



EU Aid Volunteers

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

To date:

- Over 250 EU citizens and 17 African nationals trained and deployed to humanitarian operations in over 40 countries during pilot phase

To come:

- Capacity building and certification of organisations: autumn/winter 2014
- New volunteers deployment: second half of 2015

Key figures:

18 400 opportunities including:

- 4 000 deployments of EU citizens worldwide
- 4 400 people from non-EU, disaster affected countries trained
- 10 000 online volunteering opportunities

€147.9 million of EU funding including:

- Deployment
- Capacity building in non-EU countries
- Network and communication



Some images of EU Aid Volunteers' pilot projects. © EU/ECHO Volunteers' pilot projects

Key messages

- The EU Aid Volunteers initiative provides opportunities for volunteers to engage in humanitarian aid.
- The initiative is open to a variety of profiles, from newcomers to experienced humanitarian experts.
- European standards on the management of volunteers by humanitarian organisations and a European training programme for volunteers will be developed in the context of the initiative.
- In the period from 2014 to 2020, 18 400 individuals will participate in the initiative.
- 4 000 volunteers will be deployed by humanitarian organisations in projects worldwide.

Why the EU Aid Volunteers initiative?

Humanitarian organisations need more well-prepared and trained people to carry out projects helping communities struck by disasters. The EU Aid Volunteers' initiative will enable Europeans eager to help to contribute to humanitarian projects in the countries where assistance is needed.

The majority of the existing volunteering schemes in Europe have a national focus and few provide opportunities in humanitarian aid. The EU Aid Volunteers initiative will bring volunteers and organisations from different countries to work together in joint projects in areas linked to humanitarian aid, such as resilience building and disaster risk management.

European Commission
Humanitarian Aid and Civil
Protection department
(ECHO)

B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: (+32 2) 295 44 00

Fax: (+32 2) 295 45 72

eu-aid-volunteers@ec.europa.eu

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo>



* For all latest
ECHO factsheets:
bit.ly/echo-fs



"We have here a unique opportunity to send a positive signal in these times of financial crises and increasing humanitarian crises: The EU Aid Volunteers will express European solidarity with concrete deeds helping those most in need. And they will at the same time learn invaluable skills and competencies: Saving lives is a life changing experience that they will never forget."

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

What is the initiative about?

The European Commission is setting up a European training programme for humanitarian volunteers and will develop European standards for humanitarian organisations to work with volunteers in EU-funded projects worldwide. In the period 2014-2020, the initiative will create opportunities for some 4 000 Europeans to be trained and deployed to the field, and also for some 4 400 third-country volunteers and staff to participate in capacity-building experiences. In addition, 10 000 interested citizens will have the option to contribute to specific projects as online volunteers, supporting EU Aid volunteers already in the field or helping humanitarian organisations with tasks that can be done from home on a computer. A network will be created, so that all EU Aid Volunteers and other stakeholders can interact with and support each other before, during and after deployment.

Who can apply and when?

- EU Aid Volunteers candidates have to be over 18 years of age and be citizens of EU Member States or long-term residents in the EU. Citizens from countries such as EU candidate countries, potential candidate countries, countries from the EEA or the European Neighbourhood Policy may apply subject to the conclusion of bilateral agreements on their participation with those countries. Non-EU citizens in disaster-stricken countries could also participate in the initiative, as part of local capacity training activities.
- The initiative is open to a variety of profiles: candidates can be newcomers willing to gain experience in the humanitarian sector; experts in any field connected to humanitarian aid; or retired citizens who want to help out with their acquired knowledge. Preparation and deployment opportunities will depend on the level of skills and competences of candidates.
- **The deployment of EU Aid Volunteers will begin in 2015.** Information will be available on the website of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) <http://ec.europa.eu/echo>.
- Capacity building and technical assistance for sending and hosting organisations will start in 2014.

How will it work?

- The Commission will develop European standards on the management of humanitarian volunteers and will certify humanitarian organisations that comply with these standards. These organisations will in turn identify suitable humanitarian projects and apply for EU grants to deploy EU Aid Volunteers.
- EU Aid Volunteers will first be trained and then tested as to their readiness to be deployed. The legislation on EU Aid Volunteers also foresees training of local staff and volunteers of organisations in countries hit by disasters where the EU Aid Volunteers will work.
- Deployment of volunteers will take place in projects focusing for example on resilience building, disaster risk management in vulnerable, fragile or disaster affected countries and forgotten crises; support for emergency response operations, including activities in logistics and transport, coordination, project management, finances and administration, and communication.
- EU Aid Volunteers will not be deployed to operations in areas of armed conflict.



Benefits and results

- By 2014, 4 000 EU Aid Volunteers will contribute to humanitarian projects worldwide.
- 10 000 'online volunteers' will support with tasks that can be done from home on a computer, for example helping out with translations, graphic designs or providing advice and support.
- 4 400 people from local organisations in non-EU, disaster affected countries will also benefit from the chance to undertake training and job shadowing within European humanitarian organisations.

Funding

The budget for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative is €147.9 million from 2014 to 2020. This funding will be used for putting in place an extensive capacity building and training package for EU Aid Volunteers, for volunteers and staff in third countries and for the deployment of volunteers.

Examples of EU Aid Volunteers' projects during the pilot phase



Simon Bettighofer (Germany) is a social evaluation specialist and was deployed to **Solidaridad Internacional's** Haiti office for four months to support better data collection and monitoring of activities. His team developed a system to assess food security proposing several tools such as specific questionnaires, observation sheets concerning markets, cultivation conditions and demographics, as well as statistical and contextual instructions to carry out the surveys.

Nabila Loukili (France) was deployed for six months by **ADICE (Association pour le Développement des Initiatives Citoyennes et Européennes)** to **UPA (Uganda Pioneers Association)**. Her project goal was to work on innovative tools of monitoring and evaluation of the different projects managed by the local NGO. She created a needs assessment report based on several interviews with the local population and stakeholders helping to define the content of new guidelines. Her project also aimed to ensure sustainability. She organised a workshop to train targeted beneficiaries on the developed guidelines.



Abdul Aziz Turay (United Kingdom) was deployed by **Save the Children UK** to Somalia for a period of six months. He is originally from Sierra Leone and decided to go back to his continent as EU Aid Volunteer. His job was to raise awareness about the importance of good and timely data on IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), the local population and returnees in Somalia. This type of data is needed to design needs-based interventions. His support to provide such facts and figures enabled his hosting organisation to focus on longer term projects in areas such as education, child protection, child rights governance, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene promotion), food security, nutrition and DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction).

