

# **Programa de Conservación y Custodia Alt Penedès 2021**

**Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021  
Information for Volunteers**

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# Who are we?

Associació GENS - Grup d'Experimentació en Naturisme i Sostenibilitat (Low-tech and Sustainability Research Group) is a non-profit organization based in the rural area of Font-Rubí, in the province of Barcelona. It was founded in 2019 to face, in a holistic way, the ecological, economical, and social challenges of our time, with a focus on sustainability and local community empowerment.

Our mission is to lead and promote change towards new paradigms that are respectful to life in all its forms. To that end, we promote networking and community building, we launch educational and informative actions, we design tools for sustainable development, we engage in social justice activities and we experiment with low-tech archetypes.

Our goals include:

1. Building alliances with society, public and private organizations to promote disruptive and multidisciplinary initiatives for sustainability.
2. Conducting open access research in areas related to sustainability and traditional technologies.
3. Promoting critical thinking on the human condition, relationships, and needs.
4. Protecting nature and cultural heritage.
5. Promoting individual empowerment.
6. Providing people with support, advice, social integration opportunities, skills, and knowledge.

Our activities include:

1. Developing learning and research experiences in traditional and low-tech subjects.
2. Sharing and disseminating alternative and sustainable lifestyles through seminars and workshops.
3. Lobbying for nature conservancy and sustainable management.
4. Protecting nature and cultural heritage through land stewardship projects involving volunteering.

We work for:

1. Socially vulnerable people.
2. Local people.
3. People committed to sustainability and nature conservancy.
4. Society, public and private organizations.

GENS is a member of Xarxa per la Conservació de la Natura ("Nature Conservancy Network") which promotes and advises land stewardship projects.

## Summary

The experience will begin between **February 1 and 15** and will last 12 months. You'll perform tasks related to nature conservancy, land stewardship and self-sufficiency mainly in the forest.

The volunteering team and some of our staff will be hosted **in our Tipi camp** in Can Gallego (Mediona, Barcelona), similar to that of Great Plains indigenous people. Through the experience of living in a Tipi, you'll rediscover nature and simplicity, connecting with human deeper needs.

During the stay **you'll be living with little comforts although always supported** by our team. Climatization and cooking will depend on log fires (except in summer), water will be limited and brought to the camp by buckets, outdoor latrines will be our toilets, food will need processing, Wifi and electricity will be limited.

**We are looking for highly motivated volunteers, committed to sustainability**, open minded, willing to learn and experiment, team workers, with at least basic competence in Catalan, Spanish or English. Tasks will be sometimes arduous, you shall be prepared for physically demanding activities and withstand harsh climate conditions. **During the working week you won't be able to use mobile phones, laptops nor any other electronic devices.**

You may take part in a research led by the research group [Baumes Project](#). The research will assess the psychological condition of the volunteers during the stay. Volunteers shall agree to the research terms.

During the experience you'll share activities with GENS staff, locals, trainees and other volunteers.

# European Solidarity Corps

The European Solidarity Corps aims to foster solidarity in European society, engaging young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities. It offers young people volunteering activities, traineeships or jobs, or run their own projects.

These opportunities give young people the chance to show solidarity and commitment to different communities and help resolve challenging situations across Europe. Through the experience, they will also develop their skills and gain invaluable personal experience.

You can find more information on the European Solidarity Corps through this [link](#).

## Project

Through our program you'll have the opportunity to live and work in a radically-different environment: (almost) off the grid, in deep touch with nature and connected with our deepest needs. This will be a **life-changing experience**, which will make you get in touch with the self by “unplugging” from some social inputs (hyperconnectivity and overstimulation), and comforts.

To ensure your wellbeing and safety GENS staff will be accompanying this whole experience.

## Tasks

You'll work mainly in the forest performing tasks such as:

- **forestry** improvement cuts and thinning, foraging, path recovery, logging, reforestation
- **green building** dry stone, timber, nomadic huts and mud building
- **farming** crop management, livestock management, food processing and conservation, hunting
- **crafts** pottery, basketry, woodworking, leatherworking, wildcrafting

All the tasks will be performed using mainly hand tools or draft animals as a way to replace fuel powered technologies. We'll get inspiration from ancient techniques and new approaches such as permaculture and regenerative agriculture. However, questioning, experimentation and creativity are not only allowed but promoted.

