



## EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY HUMANITARIAN AID CORPS

### Expressing EU citizen's solidarity through volunteering



*"The European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps goes beyond humanitarian aid. It will allow Europeans to concretely express their commitment with one of the most fundamental of our values: the value of solidarity. At a time when the world is facing many difficulties, when disasters and conflicts are on the increase, if we create the right platform that gives young Europeans the opportunity to show solidarity with people in need, I think we will have done a very good job together. I am determined to take up the opportunity to make this a programme for solidarity in action – and I look forward to working together with you to make it a reality."*

**Kristalina Georgieva,**  
**European Commissioner for International cooperation,**  
**Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response**

### Added value and key success factors

Since the beginning of the process, we have listened to the stakeholders to ensure that the Voluntary Corps provides a real added value. The following success criteria have been identified:

- The Corps will support and complement existing voluntary schemes and avoid duplication
- We will set up a demand-driven scheme to ensure that volunteers respond to real needs
- Security of volunteers has first priority when looking at the settings in which they will be active
- Local capacities and local volunteering need to be developed

**Recruitment, selection, training and deployment** of humanitarian volunteers are, thus, key to have the right people at the right place at the right time and to ensure that EU humanitarian volunteers can make a positive difference to humanitarian aid operations.

Our 2011 online public consultation has shown that we have taken the concerns of the actors in the field seriously and that we are on the right track: Respondents say that our Voluntary Corps will provide a positive contribution to the humanitarian aid sectors and that it holds the potential to actually increase professionalism and safety for volunteers as well as the coordination and coherence in humanitarian aid.

### What's next?

**In 2011 – the European Year of Volunteering** – we speed up the process towards the Corps: Key operational partners of DG ECHO such as Save the Children, the Red Cross, the NOHA network and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) have been chosen to run our **pilot actions to test** different options and to provide recommendations for our final steps. 2011 and 2012 will see the deployment of our first up to 90 European Humanitarian Volunteers!

All these steps will feed into a **legislative proposal in 2012 sketching out the general framework of the future Voluntary Corps**.

### Why a European Voluntary Corps?

- The Lisbon Treaty gives a clear mandate to the European Commission in its article 214.5: *'In order to establish a framework for joint contributions from young Europeans to the humanitarian aid operations of the Union, a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps shall be set-up'*
- 100 million Europeans volunteer, 30% of young Europeans are active. 'Solidarity and Humanitarian Aid' comes regularly first when people are asked where volunteering can play the most important role.
- The volunteers of today are the humanitarian leaders of tomorrow. We know that the younger people get involved the more likely they are to volunteer their whole life and to shape the future humanitarian aid.
- European Humanitarian Aid Volunteers will give a human face to the EU action in humanitarian aid operations and increase our visibility in the world.

## Progress towards the Humanitarian Aid Corps in a nutshell

- 2010:**
  - **Review of existing voluntary schemes** (gaps, analysis)
  - **Consultations** (bilateral & stakeholders Conference)
  - **Commission Communication COM (2010) 683 final:** How to express EU citizen's solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps
- 2011:**
  - **Online stakeholders consultation** (different options for implementation)
  - **Preparatory Action**, for which a 1 M€ budget has been allocated for **pilot actions** and **further consultation** (conferences, workshops)
  - **Start of first pilot actions and deployment of European Humanitarian Volunteers** by ECHO partners in the field
  - **An Impact Assessment**, including analysis of costs & benefits of different options for the Corps
- 2012:**
  - **Continuation of pilot actions and 2nd call for proposals**
  - **A legislative proposal** is currently planned for 1st semester 2012 to establish the final version of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

## The EU as a humanitarian donor

The EU (Member States + Commission) is the largest humanitarian donor in the world and delivers more than half of the official global aid.

Through its humanitarian aid (1.11 bn € in 2010), the European Commission funds relief operations for victims of natural disasters and conflicts outside the European Union. Aid is channelled impartially, straight to victims, regardless of their race, ethnic group, religion, gender, age, nationality or political affiliation.

The humanitarian programmes funded by the European Union are implemented through partner organisations: United Nations relief agencies, members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

## Further information can be found via the following links:

- [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/evhac\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/evhac_en.htm)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/georgieva/themes/voluntary\\_humanitarian\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/themes/voluntary_humanitarian_en.htm)

