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Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

Establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

EU Aid Volunteers

{SWD(2012) 265 final}

{SWD(2012) 266 final}

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

Grounds for and objectives of the proposal

As envisaged in Article 214(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), this proposal establishes the framework for the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, which should enable joint contributions from European volunteers in humanitarian aid operations. Its objective is to express the Union's humanitarian values and solidarity with people in need, through the promotion of an effective and visible European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, which contributes to strengthening the Union's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises and to building the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities in third countries.

The Union has to ensure adequate humanitarian aid in the face of the increased number and magnitude of humanitarian crises, both natural disasters and man-made crises. Well-prepared volunteers can contribute to the Union's capacity to cope with these additional humanitarian needs.

Improving the mobilisation of the volunteering capacity of European citizens can also project a positive image of the Union in the world and foster interest for pan-European projects in support of humanitarian aid activities. While volunteering is on the rise for many activities, there is still a significant potential of further developing solidarity among Union citizens with people in third countries who are victims of man-made crises or natural disasters. European citizens consider humanitarian aid to be the sector where volunteering has the biggest impact and the establishment of a European Humanitarian Voluntary Aid Corps enjoys considerable support amongst them. A large majority of European citizens have also expressed overwhelming support for the Union's activities in providing humanitarian aid. However, there is a need to further promote communication with the Union's citizens to raise levels of awareness about the Union's humanitarian aid and its visibility¹.

The proposal builds on the 2010 Communication "How to express EU citizens' solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps"². The Communication presents the guiding principles, gaps and necessary conditions to make a positive contribution to Union humanitarian aid. To test some of the possible features of the scheme, a series of pilot projects have been launched, lessons learnt from which are taken into account in this proposal.

The Council³ and the European Parliament⁴ have expressed strong support for the initiative, reaffirming the key role of the Union in promoting volunteering and identifying some of the key components of the Corps.

¹ Standard Eurobarometer 73/2010, Special Eurobarometer 343/2010 and Special Eurobarometer 384/2012.

² COM(2010) 683.

³ Council Conclusions on the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps from 25 May 2011.

⁴ Written Declaration 25/2011 of the European Parliament from 9 May 2011.

The proposal would contribute to the objectives of the Union's external policy and, in particular, the Union's humanitarian aid objectives to preserve life, prevent and alleviate human suffering and maintain human dignity. It would reinforce the benefits delivered to the hosting communities in third countries and the impact that the volunteer activities have on the volunteers themselves. Furthermore, the training and informal learning experience volunteers will acquire is a strong investment in human capital which would improve their employability in global economy and thus contribute to the Europe's 2020 objectives for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Consistency with other policies and objectives of the Union

Particular attention has been given to ensuring close coordination between the actions of the Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps with the Union's humanitarian aid policy and actions carried out under the EU external policies, in particular in the field of development cooperation. The Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, whilst centred on the objectives of the Union's humanitarian aid, should also contribute to a range of other Union internal policies such as learning, youth and active citizenship.

The Humanitarian Voluntary Corps will fill gaps which are not covered by existing European programmes such as the European Voluntary Service. Indeed, the European Voluntary Service's activities take place primarily within Europe, are focused on the promotion of young people up to 30 years old to enhance social cohesion and mutual understanding within the Union, and are not based on humanitarian principles. The objectives of the Humanitarian Voluntary Corps, its scope and activities correspond to the specific needs of humanitarian activities and operations.

2. RESULTS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE INTERESTED PARTIES AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Since the first tabling of the proposal for a Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps in the draft EU Constitutional Treaty, two external reviews in 2006 and 2010 and a series of consultations with a broad range of stakeholders were carried out in order to assess the current situation in humanitarian aid volunteering, highlight existing gaps and challenges, and identify objectives and priorities areas for action.

Interested stakeholders, including the main humanitarian aid organisations (NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Family, UN agencies), mainstream volunteer organisations, individual volunteers, Member States' representatives and other relevant actors were specifically consulted at two dedicated conferences⁵ and through a public on-line consultation. Different issues related to the Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps have been discussed in addition by the Member States within the Council working party on humanitarian aid and food aid⁶. Consultations also included an online public forum on a suitable name of the Corps. A thorough analysis lead to the choice of 'EU Aid Volunteers' as an appropriate name for the initiative and shall be hereinafter used to refer to both the initiative and to the individual volunteers who will be deployed to humanitarian operations.

⁵ In 2010 in Brussels and 2011 in Budapest – where more than 150 stakeholder organisations have actively participated.