You'll be in charge of the maintenance of a basic toolkit. Any damage coming from misuse will be satisfied by deducting the expenses from your **pocket money**.

Tasks will be, at some times, physically demanding (you shall be fit enough to undergo hard work) and outdoor based (mainly in forest or farming fields). In unexpected rainy days, we'll try to keep working if the rain is soft using raincoats, fires and other resources. If it's too intense, we'll switch into an indoor activity.

During the experience **you'll share activities with GENS staff, locals, trainees and other volunteers**. Through these opportunities you'll get to know other nature lovers and practice Spanish and Catalan.

## Education

European Solidarity Corps experiences have a powerful learning outcome. You'll enhance your knowledge and abilities through:

- **formal learning**, such as language lessons through the online platform OLS (<https://erasmusplusols.eu/en/>).
- **non formal learning**, such as pottery workshops
- **informal learning**, such as firing logs

ESC participants have the right and obligation to attend some training activities. Known as The Training and Evaluation Cycle, this cycle consists of the following sessions:

- **pre departure training** ensured by participating organisations;
- **on arrival training** ensured by National Agencies, SALTOs or participating organisations;
- **mid term evaluation** ensured by National Agencies or SALTOs;
- **annual European Solidarity Corps events** ensured by National Agencies or SALTOs.

Every young person taking part in European Solidarity Corps activities is entitled to go through the Youthpass process and receive a **Youthpass certificate** at the end of the process. Youthpass identifies and documents the competences developed during the project. Our team will provide tools in order to ease your self-assessment process and improve your learning outcomes.

We'll provide additional educational instruments related to your tasks and responsibilities. You'll be trained by experts and professionals on issues such as: Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEKs), sustainability, land stewardship, tool maintenance, etc.

During the stay you'll lead a personal project. Its subject must be related to the experience and be relevant for the organization and the society. You'll be asked to choose from these options:

- **theoretical project** thinking something (10 page thesis + annexes)
- **experimentation project** doing something (5 page thesis + annexes)
- **communication project** sharing something (5 page thesis + annexes)

At the end of the volunteering experience you'll present your results in the closure event.

Through volunteering with GENS you will learn about:

1. sustainable organization and production methods;
2. natural heritage and its management;
3. traditional crafts and experimental archaeology;
4. agroforestry, livestock management and food processing;
5. social inclusion.

## **Research**

To assess the impacts of living a simpler life, closer to nature performing active tasks we may count with the research group [Baumes Project](#). Through weekly surveys they'll register our psychological condition to assess our wellbeing, threads, difficulties and conflicts. Volunteers shall agree to the research terms.

## **Timing**

Every week you'll spend about 32 hours working and from 4 to 6 hours in learning activities and mentoring.

We'll adapt our schedules to the season, fitting the natural day-night cycles. The work will begin at dawn and end well before sunset.

# Settings

## Housing

You (and some members of the organization) will stay in a campsite at Finca Can Gallego located in the rural area of Font-Rubí, province of Barcelona.

As some members of the organization, you'll live in a shared tipi built with local and natural resources. We'll live as a little community, with little privacy, sleeping on mats.

## Hygiene & sanitation

Our toilets will be outdoor latrines dug by ourselves. Instead of toilet paper we'll use water to clean ourselves. We'll get the water from a well near the campsite. Since we'll live in a dry area water consumption will be limited to 15L per volunteer a day (excluding drinking water). If we want hot water, we'll heat it on the log fire or gas kitchen (depending on the season).

We'll produce the basic hygiene products (soap, toothpaste, shampoo) with natural resources. This way our waste won't be toxic to the environment. The organization will provide natural toothbrushes (2 for the entire year). We'll wash our clothes by hand.

## Electricity, electronic devices & Wi-Fi

We won't have electricity nor Wi-Fi. On the weekends the organization will provide electricity to work with or charge our electronic devices. During the working week you'll be asked to spare without mobile phones, laptops and other electronic devices.

## Heating & cooking

We'll cook and heat on a log fire inside the tipi during the cold season and on an outdoor gas kitchen during the hot season.

## Food

The organization will provide our food based on local organic products from our own farm or local producers. The food will need processing, we won't get processed products. We'll limit animal products consumption to twice a week for meat and once a week for fish. We'll also provide vegan or vegetarian diet options.

