



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 23.07.1997  
COM(97) 347 final

96/0318 (COD)

Amended proposal for a

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION**

**establishing the Community action programme  
"European voluntary service for young people"**

**(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 189 a (2)  
of the EC-Treaty)**

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Following the opinion of the European Parliament dated 12 June 1997, the Commission is presenting to the Council, pursuant to Article 189 A (2) of the Treaty on European Union, an amended proposal for a Decision. In general, the Commission's amended proposal retains the same structure and aims as the initial proposal, but with more detail in some aspects. The text mainly comprises two types of amendments:

- one batch provides additional information and clarification in relation to the initial proposal;
- a second batch improves the proposal in so far as they specify activities involving third countries and introduce an element of flexibility with regard to age groups.

Of the 40 amendments proposed by the European Parliament, 22 were partially or completely rejected and 18 were approved (14 of which were slightly amended).

The Commission has not accepted the principle of defining a European status for young volunteers and of coordinating tax systems and social protection, nor of integrating national civilian services into European voluntary service, thereby respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

Although very aware of the amount proposed by the European Parliament, the Commission has not accepted the increased budget for the first two years of the programme, in so far as the current financial perspectives must be respected.

Finally, with regard to comitology, the Commission has not accepted the proposal for an advisory committee, as it considers that experience has demonstrated the usefulness of a mixed committee for this type of programme; neither has it accepted other amendments concerning procedures to be followed by the committee which are not contained in the Decision of 13 July 1987. While respecting commitments made in the context of the "modus vivendi", the Commission is keeping exactly to the text of the Decision.

The Commission has accepted the principle of developing the policy of cooperation in the youth field, of the submission, before 31 December 1997, of a report discussing priorities up to the year 2000, the importance of coherence and coordination with the "Youth for Europe" programme, participation of young people from third countries in programme activities in their country of origin and within the European Union, the taking into account of specific aspects for voluntary service in the developing countries, the importance of linguistic and cultural preparation, sufficient information and awareness-raising for volunteers with regard to their rights and obligations, and a degree of flexibility with regard to the upper age limit. It has slightly altered the amendments relating to these various aspects.

Amended proposal for a

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION

establishing the Community action programme  
"European voluntary service for young people"

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 189 a (2)  
of the EC-Treaty)

<u>Initial proposal by the Commission</u>	<u>Amended proposal following the opinion of the EP of 12 June 1997</u>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>establishing the Community Action Programme</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>"European voluntary service for young people"</b></p> <p>THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,</p> <p>1. Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 126 thereof,</p> <p>2. Having regard to the proposal from the Commission<sup>1</sup>,</p> <p>3. Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee<sup>2</sup>,</p> <p>4. Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions<sup>3</sup>,</p> <p>Acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b of the Treaty<sup>4</sup>,</p> <p>1. Whereas the Essen European Council, meeting on 9-10 December 1994, and the Cannes European Council, meeting on 26-27 June 1995, stressed the need to undertake</p>	

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new actions to promote the social and occupational integration of young people in Europe;

2. Whereas the conclusions of the Florence European Council (21-22 June 1996) stressed the importance of helping young people to become integrated into active life and, in this respect, noted with interest the idea of a European voluntary service;

3. Whereas the Council requested the Commission to propose practical measures to promote transnational cooperation in the field of voluntary service<sup>5</sup>;

4. Whereas the Council, in its Resolution of 5 October 1995 on cooperation with third countries in the youth field, stressed the need to step up cooperation, particularly with regard to voluntary service, with third countries with which the Community has concluded association and cooperation agreements;<sup>6</sup>

5. Whereas the European Council of 25-26 June 1984 asked Member States to take steps to encourage young people to take part in projects organised by the Community outside its frontiers, and whereas they recommended that Member States take on board as one of the objectives of their social policies the incorporation of social protection for development volunteers or the correction of shortcomings;

6. Whereas the Parliament has also expressed its support, on many occasions, for the development of a voluntary service at Community level, in particular in its

<sup>5</sup> Conclusions of the Council and the Ministers of Youth of 30 November on the promotion of voluntary service periods for young people, OJ C348 of 9.12.1994.