⁶ COHAFA.

An impact assessment report was prepared to examine policy options and their potential impacts. This process was accompanied by an Impact Assessment Steering Group involving relevant Commission services⁷ and benefitted from input of an external preparatory study. Lessons learnt and conclusions from two seminars organised with pilot project coordinators were taken into account⁸.

All comments by stakeholders were fully considered and are reflected in the impact assessment report.

Impact assessment

The main problems identified are:

- (1) Lack of a structured EU approach towards volunteering;
- (2) Poor visibility of EU humanitarian action and solidarity with people in need;
- (3) Lack of consistent identification and selection mechanisms across Member States;
- (4) Insufficient availability of qualified volunteers for humanitarian aid;
- (5) Shortcomings in the surge capacity of humanitarian aid;
- (6) Weak capacity of hosting organisations;

The impact assessment examined a number of policy options resulting from the combination of different modules and mode of management:

Policy Option 1, including: (1) Development of standards for identification, selection and training of volunteers and (2) Development of certification mechanism for sending organisations;

Policy Option 2, including the modules under Option 1 plus (3) Support to training for EU volunteers in humanitarian aid, (4) Creation of an EU Register of trained volunteers, (5) Development of standards and a certification mechanism for volunteer management in hosting organisations;

Policy Option 3, including all modules under Option 2 plus (6) Support to deployment of EU volunteers, (7) Building capacity in third country hosting organisations, (8) Establishment of an EU Network of humanitarian volunteers. This Option would be implemented in partnership with humanitarian aid organisations which should identify, select and deploy the volunteers.

Policy Option 4, including all modules under Option 3 implemented in a direct management mode by the European Commission.

Based on this assessment of the potential economic, social and environmental impacts, Policy Option 3 was recommended as the most efficient and effective option for addressing the problems identified.

⁷ SG, SJ, DG BUDG, DG DEVCO, FPIS, EEAS, DG EAC, EACEA, DG EMPL, DG ELARG.

⁸ Two capitalisation seminars were organised in December 2011 and June 2012 in Brussels with more than 70 participants.

3. LEGAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal lays down the procedures and the rules for the operation of the EU Aid Volunteers as envisaged in Article 214(5) of the Treaty. It follows an enabling approach and is limited to the essential elements necessary for the implementation of the Regulation, including specifying its general and operational objectives, the principles and the actions of which it consists, the provisions for financial assistance and the general provisions for its implementation.

The proposal follows the humanitarian aid **principles** (Art. 4) and the **definition of humanitarian aid** from the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid⁹. In addition to crisis response it also covers disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery operations as well as humanitarian aid activities which aim to increase the capacities of the communities and build their resilience to crises.

The main elements of the proposal concern the **different actions** of the EU Aid Volunteers which can be supported with financial assistance and implemented by different beneficiaries based on a Commission annual work programme (Art. 21). In accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No. 58/2003¹⁰, the Commission has the intention to **delegate the programme management to an executive agency**.

The proposal specifies the following types of actions:

– **Standards regarding candidate and EU Aid Volunteers (Art. 9)**

The Commission will develop standards which will set the policy framework and minimum requirements to ensure effective, efficient and coherent recruitment and preparation of candidate volunteers and deployment and management of EU Aid Volunteers which are the main actions of this initiative. The standards will ensure duty of care and cover notably responsibilities of the sending and hosting organisations, minimum requirements on the coverage of subsistence, accommodation and other relevant expenses, insurance coverage and other relevant elements.

– **Certification (Art. 10)**

Sending organisations that would like to select, prepare and deploy EU Aid Volunteers will have to be certified for compliance with these standards. They should meet different eligibility requirements and follow a differentiated certification procedure (to be defined in implementing acts), taking into account their nature and capacity (e.g. Member States' public bodies, NGOs). Civil protection and development cooperation actors acting in the field of humanitarian aid shall also be considered eligible. A differentiated certification mechanism will be established for eligible hosting organisations. Although private companies are not eligible as sending or hosting organisations, they can be associated to the projects and co-finance part of the costs of the volunteer to encourage corporate volunteering as called for in Communication "A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility"¹¹.

⁹ OJ C 25, 2008, p.1.

¹⁰ OJ L11, 2003, p.1.

¹¹ COM(2011) 681 final.