To help us with food management and cooking we'll be assisted by our cook. She'll teach us how to process edible wild products, how to plan healthy meals and how to cook delicious sustainable mediterranean meals.

## Other

### Holidays

You'll have 2 consecutive free days per week. During these days you can either stay on the farm or visit our region. During autumn, you'll enjoy your 30 natural days long holidays. You can use these days to chill in the farm and prepare for winter or to travel around.

When leaving the farm on your free days or holidays you'll be allowed to take the necessary food with you. The organization won't pay for meals outside the farm.

### Transportation

Finca Can Gallego is located 15km far from Vilafranca del Penedès. You can get to Can Gallego by bus or carsharing. At your arrival you'll be assigned a bike to move around and explore the surroundings.

You shall not come by plane, since the environmental impact of this transportation is against our values<sup>1</sup>. The organization won't pay plane transportation costs.

Travel costs will be reimbursed on arrival through bank transfer.

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<sup>1</sup> Climate change: Should you fly, drive or take the train? (2020, august 23) *BBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/>

## **Pocket money**

As ESC volunteers you'll get 5€ per day during your stay. You'll get the money through bank transfer every first week of the month.

## **Security, injuries and insurance**

We'll provide access to basic allopathic medicine and natural remedies for small pathologies.

In case of severe injury the closest hospital is at 17' by car.

One key aspect of the activities carried out under the European Solidarity Corps is that the participant must at all time be under a safe environment. To guarantee that the participant is covered for unforeseen circumstances, the organization will cover:

- travel insurance (including damage or loss of luggage);
- third party liability (including professional/corporate liability of participating organisations);
- accident and illness (including permanent or temporary incapacity), pregnancy and childbirth;
- death (including repatriation in case of projects carried out abroad).

Participants must be in the possession of a European Health Insurance Card before the arrival.

## **Luggage**

You **must** bring with you:

- Sleeping bag (comfort temperature 10 to 15°C) and sleeping mat
- 1x heavy-duty boots (must be comfortable)
- 1x sneakers
- 1x sandals
- 7x mid calf socks
- 1x heavy-duty pants
- 1x light pants
- 2x T-shirt
- 2x thick sweater
- 1x winter jacket
- 1x long raincoat
- 7x underwear

- 1x 30 to 40l backpack
- 1x rain/sun hat
- 1x wool hat
- 1x towel

Plus any other equipment that you may need for your leisure days.

# Application

## Eligibility criteria

Participants must fulfill the following requirements:

1. initiative and leadership abilities;
2. commitment to experiment a sustainable and simple life;
3. self-criticism, open mind, willing to learn;
4. commitment to teamwork and household duties;
5. able to communicate in Catalan, Spanish or English;
6. fit enough to work in the mountain doing manual tasks and able to handle bad weather;
7. fulfill Spain [Entry Requirements](#) (see [document](#) section B to check if you can travel without a visa) The organization won't pay for the visa;
8. registered as an ESC volunteer before the interview (you can register [here](#)).

Participants must agree to:

1. research terms;
2. spare without mobile phones and other electronic devices during working days;
3. not to travel by plane.

## Application process

Here's how you can apply:

1. You must **read this document carefully** before fulfilling the application form.

2. Once read, you may **fulfill the [application form](#)** before December 15th  
You'll have to upload an up to date CV and a motivation letter (from 400 to 600 words) covering the next items:
  - a. Why would you like to join our project?
  - b. Why do you want to experience living off-the-grid?
  - c. What do you think you can bring/add to the project (skills, ideas, work...)?
  - d. What is your relationship with sustainability?
  - e. What will you do in your free time during the week in Can Gallego and surroundings?
3. After reviewing the applications we'll contact the preselected applicants asking for an **interview**, which will take place before December 31st.  
Preselected applicants shall get in touch with a sending organization in their country (we can help you find one).
4. **Final selection** will take place before January 15th.

Selected volunteers shall:

1. accept our offer through the **ESC website**;
2. **read the insurance terms** before travelling to Spain (we'll provide the information);
3. read and sign **this document**, the European Solidarity Corps **Info Kit** and the **volunteer agreement**;
4. complete the **pre departure training** including your first language lessons (English or Spanish) through the **[OLS platform](#)**;
5. get the **travel ticket** (we'll reimburse the costs on arrival);
6. fulfill **COVID-19** health controls and associated forms (see [link](#));
7. pack your luggage and prepare yourself for **THE EXPERIENCE!**

# Rights & responsibilities

In addition to the rights and responsibilities detailed in the [European Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers](#), you'll have the following:

## Rights

As a volunteer you have the right to be treated without discrimination, with respect of your freedom, dignity, privacy, your beliefs or ideology. You have also the right to be assured against risk of accident and illness during any volunteering activity.