<sup>6</sup> Council Resolution of 5 October 1995 on cooperation with third countries in the youth field (OJ No C296 of 10.11.1995)

Resolution of 22 September 1995 on the establishment of European civilian service<sup>7</sup>;

7. Whereas voluntary service activities also exist in a range of forms in several Member States and a number of non-governmental organisations are working in this field;

8. Whereas, despite these experiences, transnational voluntary service actions remain limited;

9. Whereas it is necessary to create new opportunities for the transfer and application of experience and good practice and to promote new partnerships;

10. Whereas the pilot action launched in January 1996 and still in progress is designed *inter alia* to test the arrangements for decentralised implementation of long term voluntary service activities looking ahead to the multi-annual programme envisaged, and whereas the initial results of this pilot action are described in an interim progress report;

11. Whereas an independent *ex ante* evaluation for a multi-annual programme of voluntary service has been carried out in accordance with the principles put in place by the Commission for the second phase of its SEM 2000 ('sound and efficient management') programme<sup>8</sup>;

6a. Whereas the policy of cooperation in the youth field as a field of informal education has now become supplementary to the education policy laid down in the Treaty and requires development;

10. Whereas the pilot action launched in January 1996 and still in progress is designed *inter alia* to test the arrangements for decentralised implementation of long term voluntary service activities looking ahead to the multi-annual programme envisaged, and whereas the initial results of this pilot action are described in an interim progress report carried out on the basis of the specific budget heading created for this purpose in the 1996 budget;

<sup>7</sup> B4-1127/95 (PE 193.734).

<sup>8</sup> SEC(95)1814/5.

12. Whereas this interim report already provides a basis for the programme's legal and financial structure, and a framework for its administrative management; and whereas the Commission will scrutinise the results of the pilot action at the half-way stage (second progress report) before taking full stock of the final results upon completion of the pilot action for the purpose of the discussions to be held as part of the co-decision procedure on the proposal for a decision and will, if need be, submit amendments to its proposal, particularly in relation to activities in non-EU countries;

13. Whereas there are a series of legal obstacles to the development of voluntary service;

14. Whereas this Decision therefore establishes a Community framework which is intended to overcome these obstacles and to promote the development of transnational voluntary service activities;

15. Whereas participation in voluntary service activities by young people is an educational experience that may promote their integration into active life;

13. Whereas there are significant legal obstacles to transnational mobility for young people, and these obstacles can be removed, particularly through measures to be taken at national level with regard to social protection and tax schemes applicable to the allowances and expenses which young people receive during their voluntary service for travel, accommodation or subsistence, and through increased cooperation between the Member States;

15. Whereas participation in voluntary service activities by young people is an educational experience that may promote their integration into active life and promote awareness of a true European citizenship;

15a. Whereas the establishment of European voluntary service should be carried out in coherence with other Community actions for young people, particularly in the context of the "Youth for Europe" programme, and it is therefore important to ensure their complementarity;

16. Whereas it is necessary to reinforce the links between the actions undertaken by this programme and those pursued within the framework of social policy, particularly action on training and access to employment for young people supported under the European Social Fund (both mainstream and the 'Employment-Youthstart' Community Initiative), the fight against racism and xenophobia, and cooperation with third countries;

17. Whereas, in order to facilitate this transition into active life, complementary links need to be established between European voluntary service and local employment initiatives;

18. Whereas voluntary service may help to meet new social needs and may also reveal new kinds of professions and activities;

19. Whereas participation in the voluntary service actions covered by this Decision takes place on a purely voluntary basis, since these activities are non-profit-making and the volunteer/host project relationship can in no case be assimilated with the employee/employer relationship;

20. Whereas young volunteers taking part in this programme will have adequate means of subsistence and will not, therefore, represent a burden to the host country;

21. Whereas European voluntary service activities are not a substitute for military service, for the alternative service formulae provided in particular for conscientious objectors or for the compulsory civilian service that exist in Member States and are not a substitute for potential or existing paid employment; whereas they are also no substitute for potential or existing paid jobs;

22. Whereas all young people resident in a

21. Whereas European voluntary service activities are not a substitute for military service, for the alternative service formulae provided in particular for conscientious objectors or for the compulsory civilian service that exist in Member States, and must not have the effect of restricting or substituting for potential or existing paid jobs;



Member State may apply to take part in European voluntary service, without discrimination;

23. Whereas the participation of young nationals of third countries legally resident in a Member State also needs to be promoted;