– **Identification and selection of candidate volunteers (Art. 11)**

The EU Aid Volunteers are open for participation to Union citizens as well as nationals legally residing in the EU on a long term basis. Subject to agreements as referred to in Article 23(1), citizens from candidate and potential candidate countries and from partner countries from the European Neighbourhood Policy may apply to become EU Aid Volunteers.

On the basis of an annual work programme, the Commission will publish calls for proposals for the identification and selection of candidate volunteers by certified sending organisations. Sending organisations that have been awarded the contracts in response to these calls will identify and select candidate volunteers for training after prior assessment of the needs in third countries by sending or hosting organisations or other relevant actors.

– **Training and pre-deployment preparation (Art. 12)**

The selected candidate volunteers will undergo tailor-made training, taking into account their prior experience. The training programme will be organised by the Commission and will be implemented by organisations with specific training expertise. In addition, as part of their training and depending on their training needs, candidate volunteers will be able to gain practical experience through apprenticeship placements or other forms of short term pre-deployment preparation given by certified sending organisations.

– **Register of EU Aid Volunteers (Art. 13)**

Candidate volunteers should be assessed for their preparedness to be deployed in third countries. If successful, they should be included in a Register of EU Aid Volunteers eligible for deployment which will be managed by the Commission. The Register will also include volunteers who have already been deployed, if they are willing to be considered for future deployment.

– **Deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries (Art. 14)**

On the basis of its annual work programme, the Commission will publish calls for proposals for the deployment of EU Aid Volunteers by certified sending organisations. Sending organisations that have been awarded the contracts in response to these calls can select volunteers from the Register and deploy them to hosting organisations. The Commission may also deploy volunteers from the Register to the Commission's humanitarian aid field offices or in response operations in third countries through the Emergency Response Centre¹² that facilitates the Union response to disasters. The specific terms of deployment will be set-out in a contract between the sending organisation and the volunteer.

¹² Established by Decision X/XX on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

– **Capacity building of hosting organisations (Art. 15)**

Through this action, the Commission can support capacity building actions of the hosting organisations so as to ensure effective management of the EU Aid Volunteers and sustainable impact of their work, including the promotion of local volunteering.

– **EU Aid Volunteers' Network (Art. 16)**

This action envisages the establishment of an EU Aid Volunteers' Network which will be managed by the Commission. It will consist of and facilitate interaction between the EU Aid Volunteers and will also carry out specific activities, notably through knowledge sharing and dissemination of information. It shall also support activities such as seminars, workshops and alumni activities.

– **Communication, awareness raising and visibility (Art. 17)**

This action will support public information, communication and awareness raising actions to promote the EU Aid Volunteers and to encourage volunteering in humanitarian aid. The Commission will develop an information and communication action plan, which will be implemented by all beneficiaries, in particular sending and hosting organisations.

The Commission is empowered to adopt modalities of some of the actions through **delegated acts** (as foreseen in Art. 25) on standards and amending indicators for operational objectives; or through **implementing acts** (Art. 24) including the certification mechanism and modalities of the training programme).

Legal basis

The legal basis of this proposal is Article 214(5) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Subsidiarity principle

As the establishment of the EU Aid Volunteers by the Union is envisaged in a specific legal basis in the Treaty, the subsidiarity principle does not apply.

Proportionality principle

The proposal addresses identified gaps in existing volunteering schemes and does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives.

The administrative burden falling upon the Union is limited and ensures the conditions necessary for the deployment of volunteers in humanitarian aid operations, including the development of standards, certification mechanism, a training programme and a Register of trained volunteers. The main actions concerning the EU Aid Volunteers related to the identification, selection, preparation and deployment of volunteers will be decentralised and implemented by sending and hosting organisations. The Commission has furthermore the intention to delegate the programme management to an executive agency.

Choice of instrument

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATION

The Commission's Communication on a 'Budget for Europe 2020'¹³ envisages budgetary commitments for the establishment of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (EU Aid Volunteers) of EUR 239.1 million in current prices.

¹³ COM(2011) 500 final.