You also have the right to receive information, training, support and materials necessary to perform your activity as a volunteer.

You are entitled to receive payment of all expenses you have during the performance of their volunteering tasks.

## Responsibilities

You must fulfill and follow the commitments of the organization, respecting its rules. You must follow the instructions of your organization; participate in activities effectively and in the training organized by the organization.

You have to take care of and respect the resources and materials of the organization.

You must respect the rights of the beneficiaries of the volunteering activity, and act and participate in the volunteering activity effectively and supportively.

# Highlights

<b>Start date</b>	1-15 february 2021
<b>End date</b>	1-15 february 2022
<b>Where</b>	Finca Can Gallego 41°27'19.6"N 1°38'01.4"E
<b>Shelter</b>	Shared tipi (2-5 people)
<b>Privacy</b>	Tipis & other spaces will be shared
<b>Toilet</b>	Outdoor latrines Water instead of toilet paper
<b>Water</b>	Well at 1-2 minutes walking 15L /person and day Cold water (heated by fire)
<b>Laundry</b>	By hand
<b>Electricity</b>	Limited to weekends to charge your devices
<b>Phones</b>	Limited to weekends
<b>Wi-fi</b>	Limited to weekends, closest Wi-Fi point in Guardiola de Font-rubí (20' by bike)
<b>Heating &amp; cooking</b>	Log fire (cold season) Outdoor kitchen (hot season)
<b>Diet</b>	Based on local ingredients, simple and frugal.
<b>Holidays</b>	2 consecutive free days per week 30 days in autumn (vacances nadal?)
<b>Shopping</b>	Guardiola de Font-rubí (basic grocery stores) Vilafranca del Penedès
<b>Transportation</b>	Bike provided by the organization Weekdays: bike, walk Weekend: bus, carsharing The organization won't pay plane transportation

	<p>costs.  Travel costs will be reimbursed on arrival through bank transfer.</p>
<b>Pocket money</b>	5€/day paid every first week of the month by bank transfer
<b>Security, injuries and insurance</b>	<p>Basic allopathic medicines + natural remedies  Closest hospital at 17' by car  Insurance covering: travel insurance; third party liability;  accident and illness, pregnancy and childbirth; death.</p>
<b>Luggage</b>	See <a href="#">luggage listing</a>
<b>Application process</b>	<p>Application before December 15  Interview query before December 31  Final selection before January 15</p>

# European Solidarity Corps – Volunteering agreement

**Associació Grup d'Experimentació en Naturisme i Sostenibilitat (GENS),**  
with OID number **E10215247** located in La Mata Nova, 08736 Font-rubí, Spain.

Called hereafter "the organisation", represented for the purposes of signature of this agreement by Eduard Ferrer, president, of the one part, and

**Mr/Mrs** [first name and family name]  
**Date of birth:** [DD/MM/YYYY] **Nationality:**  
**Address:** [official address in full]  
**Phone:** **E-mail:**  
**Sex:** [M/F/other]

Called hereafter "the participant" of the other part, have agreed the Special Conditions and the Annex below which form an integral part of this agreement ("the agreement"):

The agreement also concerns the following partner organisation(s) in the project:  
[Full official name of the partner organisation(s), PIC number and role in the volunteering project (supporting or host)]

Address: [official address in full]

Called hereafter "the partner organisations"

**Project number:** 2020-3-ES02-ESC11-016579

**Project title:** Programa de Conservación y Custodia Alt Penedès 2021

**National Agency:** ES02 - AGENCIA NACIONAL ESPAÑOLA DE LA JUVENTUD (INJUVE)

# **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

## **ARTICLE 1 – SUBJECT MATTER OF THE AGREEMENT**

1.1 The organisation shall provide financial support to the participant for undertaking a volunteering activity under the European Solidarity Corps Programme.

1.2 Any amendment to the agreement shall be done in writing. In case of substantial modifications, a new agreement has to be signed.

