarity-corps-guide_2020_en.pdf)

European Solidarity Corps webpage of the Czech National Agency (DZS)

<https://www.dzs.cz/cz/evropsky-sbor-solidarity/staze-a-pracovni-mista/>

European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre

<https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/solidarity/>

***Magda Wagenknechtová Svobodová,***  
*Association of Non-formal Education z.s. (ANEV z.s.),*  
*long-term experience with topic of EVS/ESC*  
*and with EVS accreditations/ESC Quality Label, Czech Republic*