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

Establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

EU Aid Volunteers

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 214(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After consultation of the European Data Protection Supervisor,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national Parliaments,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

- (1) Solidarity is a fundamental value of the Union and there is potential for further developing means of expressing solidarity of Union citizens with people in third countries vulnerable to or affected by man-made crises or natural disasters.
- (2) Volunteering is a concrete and visible expression of solidarity allowing individuals to dedicate their knowledge, skills and time to the service of fellow human beings, without a primary concern for financial gain.
- (3) The Union's vision of humanitarian aid, including a common objective, principles and good practice and a common framework to deliver the Union's humanitarian aid, is set out in the "European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid"¹⁴. The European Consensus underlines the Union's firm commitment to upholding and promoting the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The actions of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as the 'EU Aid Volunteers') should be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.
- (4) The Union's humanitarian aid is delivered in situations where other instruments related to development cooperation, crisis management and civil protection operate. The EU Aid Volunteers should work in a coherent and complementarity manner with relevant policies and instruments in order to make the most effective use of these instruments

¹⁴ OJ C 25, 2008, p.1.

while systematically promoting humanitarian principles and long-term development goals. Synergies of the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers should be sought with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, the Emergency Response Centre established by Decision XX/XXXX¹⁵ and with the EEAS and the EU Delegations in order to coordinate the Union's response to humanitarian crises in third countries.

- (5) The number, scope and complexity of humanitarian crises worldwide have increased significantly over the years leading to a rising demand on humanitarian actors to provide an effective, efficient and coherent response and to support third country local communities in order to make them less vulnerable and to strengthen their resilience to disasters.
- (6) Volunteers can strengthen humanitarian aid operations and contribute to the professionalization of humanitarian aid when they are adequately selected, trained and prepared for deployment so as to ensure that they have the necessary skills and competences to help people in need in the most effective way.
- (7) Volunteering schemes exist in Europe and worldwide focusing on third country deployment. These are often national schemes which focus mainly or exclusively on development projects. The EU Aid Volunteers should, therefore, avoid duplication and should add value by providing opportunities to volunteers to jointly contribute to humanitarian aid operations thus reinforcing active European Union citizenship and by fostering transnational cooperation of implementing organisations participating in the actions of the Corps.
- (8) There are gaps in the current landscape of humanitarian volunteering that the EU Aid Volunteers can fill with the volunteers with the right profiles deployed at the right time to the right place. This could be achieved notably through providing European standards on identification and selection of humanitarian volunteers, commonly agreed benchmarks for training and preparation of humanitarian volunteers for deployment, improved registers of potential volunteers who are identified based on the needs in the field, and opportunities for volunteers to contribute to humanitarian operations not only by deployment but also through back-office support and online-volunteering activities.¹⁶
- (9) Security and safety of the volunteers should remain of paramount importance.
- (10) The Union carries out its humanitarian aid operations in partnership with implementing organisations. These organisations should play a significant role in implementing the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative to ensure ownership of the actors in the field and to maximise the potential uptake of the Voluntary Corps' actions. The Union should entrust implementing organisations notably with the identification, selection, preparation and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in accordance with standards established by the Commission. The Commission should, in addition, be able to draw upon successfully trained and prepared volunteers for deployment, where appropriate.

¹⁵ Not yet published.

¹⁶ Commission Communication COM(2010) 683 "How to express EU citizens' solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps" (OJ C 121/59, 2011).

- (11) Private companies can play an important role and contribute to the Union's humanitarian operations notably through employee volunteering¹⁷.
- (12) Volunteering in humanitarian aid could help maintain young people active, contribute to their personal development and intercultural awareness, and improve their competences and employability in global economy. It would, thus, contribute to the 'Youth Opportunities Initiative'¹⁸ and to a range of other key objectives of the Union such as social inclusion, employment, active citizenship, education, and skills development¹⁹.
- (13) The Union's principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination suggest that Union citizens and long-term residents in the Union of all walks of life and age should be able to engage as active citizens. Given the specific challenges of the humanitarian context, participants of the EU Aid Volunteers should be aged over 18.
- (14) A clear legal status is a crucial precondition for volunteers to participate in deployment in countries outside the Union. The terms of deployment of the volunteers should be defined contractually, including standards for protection and safety of the volunteers, responsibilities of the sending and hosting organisations, insurance coverage, coverage of subsistence, accommodation and other relevant expenses. Volunteers' eligibility for deployment in third countries should be subject to adequate safety and security arrangements.
- (15) The EU Aid Volunteers should support local humanitarian aid organisations in third countries. Its activities should increase the hosting organisations' capacity to deal with humanitarian crises and to professionally manage the EU Aid Volunteers, to effectively use their skills and competences and to ensure that the volunteers' contributions have a sustainable impact on local communities thereby assisting the people in need affected by humanitarian crises, who are the final beneficiaries of the Union's humanitarian aid.
- (16) The financial provisions of this Regulation should apply as of 1 January 2014 as they are related to the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020. The allocation of financial assistance should be implemented in accordance with Regulation No xxx/2012²⁰ applicable to the general budget of the European Union (the Financial Regulation). Due to the specific nature of action of the EU Aid Volunteers, it is appropriate to provide that financial assistance may be awarded to natural, public and private law legal persons. It is also important to ensure that the rules of that Regulation are respected, in particular regarding the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness laid down therein.
- (17) The financial interests of the Union should be protected through proportionate measures throughout the expenditure cycle, including the prevention, detection and

¹⁷ Commission Communication on "A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility" COM(2011) 681 final (OJ C 37, 2012, p.24).