## **ARTICLE 2 – ENTRY INTO FORCE AND DURATION OF ACTIVITY**

2.1 The agreement shall enter into force on the date when the last of the two parties signs.

2.2 The activity period shall start on February 1 to 15 2021 and end on February 1 to 15 2022.

2.3 The total duration of the activity period, including previous participation in EVS or in an Erasmus+ Volunteering activity, shall not exceed 14 months for a participant.

## **ARTICLE 3 – FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

3.1 The financial support in the form of Pocket Money for the activity period has a minimum amount of 5€ per day.

3.2 The participant shall receive financial support from EU funds for 365 days. The total amount for the activity period shall be determined by multiplying the number of days of the activity with the rate applicable per day for the host country concerned.

3.3 The reimbursement of costs incurred in connection with special needs, when applicable, shall be based on the documentation such as invoices, receipts, etc. provided by the participant.

3.4 The financial support may not be used to cover similar costs already funded by European Union funds.

## **ARTICLE 4 – RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

4.1 See section Rights & responsibilities in “Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021 Information for Volunteers”.

4.2 See section Transportation in “Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021 Information for Volunteers”.

4.3 See section Pocket money in “Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021 Information for Volunteers”.

## **ARTICLE 5 – INSURANCE**

5.1 The participant shall be registered for the European Solidarity Corps insurance scheme.

5.2 The insurance identification of the participant is [number as provided by the insurance provider].

5.3 By signing this agreement, the organisation confirms that the registration has been undertaken and the participant has been duly informed of how the insurance scheme functions, as well as the obligation of obtaining the European Health Insurance Card, if free of charge, before arriving in the host country.

## **ARTICLE 6 – LINGUISTIC SUPPORT**

6.1. The participant shall carry out an online assessment of linguistic competences before and at the end of the activity period, with the exception of native speakers. The participant shall immediately inform the organisation if he/she is unable to carry out the online assessment.

6.2 The participant shall follow the online [language to be specified] language course in order to prepare for the activity abroad. The participant shall immediately inform the organisation if he/she is unable to carry out the online course.

## **ARTICLE 7 – EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS INFO KIT**

7.1 The organisation has provided the participant with the document “Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021 Information for Volunteers” and the European Solidarity Corps Info Kit.

7.2 The participant shall be familiar with the content of these documents before signing the Volunteering agreement.

## **ARTICLE 8 – ROLES AND TASKS OF THE PARTICIPANT**

8.1 See section Tasks in “Alt Penedes Conservation Stewards Program 2021 Information for Volunteers”.

## **ARTICLE 9 – FINAL REPORT**

9.1 The participant shall complete the participant report at the latest 30 days after the end of the activity period.

## **ARTICLE 10 – LAW APPLICABLE AND COMPETENT COURT**

10.1 The Agreement is governed by the **Law of Spain**.

10.2 The competent court determined in accordance with the applicable national law shall have sole jurisdiction to hear any dispute between the institution and the participant concerning the interpretation, application or validity of this Agreement, if such dispute cannot be settled amicably.

## **ARTICLE 11 – PARTICIPANT DECLARATION**

11.1 By signing this agreement, the participant declares to not have taken part in EVS or an Erasmus+ Volunteering activity previously (with the exception indicated in the Programme Guide).

11.2 The participant declares to be familiar with the main European Solidarity Corps facts, this document and the content of the documents listed in article 7.1.

## SIGNATURES

For the participant

For the organisation

[name / forename]

[name / forename / function]

Done at [place], [date]

Done at [place], [date]

# Annex I

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

### **Article 1: Liability**

Each party of this agreement shall exonerate the other from any civil liability for damages suffered by them or their staff as a result of performance of this agreement, provided such damages are not the result of serious and deliberate misconduct on the part of the other party or their staff.

The National Agency of Spain, the European Commission or their staff shall not be held liable in the event of a claim under the agreement relating to any damage caused during the execution of the activity. Consequently, the National Agency of Spain or the European Commission shall not entertain any request for indemnity of reimbursement accompanying such claim.

### **Article 2: Termination of the agreement**

In the event of failure by the participant to perform any of the obligations arising from the agreement, and regardless of the consequences provided for under the applicable law, the organisation is entitled to terminate or cancel the agreement without any further legal formality where no action is taken by the participant within one month of receiving notification by registered letter.