24. Whereas implementation of this programme must be based on decentralised structures designated by Member States in close cooperation with the national authorities responsible for youth questions, with a view to ensuring that Community action supports and complements national activities whilst respecting the principle of subsidiarity, as defined in Article 3b of the Treaty;

25. Whereas in its Communication of 13 June 1995 on "A European strategy for encouraging local development and employment initiatives"<sup>9</sup>, the Commission notes that local development and employment initiatives are spreading throughout the European Union as they are found to provide a genuine response to current aspirations;

26. Whereas European voluntary service activities directly involve local and regional authorities, bearing in mind the role they will play in direct support for projects as well as in the development of local information and in following up young people at the end of their service;

27. Whereas the social partners should play an important role in the development of a European voluntary service not only to avoid any activity that is a substitute for potential or existing employment but also to

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<sup>9</sup> COM(95)273.

build on the experience acquired in order to help young people to become integrated into active life;

27a. Whereas the voluntary sector should also play an important role in enabling the participation in these programmes of those young people in the greatest difficulties;

27b. Whereas there should be ongoing monitoring to take full account of the opinions of the social partners and the voluntary sector;

27c. Whereas the Commission and the Member States are keen to encourage cooperation with non-governmental organisations in the youth and social fields, the environment, culture and the fight against various forms of exclusion;

28. Whereas the Agreement on the European Economic Area<sup>10</sup> sets out enlarged cooperation in the field of education, training and youth between the European Community and its Member States, on the one hand, and the countries of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area, on the other hand, and that Article 4 of Protocol 31 states that the countries of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area shall take part, from 1 January 1995, in all Community programmes in the field of education, training and youth that are already in force or have been adopted;

29. Whereas the programme "European voluntary service for young people" is open to the participation of the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in accordance with the conditions set out in the Additional Protocols to the Association Agreements on participation in Community

<sup>10</sup> OJ L1 of 3.1.1994, p 3.

programmes to be concluded with those countries; whereas this programme is open to the participation of Cyprus and Malta on the basis of additional appropriations under the same rules as apply to the EFTA countries, in accordance with procedures to be agreed with those countries;

30. Whereas the Association and Cooperation agreements provide for exchanges of young people;

31. Whereas this Decision establishes for the full duration of the programme a financial framework which constitutes the preferential point of reference for the budget authority during the annual budgetary procedure within the meaning of Point 1 of the Joint Declaration of 6 March 1995 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission;

32. Whereas the Community's financial perspective is valid up until 1999 and will have to be revised for the period beyond that date;

29a. Whereas the acquisition of active citizenship and of formative experience on the one hand, and the contribution of young people to cooperation between the Community and third countries on the other, are important objectives of the "Voluntary service for young people" programme;

29b. Whereas the quality of voluntary service will depend to a large extent on linguistic and cultural preparation activities;

32a. Whereas, in the light of the conclusion of the third phase of the "Youth for Europe" programme on 31 December 1999 and of the first phase of the pilot action "European voluntary service for young people", the Commission is to present to the European Parliament and the Council, by

31 December 1997, a report discussing the priorities of the policy of cooperation in the youth field between now and the year 2000.

33. Whereas an agreement on a *modus vivendi* between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission concerning the implementing measures of the acts adopted pursuant to the procedure referred to in Article 189b of the Treaty took place on 20 December 1994;

HAVE DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*

**Establishment of the programme  
"European voluntary service for young  
people"**

1. This Decision establishes the Community action programme "European voluntary service for young people", as described in the Annex and hereinafter referred to as the "programme", concerning European voluntary service activities for young people within the Community and in third countries.

The programme is adopted for the period from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 2002.

2. This programme comes within the context of the general objectives of a cooperation policy in the youth field as set out in the programme Youth for Europe (Article 1, paragraph 2). It is intended, while respecting equal opportunities for men and women, to encourage mobility among young Europeans as part of an active citizenship, to give them the chance of an educational experience in a

2. This programme comes within the context of the general objectives of a cooperation policy in the youth field as set out in the programme Youth for Europe (Article 1, paragraph 2). It is intended, while respecting equal opportunities for men and women, to encourage mobility among young Europeans as part of an active citizenship, to give them the chance of an educational experience in a

variety of sectors of activity, to promote their active contribution to the construction of Europe and cooperation between the European Community and third countries through their participation in transnational activities of benefit to the community.

variety of sectors of activity, to promote their active contribution, to the ideals of democracy, tolerance and cohesion of European integration and to cooperation between the European Union and third countries through their participation in transnational activities of benefit to the community.

