

For supporting organisations:

## **PREPARING THE VOLUNTEER FOR THE VOLUNTEERING PROJECT**

**within European Solidarity Corps**

### Basic information

In order for the project to be successful and the volunteering experience to be positive and enriching for the volunteer, it is crucial that the Supporting Organisation adequately prepares the volunteer prior to departure.

This preparation should take place at least one month before departure and should be tailored to the individual needs of the volunteer and the specificities of the project, the service and the host country. Pre-departure preparation provides the volunteers with information about the Volunteering project, the project life cycle and the different parties involved. It allows volunteers to discuss their expectations, their motivation and also any concerns they may have about their future project with their supporting/sending Organisation.

During their service period, volunteers will be living in a different country, interacting with people from a different culture and often in a foreign language. At times this will be difficult, and volunteers are likely to face various difficult situations during the service period. It is therefore essential to lay the grounds for guiding volunteers through the intercultural learning process and to tell them about the support available during their service period.

Pre-departure preparation includes providing volunteers with practical and technical information on matters such as insurance, visa, pocket money and working hours, etc.

Volunteers need to be presented with following documents:

- [the Info Kit, prepared by European Commission](#)
- [Information about insurance for volunteers](#)
- [Information about Youthpass as a learning support](#)

## **Expected achievements of the preparation**

The pre-departure preparation will vary according to training practices, organisational possibilities and participant needs. Nevertheless, pre-departure preparation should ensure that, by the time they leave, all participants:

- know about the concept of the European Solidarity Corps;
- are familiar with the partners involved in the activity, i.e. the host and supporting organisation in volunteering activities, the organisations holding an Occupational Quality Label in the case of traineeships and jobs, the mentor and, where applicable, the National/Executive Agency, Resource Centres and the European Commission;
- are familiar with the documents in the Info-Kit;
- have shared their motivations, expectations and fears, and have reflected on their goals, including goals for learning;
- have received appropriate practical and technical information on visas, residence permits, their legal status as a participant, their insurance (including guidance on how to obtain the mandatory European Health Insurance Card before the departure), pocket money, the relevant agreement under the European Solidarity Corps and the working conditions and labour law applicable (for traineeships and jobs participants) ;

- understand the meaning of intercultural learning and are aware of the ongoing intercultural learning process;
- have received guidance or at least hints on crisis management;
- understand the importance and usefulness of getting recognition for the individual learning outcomes, in particular through EU level tools such as Youthpass and Europass.

## **Suggested programme for the Pre-departure training**

### **1) I am...**

Who am I? Who is my sending organisation? Where I am going for my Volunteering project, my hosting organisation? What am I going to do there, which target group will I be working with?

### **2) I am going, because ...**

Motivation, expectations, wishes, fears.

### **3) Volunteering within European Solidarity Corps is...**

Basic presentation of European Solidarity Corps, structure and key players in Volunteering projects, rights and responsibilities in Volunteering (Info-Kit)

### **4) My culture is ...**

Meaning of the international mobility, what's in it for me, importance of intercultural learning.

### **5) I solve my problems ...**

Where can things go wrong in European Solidarity Corps? Who can help me, how?

### **6) I want to learn to ....**

What do I wish to learn? How do I wish to learn it? Who can help me in this? When will I learn it? Basic presentation of Youthpass, and the volunteer writes a letter to him/herself (and receives it after 2 months)

### **7) I want to contribute...**

How does my project address needs of the local community? What will I do to leave mark?

### **8) This training was...**

Short evaluation of the training

March, 2020