In the event of failure by the organisations to perform obligations outlined in the agreement and/or the European Solidarity Corps principles, the volunteer is entitled to terminate or cancel the agreement.

If the participant terminates the agreement before its agreement ends or if he/she fails to follow the agreement in accordance with the rules, he/she shall have to refund the amount of the grant already paid, in case part of the grant has been paid in advance for non-active days.

In case of termination by the participant due to "force majeure", i.e. an unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the participant's control and not attributable to error or negligence on his/her part, the participant shall be entitled to receive at least the amount of the grant corresponding to the actual duration of the mobility period. Any remaining funds shall have to be refunded.

### **Article 3: Data Protection**

All personal data contained in the agreement shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the EU institutions, agencies and bodies. Such data shall be processed solely in connection with the implementation and follow-up of the agreement by the partner organisations, the National Agency and the European Commission, without prejudice to the possibility of passing the data to the bodies responsible for inspection and audit in accordance with EU legislation [Court of Auditors or European Antifraud Office (OLAF)]

The participant may, on written request, gain access to his personal data and correct any information that is inaccurate or incomplete. He/she should address any questions regarding the processing of his/her personal data to the sending institution and/or the National Agency. The participant may lodge a complaint against the processing of his personal data with the Autoritat Catalana de Protecció de Dades with regard to the use of these data by the sending institution, the National Agency, or to the European Data Protection Supervisor with regard to the use of the data by the European Commission.

### **Article 4: Checks and Audits**

The parties of the agreement undertake to provide any detailed information requested by the European Commission, the National Agency of Spain or by any other outside body authorised by the European Commission or the National Agency of Spain to check that the mobility period and the provisions of the agreement are being properly implemented.



## INFO KIT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Congratulations!

You have been selected to participate in the European Solidarity Corps. The next weeks and months might be a life changing experience for you.

Through your participation in the European Solidarity Corps, you will get the chance to live in another country, get to know a new culture and a new language. You will make new friends – within and beyond your organisation. Not only will you provide a service to the benefit of your organisation and the local community, but you will also develop your own personal, social and professional skills.

This Info Kit attached to this letter will help you prepare for the European Solidarity Corps experience. You will learn about what you can expect from the organisation(s) involved in your activity and what is expected from you. We recommend that you go through and discuss the Info Kit with the European Solidarity Corps coordinator of your organisation because the kit is supposed to complement their preparatory activities.

It is also important to know about the European Solidarity Corps Guide, which includes everything you need to know about the Corps, from volunteering activities, through traineeships and jobs, to solidarity projects. This Info Kit is among several supporting documents which complement the information in the Guide and helps you be more successful during your activity.

We hope that you will make the most of your experience, and we wish you the best of luck!

The European Commission

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

### 1. Introduction

This document is intended for participants and organisations involved in the European Solidarity Corps. It provides information to participants and organisations about what to expect before, during and after the activities. The document also supports the efforts of organisations, agencies and the European Commission in the area of risk prevention for European Solidarity Corps participants.

Each participant carries with them ideas, expectations, needs and habits that deserve to find a respectful and trustful hosting environment, receptive of individual specificities. At the same time, participating organisations often devote a great deal of time, energy and resources to set up a European Solidarity Corps project; they can therefore expect that the participant shows a similar level of respect for and trust in their commitment to carry out activities in their local community.

The main objective of this text is therefore to clarify the role that each actor involved in the project (including participants) should take in jointly creating a positive environment for a European Solidarity Corps activity.

The guidelines outlined in this document take into account the great variety of project partners, project formats and areas, and they need to be adapted to the specific circumstances of each project. The guidelines complement the information given in the European Solidarity Corps Guide and they form part of the Info Kit to be given to all participants before departure.

### 2. Implementing bodies

Most participants will take part in a project granted by National Agencies established in each Programme Country. Some specific project formats can also be granted by the Executive Agency located in Brussels.

The National and Executive Agencies are promoting the programme, supporting applicants, managing applications and following up on the projects. In case a serious situation arises, you or the organisation(s) involved may contact the granting agency or the agency of the host country.

There are also six SALTO Resource Centres and a dedicated European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre, supporting National Agencies and organisations in working with a neighbouring region or on a particular theme. More information about the role of the different programme structures can be found in the European Solidarity Corps Guide.