¹⁸ Commission Communication COM(2011) 933 (OJ C 102, 2012, p.35) .

¹⁹ Commission Communication COM(2011) 568 "EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and Promoting Cross border Voluntary Activities in the EU" (OJ C 335, 2011, p.19),

²⁰ Not yet published.

investigation of irregularities, the recovery of funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used and, where appropriate, penalties. Appropriate measures should be taken to prevent irregularities and fraud and the necessary steps taken to recover funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used in accordance with Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the Communities financial interests²¹, Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities²² and Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)²³.

- (18) Participation of third countries, in particular acceding, candidate, EFTA and partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy, should be possible on the basis of cooperation conventions.
- (19) In order to allow for continuous feedback and improvement, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be delegated to the Commission in respect of provisions relating to the standards for management of EU Aid Volunteers and the amendment of the performance indicators. It is of particular importance that the Commission carries out appropriate consultations during its preparatory work, including at expert level. The Commission, when preparing and drawing-up delegated acts, should ensure a simultaneous, timely and appropriate transmission of relevant documents to the European Parliament and Council.
- (20) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers.²⁴ The examination procedure should be used for the adoption of the certification mechanism, the training programme and the annual work programme of the Corps.
- (21) This Regulation respects the fundamental rights and observes the principles which are recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- (22) The processing of personal data that is carried out within the framework of this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary and proportionate for the purposes of ensuring the smooth running of the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative. Any processing of personal data by the Commission will be governed by Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community

²¹ OJ L 312, 1995, p.1.

²² OJ L 292, 1996, p.2.

²³ OJ L 136, 1999, p.1.

²⁴ OJ L 55, 2011, p.13.

institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data²⁵. Any processing of personal data by implementing organizations legally established in the Union will be governed by the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC²⁶.

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Chapter I

Objectives, Scope and Definitions

Article 1

Subject matter

This Regulation establishes a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (hereinafter referred to as 'the EU Aid Volunteers') as a framework for joint contributions from European volunteers in humanitarian aid operations of the Union.

This Regulation lays down the rules and procedures for the operation of the EU Aid Volunteers and rules for the provision of financial assistance.

Article 2

Scope

This Regulation shall apply to:

1. deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in humanitarian aid operations in third countries.
2. actions inside the Union that support, promote and prepare the deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in humanitarian aid operations.
3. actions inside and outside the Union aimed at building the capacity of hosting organisations in third countries in view of the management of EU Aid Volunteers.

Article 3

Objective

The objective of the EU Aid Volunteers shall be to express the Union's humanitarian values and solidarity with people in need, through the promotion of an effective and visible EU Aid Volunteers' initiative, which contributes to strengthening the Union's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises and to building the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities in third countries.

²⁵ OJ L 8, 2001, p.1.

²⁶ OJ L 281, 1995, p. 31.

Article 4
General principles

1. The actions of the EU Aid Volunteers shall be conducted in compliance with the humanitarian aid principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.
2. The actions of the EU Aid Volunteers shall respond to the need of local communities and hosting organisations and should contribute to the professionalization of the provision of humanitarian aid.
3. The safety and security of volunteers shall be a priority.
4. The EU Aid Volunteers shall promote common activities and participation of volunteers from different countries and foster joint projects and transnational partnerships between implementing organisations as referred to in Article 10.

Article 5
Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) 'volunteer' means a person who chooses, out of free will and motivation and without a primary concern for financial gain, to engage in activities that benefit the community, him or herself, and society at large.
- (b) 'candidate volunteer' means a person eligible in the sense of Article 11(1) applying for participation in the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers.
- (c) an 'EU Aid Volunteer' means a candidate volunteer that has been selected, trained, assessed as eligible and registered as available for deployment in humanitarian aid operations in third countries.
- (d) 'humanitarian aid' means activities and operations intended to provide needs-based emergency assistance aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity in the face of man-made crises or natural disasters. It encompasses assistance, relief and protection operations in humanitarian crises or their immediate aftermath, supporting measures to ensure access to people in need and to facilitate the free flow of assistance, as well as actions aimed at reinforcing disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction, and contributing towards strengthening resilience and capacity to cope with, and recover from, crises.
- (e) 'third country' means a country outside the Union where humanitarian aid activities and operations as referred to under (d) take place.