## *Article 2*

### **Framework, objectives and resources**

1. This programme, based on increased cooperation between the Member States, offers young Europeans a recognised educational experience, at transnational level, involving both the acquisition of skills and abilities and the demonstration of responsible citizenship in order to help them to become integrated into active life.
2. In accordance with the general objective set out in Article 1, the specific objectives of this programme shall be as follows:
  - a) to step up participation by young people resident in a Member State in long-term or short-term transnational activities of benefit to the community, within the Union and in third countries;
  - b) to promote an educational experience accredited at the European level;
  - c) to encourage a spirit of initiative and enterprise among young people in order to promote their integration

<p>into active life and their contribution to the development of the objectives of the programme;</p> <p>d) to promote access to the programme for all young people;</p> <p>3. For this purpose, and in accordance with the general objective set out in Article 1, and the specific objectives described in the previous paragraph, the main elements of this programme shall be as follows:</p> <p>a) to support long-term or short-term transnational activities of benefit to the community, within the Union and with third countries;</p> <p>b) to support networks of innovative initiatives, particularly in the social, environmental and cultural fields and with regard to the fight against different forms of exclusion;</p> <p>c) to support projects that help to build on the experience acquired and are intended to further the follow-up of these young people;</p> <p>d) to develop and support the preparation, particularly linguistic and intercultural, and the supervision of young volunteers, <u>in particular long-term</u> volunteers, "mentors" and European project leaders so that the young volunteers can benefit</p>	<p>d) to develop and support the preparation, particularly linguistic and intercultural, and the supervision of young volunteers, "mentors" and European project leaders so that the young volunteers can benefit from high-quality actions connected with the</p>
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from high-quality actions connected with the objectives of the programme;

- e) to support the quality of all the programme's activities, the development of their European dimension and to contribute to cooperation in the youth field by supporting Member States' endeavours to improve services and measures linked to European voluntary service, particularly through measures to provide young people with information on the objectives of the programme and through studies and continuing evaluation through which the operation and guidelines of the programme can be brought into line with the needs of target-groups.

### *Article 3*

#### **Financial provisions**

1. The financial framework for the implementation of the programme during the period 1998-1999 shall be ECU 60 million, in keeping with current financial perspectives. Proposals shall be put forward in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 10 in order to determine the financial framework for the final three years of the programme (2000-2002).
2. The budget authority shall determine the appropriations available for each financial year within the limits of the financial perspective.

objectives of the programme;

#### *Article 4*

##### **Positive action to facilitate access to the programme**

1. Special attention shall be paid to ensuring that all young people can have access, without discrimination, to the programme's activities.
2. The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that special efforts are made for young people who experience the most difficulties in being included in existing action programmes at both Community and national, regional and local levels, due to cultural, social, physical, economic or geographical reasons. These efforts shall be proportional to the problems encountered by this target group.

#### *Article 5*

##### **Participation by associated countries**

This programme shall be open to the participation of the associated countries of central and eastern Europe (CCEE) in accordance with the conditions set out in the Europe agreements and the Additional Protocols to the Association Agreements on participation in Community programmes that have been or are to be concluded with those countries. This programme shall be open to the participation of Cyprus and Malta on the basis of additional appropriations under the same rules as apply to the EFTA countries, in accordance with the procedures to be agreed with those countries.

#### *Article 6*



**Links with other Community actions and cooperation with the relevant international organisations**

1. The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that the programme is compatible with and complementary to other actions undertaken for young people by the Member States and the Community.
2. They shall promote cooperation relating to this programme to allow complementarity of the programme with the relevant international organisations, in particular the Council of Europe.

*Article 7*

**Cooperation with Member States**

1. The Commission and the Member States shall take the necessary measures to develop the structures set up at European, national, regional and local level for achieving the objectives of the programme, for facilitating the access of young people and other partners at local level to the programme, for evaluating and monitoring the actions set out in the programme and for applying consultation and selection mechanisms.