### **3. Information and communication**

The participant has to be informed about the European Solidarity Corps — its philosophy, aims, priorities and procedures — and how European Solidarity Corps activities are carried out. Prior to their departure, the participant must receive clear information about the European Solidarity Corps activity, in particular about the tasks to be performed, accommodation, training and support. If the hosting is located in a live-in community, the participant must be informed about the rules and conditions that apply in such a community and which relate to them.

Prior to their departure, the participant is responsible for informing the organisations about any circumstances that may influence their capability to carry out the tasks and provide notification about any special needs. If necessary, they should also provide accurate information about health-related issues.

The participant must inform the host and supporting organisations about the exact dates of their departure and arrival. This information should be provided well in advance before the start of the activity.

It is highly recommended that the participant reads the grant application approved by the National/Executive Agency for their project. All parties involved (including the participant) are responsible for respecting the project details as set out in the European Solidarity Corps funding agreement.

### **4. Benefits**

Participation in the European Solidarity Corps is free of charge for the participant. Except for a possible contribution to travel costs, the participant must not be charged, neither fully or partially, nor directly or indirectly, for taking part in a European Solidarity Corps activity.

All participants can access a range of support services such as online linguistic support and training. Their travel costs from home to the venue of the project and back will be covered.

At the end of the activity all participants will receive a European Solidarity Corps certificate of participation, issued through the European Solidarity Corps Portal by the organisation who provided the activity.

Every young person taking part in European Solidarity Corps activities can benefit from a process and certificate that identifies and documents their individual learning outcomes through EU level recognition tools such as Youthpass. Organisations have the obligation to provide a Youthpass certificate to each individual participant requiring it at the end of the activity. The Youthpass website ([www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)) includes information about the scope of the Youthpass and on how to obtain the certificate. It is important that supporting and host organisations, as well as the participant, are familiar with the information provided.

### Volunteering activities

The participant is entitled to free board and lodging. Their accommodation must remain available to them throughout the entire activity period, including holidays. The participating organisations must ensure that the participant lives in safe and clean accommodation and can eat sufficient and healthy food.

Participants in volunteering activities will receive a small allowance (pocket money) for their personal expenses throughout the duration of the activity, including vacations. Their accommodation and food will be provided by the host organisation.

The participant is entitled to two consecutive free days per week (unless arranged differently in mutual agreement between the participant and the organisation and explicitly stated in the participation agreement) and two days of holiday per month.

Vacation periods and weekly rest days have to be agreed upon between the host organisation and the participant.

The participant can request and must receive help from the organisations in obtaining a visa, if so required by the legislation of the host country. If asked to do so in due time, the National/Executive Agency or SALTO can also issue letters supporting the participant's visa application.

The pocket money must not cover costs related to the implementation of the project (for example local transport or food).

### Traineeships and Jobs

The participant is entitled to remuneration for the entire duration of the activity, in accordance with the traineeship agreement / job contract.

Participants in traineeships and jobs activities will also receive a relocation allowance. At least 80% of the total relocation allowance will be paid to the participant at the start of the activity and the remainder before the end of the activity. The amounts are outlined in the European Solidarity Corps Guide.

The relocation allowance must not cover costs related to the implementation of the project (for example local transport or remuneration).

### Insurance

All participants in cross-border activities have to be covered, throughout the activity period, by the obligatory European Solidarity Corps insurance plan set up by the European Commission. This coverage is only complementary to the mandatory coverage of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which must be obtained prior to departure.

In certain cases, when national rules deprive participants from coverage under EHIC for the duration of the placement, CIGNA will provide full coverage. However, participants must provide proof that obtaining the EHIC in their case was not possible and they should contact their National Agency in order to seek tailored advice, for their specific circumstance.

The participant must read carefully the insurance-related information found online here: <https://www.cignahealthbenefits.com/en/plan-members>.

## **5. Responsibilities**

All parties involved should abide by the European Solidarity Corps principles and quality standards of any European Solidarity Corps activity. To know more, go here: [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/mission\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/mission_en).

The participant should be encouraged to take an active role in setting up their European Solidarity Corps activity together with the organisations involved.

The organisations must take care of the practical arrangements in order to support and guide the participant from the moment of their arrival in the host country.

The participant must respect the rules and the organisational structure of the host organisation. The participant must also abide by the laws in force in the host country.

The participant in volunteering activities must take good care of the accommodation that has been provided to them.

The participant must sign a volunteering or a traineeship agreement or an employment contract. More information about the content of these agreements/contracts can be found in the European Solidarity Corps Guide.

The participant must keep the host organisation informed about their whereabouts during the activity period.

While abroad, the participant should give the supporting organisation regular feedback on their experience and must evaluate the overall project with the supporting organisation upon their return.

Upon their return, the participant must complete a final report.

## **6. Preparation and training**

Prior to departure, the participant must receive this European Solidarity Corps Info Kit and be adequately prepared by the supporting organisation for the stay abroad, according to their needs and in line with the European Solidarity Corps Training and Evaluation Cycle guidelines and minimum quality standards.

Upon arrival in the host country, participants in projects with duration of more than two months have the right and obligation to take part in an on-

arrival training session. Participants taking part in activities lasting six months or more also have the right and obligation to take part in a mid-term evaluation session.

The participant should receive appropriate task-related support and guidance to enable them to carry out the agreed tasks.

If online language courses are provided as part of the project support from the Commission, the supporting organisation must ensure a proper follow-up and support to the participant in starting the course as early as possible and completing it. The same applies when funding is provided for language learning. A number of participants will take language tests before and after the activity. The final language test should be taken just before the completion of the YouthPass, at the end of the activity. The host organisation has to oversee that the final test is taken by those participants who are given access to the testing scheme.

In addition, the participating organisations support other language training, free of charge for the participant. The training can be formal or informal, and the format, duration and frequency will depend on the needs of the participant, their project tasks and the resources available to the organisation.

For personal support, the participant has a mentor with whom they will have regular meetings throughout the activity period. The mentor must be appointed by the host organisation, and must not be the participant's supervisor or be otherwise directly involved in the participant's daily activities.

The mentor should help integrate the participant in the organisation, the project and the local community. The mentor should help the participant with administrative issues, if necessary.

The participant must accept the role of the mentor as the person responsible for their well-being and must attend the regular meetings organised by the mentor.

At the end of the project, the participant should receive help from the supporting organisation in evaluating the participation in the European Solidarity Corps so as to gain the maximum benefit from their experience. If asked for, the participant should also get help in re-adjusting to life in their home country and for guidance in accessing the labour market.

After completing their activity, participants should take part in the Annual European Solidarity Corps event organised by the National Agency.

The participant can also contact the relevant National Agencies or the Executive Agency<sup>1</sup> asking for any kind of advice and support (on accreditation, insurance, visa support, crisis management, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> For contact details to National Agencies and the Executive Agency please consult [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact/national-agencies\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact/national-agencies_en)

## **7. Participant's tasks**

The participation conditions must respect the participant's personal health, safety and dignity, and be in line with the national laws of the host country.

The European Solidarity Corps must be a full-time activity for the participant, taking at least 30 and not more than 38 hours per week (including language and other training activities relating to the project).

The participants in volunteering activities and the trainees must not carry out routine tasks that would normally be carried out by paid employees. The participant must not carry out high-responsibility tasks alone or unsupervised. They must not be solely responsible for the individual care of vulnerable persons (babies or children; ill, elderly or disabled people, etc.) on a day-to-day basis.

The participant must not teach or provide teaching assistance as part of their formal education.

The participant should be encouraged to use their own ideas, creativity and experience to develop their own projects or activities relating to the work of the host organisation.

Any changes in the project and in the participant's tasks, areas of responsibility, support and training must remain in line with the general set-up of the agreed and approved project and must be agreed between the participant and the host organisation.

## **8. Risk and conflict management**

The participant must not act in any way that could put others or themselves at risk of being injured. If a conflict situation arises, the participant may ask her/his mentor to facilitate communication between the participant and the local environment or the host organisation.

The mentor should be able to provide an independent and objective evaluation of the situation. If conflict arises between the participant and the mentor, the participant can ask to get another person appointed as their mentor.

In the event of a conflict situation, the participant should be supported and must cooperate actively with the participating organisations to avoid communication problems.

If a serious incident occurs, the participant can expect the mentor to establish and maintain appropriate contact with the supporting organisation, their next of kin (if required or requested) and the insurance company, if necessary.

In the event of a serious incident or conflict situation that cannot be resolved in other ways, the participant can leave the project. This, however, should always be the last resort and should be agreed with the National/Executive Agency.