1. The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that the programme is compatible with and complementary - including from a budgetary point of view - to other actions undertaken for young people by the Member States and the Community. In this context, the Member States involved may examine procedures enabling young people from third countries to take part in activities arising from this programme both within their country of origin and within the European Community.

1. The Commission and the Member States shall take the necessary measures to develop the structures set up at European, national, regional and local level for achieving the objectives of the programme, for facilitating the access of young people and other partners at local level to the programme, for evaluating and monitoring the actions set out in the programme and for applying consultation and selection mechanisms. They shall ensure that volunteers are given sufficient information and made

sufficiently aware at European, national and local level of their rights and obligations and shall make an active contribution to ensuring complementarity between transnational activities and local voluntary actions.

2. Each Member State shall endeavour to adopt the measures necessary to ensure that the young people participating in the programme do not encounter obstacles, especially as regards the right of residence in the host Member State for the period of the voluntary service and the maintenance of their entitlements, in particular those linked to their social protection.

#### *Article 8*

#### **Validation**

Young volunteers shall receive a European certificate, drawn up by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States, attesting to their participation in European voluntary service and the experience and skills that they have acquired during this period.

#### *Article 9*

#### **Committee**

1. The Commission shall implement this programme in accordance with this Decision.
2. In the performance of this task, the Commission shall be assisted by a committee composed of two representatives appointed by each Member State and chaired by the representative of the Commission.

3. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee, in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 4, a draft of the measures to be taken in respect of:

- the committee's internal rules of procedure;
- the annual plan of work for the implementation of the actions of the programme;
- the general balance between all the sections of the programme;
- the criteria for determining indicative allocation of funds among the Member States;
- the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the programme.

4. The Committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft measures referred to in point 3 within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter. The opinion shall be delivered by the majority laid down in Article 148 (2) of the Treaty in the case of decisions which the Council is required to adopt on a proposal from the Commission. The votes of the representatives of the Member States shall be weighted in the manner set out in that Article. The chairman shall not vote.

The Commission shall adopt measures which shall apply immediately. However, if these measures are not in accordance with

the opinion of the committee, they shall be communicated by the Commission to the Council forthwith. In that event:

- a) the Commission may defer application of the measures which it has decided for a period of two months from the date of that communication;
- b) the Council, acting by a qualified majority, may take a different decision within the time limit referred to in point a).

5. The Commission may consult the committee on any other matters relating to the implementation of this programme.

6. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee a draft of the measures to be taken. The committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft within a time limit which the Chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the opinion delivered by the committee. It shall inform the committee of the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.

*Article 10*

**Monitoring and evaluation**

1. On implementation of this Decision, the Commission shall take the necessary measures to ensure the monitoring and continuous evaluation of the programme, taking account of the general objective referred to in Article 1, the specific objectives defined in the Annex, the provisions laid down in Article 4 and any input provided by the committee set up under Article 9.
2. During the course of the second year of this programme, the Commission shall present to the European Parliament and to the Council an evaluation report which will serve to define any new implementing guidelines and methods, and a new budget framework for the final three years of the programme.
3. In the light of the evaluation report referred to in paragraph 2 and the proposals made by the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council shall envisage the possibility of adjusting the programme, extending some actions or making provision for new actions.

*Article 11*

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its publication in the Official Journal.

Done at ....., .....

*For the European Parliament*

*For the Council*

*The President*

**ANNEX**

In order to promote mobility among young people within the framework of active citizenship, their practical participation in the creation of European solidarity and their integration into active life, the Community shall support European voluntary service activities within the Union and in third countries, projects to follow up these activities and European cooperation measures to develop their quality and their European dimension.

The basic principles on which the Community action is based are as follows:

- local partnerships between the various public/private partners involved in the integration of young people into active life;
- transnational partnerships between host projects - validated by the Member States and the Commission - and sending projects;
- guarantees from the point of view of the preparation and supervision of young volunteers and their physical conditions, insurance and social protection;
- the inclusion, within host projects, of "mentors" having an important role to play in the supervision of young volunteers and in the validation of the skills acquired and the preparation of measures following up the experience;
- validation of the educational experience;

- follow-up for young volunteers and the enhancement of the skills that they have acquired.

In order to meet these basic objectives, the Community is organising the current programme which is made up of five main sections. These five sections are interlinked and are flexible enough to meet the needs of the young people concerned in the most appropriate way.

### SECTION 1 - INTRA-COMMUNITY

1. The Community shall support long-term (in principle for six months to one year) and short-term (in principle from three weeks to three months) transnational projects allowing young people – aged between 18 and 25 – resident in a Member State to play an active part in activities which help to meet the needs of society in a wide range of fields (social, environmental, cultural, etc.) and which are likely to have a direct impact on the well-being of the populations of the host communities. The aim of these projects shall be to provide young people from the Union with an educational experience and to bring them into contact with other cultures and experience new ideas and projects in an intercultural context.

2. The assistance awarded under this section should not exceed 50% of the total expenditure incurred,

1. The Community shall support long-term (in principle for six months to one year) and short-term (in principle from three weeks to three months) transnational projects allowing young people – with priority given to those aged between 18 and 25, but without excluding the possibility, in some exceptional and justified cases, of taking into consideration applications from young people above this age limit – resident in a Member State to play an active part in activities which help to meet the needs of society in a wide range of fields (social, environmental, cultural, etc.) and which are likely to have a direct impact on the well-being of the populations of the host communities. The aim of these projects shall be to provide young people from the Union with an educational experience and to bring them into contact with other cultures and experience new ideas and projects in an intercultural context.

subject to point 3.

3. In accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Decision, efforts shall be made to help young people facing cultural, social, economic, physical or geographical difficulties. These efforts must be proportional to the difficulties that participation in existing action programmes raises for this target group. In this context, financial assistance greater than the 50% set out in point 3 may be awarded, or support, where appropriate, for other activities likely to facilitate participation by this target group, including preparation and follow-up actions.
4. Assistance shall be awarded to:

#### ***LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES***

5. Long-term activities shall place the emphasis on the acquisition of appropriate experience from European voluntary service projects and on the follow-up of young volunteers' activities.
6. The Commission shall certify, at European level, the skills acquired from this formative experience and from the follow-up of young volunteers at the end of these activities.

#### ***PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION***

7. Actions intended (particularly as regards language, intercultural development, etc.) to build on the European dimension of activities, to prepare young long-term volunteers prior to departure and to promote their integration during these



activities and at the end of European voluntary service.

8. Actions (particularly training in setting up projects etc...) to promote the development of follow-up projects for young volunteers at the end of their European voluntary service.

### ***SHORT-TERM ACTIVITIES***

9. The Community shall support short-term transnational projects intended to make young people genuinely aware of the potential of actions linked to the principle of active citizenship, the impact that these activities may have on their lives and to familiarise all the partners with the concept of active citizenship.
10. These projects will initially involve groups of young people. Support for individual participation in a host project may be envisaged depending on the length of the project, its nature or the profile of the young volunteer.

### **SECTION 2 - THIRD COUNTRIES**

1. The Community shall support long-term (in principle 6-12 months) and short-term (in principle from three weeks to three months) transnational projects allowing young people – aged between 18 and 25 – resident in a Member State to play an active part in third countries in activities which meet the needs of society in a wide range of fields (social, environmental, cultural, etc.) and which are likely to have a direct impact on the well-being of the populations of the host communities.

1. The Community shall support long-term (in principle 6-12 months) and short-term (in principle from three weeks to three months) transnational projects allowing young people – with priority given to those aged between 18 and 25, but without excluding the possibility, in some exceptional and justified cases, of taking into consideration applications from young people above this age limit – resident in a Member State to play an active part in third countries in activities which

The aim of these projects shall be to provide young people with an educational experience and to bring them into contact with other cultures and experience new ideas and projects in an intercultural context.

meet the needs of society in a wide range of fields (social, environmental, cultural, etc.) and which are likely to have a direct impact on the well-being of the populations of the host communities. The aim of these projects shall be to provide young people with an educational experience and to bring them into contact with other cultures and experience new ideas and projects in an intercultural context.

1a. With regard more specifically to voluntary service activities in the developing countries, the Community shall support activities respecting the aims and scope for cooperation between the European Union and the developing countries as defined in cooperation agreements, other agreements and the relevant regulations. These activities may be open to young volunteers aged over 25 in the case of projects justified by a specific transfer of know-how to the countries concerned or by particular, duly justified conditions. Long-term projects may in exceptional circumstances be extended to two years.

2. The appropriations awarded under this Section shall in principle cover the costs of the activities of young people residing in the Member States.

3. Assistance shall be awarded for:

***LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES***

4. Long-term activities shall place the emphasis on the acquisition of appropriate experience from

European voluntary service projects and from the follow-up of young volunteers' activities.

5. The Commission shall certify, at European level, the skills acquired from this formative experience and from the follow-up of young volunteers at the end of these activities.

#### ***PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION***

6. Actions making it possible to lay or consolidate the foundations needed for the development of transnational European voluntary service projects with third countries, in particular long-term activities.
7. Actions intended (particularly as regards language, intercultural development, etc.) to build on the European dimension of activities, to prepare young long-term volunteers prior to departure and to promote their integration during these activities and at the end of European voluntary service.
8. Actions (particularly training in setting up projects etc...) to promote the development of follow-up projects for young volunteers at the end of their European voluntary service.

#### ***SHORT-TERM ACTIVITIES***

9. The Community shall support short-term transnational projects intended to make young people genuinely aware of the impact that these activities may have on their lives and to familiarise all the partners with the concept of active citizenship.

10. These projects will initially involve groups of young people. Support for individual participation in a host project may be envisaged depending on the length of the project, its nature or the profile of the young volunteer.

### **SECTION 3 - INNOVATIVE NETWORKS**

1. Assistance shall be awarded for actions coordinated by innovative networks, particularly in the social, environmental and cultural fields and with regard to the fight against different forms of exclusion.
2. This assistance shall cover innovative networks of initiatives both within the Union and with third countries.
3. Support for these innovative networks shall be intended to help, on the one hand, these networks to develop practical European voluntary service activities and, on the other hand, to help these networks to take on a European voluntary service dimension.

### **SECTION 4 - DEVELOPING A SENSE OF INITIATIVE AND ENTERPRISE**

1. Assistance may be awarded for projects intended to build, in a concrete way, on the experience that young people have acquired from European voluntary service and thus to promote their integration into active life.
2. This assistance will allow young volunteers to develop their sense of

initiative and enterprise by helping them to:

- launch complementary training projects;
- develop voluntary service initiatives that follow on from the activities that they have undertaken;
- launch economic activities, including business creation.

3. Special attention should be paid to the commitment of (public and/or private) partners to these projects in order to support, help and sponsor young people's strategies of integration into active life.

## **SECTION 5 - COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES**

### **5.1 Preparation and supervision**

1. In addition to actual voluntary service activities, assistance will also be awarded for actions intended to underpin the work of "mentors" and European project leaders. These actions shall concern activities supported at intra-Community level as well as in third countries. They are intended, on the one hand, to ensure that the content of the formative experience is of high quality and, on the other hand, to help to develop certification methods.
2. The term "mentors" means people supporting and supervising young volunteers during European voluntary service activities within hosting projects and those who act as

contact points for young volunteers and projects within relay structures at national, regional or local level.

Special attention shall be paid to projects having little or no experience of transnational activities.

#### *Mentors*

3. Activities intended to prepare and support mentors from the point of view of their tasks of supporting and supervising young volunteers during transnational voluntary service activities.

#### *European project leaders*

4. Activities intended to develop the ability of European project leaders effectively to carry out their administrative tasks in a European context (financial and administrative management and follow-up of European projects, legal aspects, etc.).

#### **5.2 Partnerships**

1. The Community shall support activities to promote partnerships at local/national/regional level - between public and private partners - geared towards European voluntary service and leading potentially to transnational partnerships.
2. Assistance shall be awarded for activities to facilitate and promote the creation of transnational partnerships between local/regional/national partnerships wishing to work together within the framework of this programme either within the Union or with third

countries.

3. Special attention shall be paid to local projects/initiatives which have little or no experience of or opportunity for contacts at European level.

### **5.3 Research, information and evaluation**

1. Support for activities to launch awareness, information and advisory systems at local, regional, national and transnational level to promote and support the objectives of the programme.
2. In the particular area of studies and evaluation connected with the objectives of the programme, the Community will concentrate its efforts on the analysis and dissemination of data and the promotion of Community cooperation in this field. The Commission will, in cooperation with the Member States, monitor and evaluate this programme in an ongoing way in order, when necessary, to bring it into line with needs arising during implementation.

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