Article 6
Coherence and complementarities of the Union action

1. In implementing the Regulation, coherence shall be ensured with other areas of Union's external action and with other relevant Union policies. Particular attention

shall be given to ensure smooth transition between relief, rehabilitation and development.

2. The Commission and the Member States shall cooperate to improve the consistency and coherence between relevant national volunteering schemes and the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.
3. The Union shall foster cooperation with relevant international organisation, in particular the United Nations, and other humanitarian aid partners in implementation of the actions of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Article 7 **Operational objectives**

1. The EU Aid Volunteers shall pursue the following operational objectives:
 - (a) Increase in and improvement of the capacity of the Union to provide humanitarian aid.

Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

- the number of EU Aid Volunteers deployed or ready for deployment;
- the number of people reached by humanitarian aid provided by the Union.

- (b) Improvement of the skills and competences of volunteers in the field of humanitarian aid and the conditions under which they are working.

Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

- the number of volunteers trained and the quality of the training on the basis of the reviews and level of satisfaction;
- the number of certified sending organisations applying the standards for deployment and management of EU Aid Volunteers.

- (c) Building the capacity of hosting organisations and foster volunteering in third countries.

Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

- the number and type of capacity building actions;
- the number of third country staff and volunteers participating in the capacity building actions.

- (d) Promotion of the visibility of the Union's humanitarian aid values.

Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

- the EU Aid Volunteers' level of knowledge about EU humanitarian aid;
 - the level of awareness about the EU Aid Volunteers among the targeted population in the Union, the participating and benefitting third country communities and other humanitarian actors.
- (e) Enhancement of coherence and consistency of volunteering across Member States in order to improve opportunities for Union citizens to participate in humanitarian aid activities and operations.

Progress towards the achievement of this operational objective shall be assessed on the basis of indicators, such as:

- the number of certified sending organisations;
- dissemination and replication of the standards on management of EU Aid Volunteers by other volunteering schemes.

2. The indicators referred to under paragraph 1(a) to (e) shall be used for monitoring, evaluation and review of performance as appropriate. They are indicative and may be amended in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 25 in order to take into account experience from the progress measurement.

CHAPTER II

ACTIONS OF THE EU AID VOLUNTEERS

Article 8 ***Actions of the EU Aid Volunteers***

The EU Aid Volunteers shall pursue the objectives referred to in Articles 3 and 7 through the following types of actions:

- Development and maintenance of standards regarding candidate and EU Aid Volunteers;
- Development and maintenance of a certification mechanism for sending and hosting organisations;
- Identification and selection of candidate volunteers;
- Establishment of a training programme and support for training and apprenticeship placements;
- Establishment, maintenance and updating of a Register of EU Aid Volunteers;
- Deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries for humanitarian aid activities and operations;

- Capacity building of hosting organisations;
- Establishment and management of an EU Aid Volunteers' Network;
- Communication, awareness raising and visibility;
- Ancillary activity that furthers the accountability, transparency and effectiveness of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Article 9

Standards regarding candidate and EU Aid Volunteers

1. The Commission shall adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 25 in order to establish standards for:
 - (a) the identification, selection and preparation of candidate volunteers for deployment in humanitarian aid operations;
 - (b) management and deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries.
2. These standards shall ensure duty of care and cover notably the responsibilities of the sending and hosting organisations, minimum requirements on the coverage of subsistence, accommodation and other relevant expenses, insurance coverage, security procedures and other relevant elements.

Article 10

Certification

1. The Commission shall establish a certification mechanism ensuring that sending organisations comply with the standards referred to in Article 9 and a differentiated certification mechanism for hosting organisations.
2. Sending organisations shall be eligible for certification, if they are active in the field of humanitarian aid as defined in Article 5(d) and if they belong to any of the following categories:
 - (a) Non-governmental not-for-profit organisations formed in accordance with the law of a Member State and whose headquarters are located within the Union;
 - (b) The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;
 - (c) Public law bodies governed by the law of a Member State.

Non-governmental not-for-profit organisations and public law bodies established in the countries referred to in Article 23 shall also be eligible for certification under the conditions laid down in that Article and the agreements mentioned therein.

3. Organisations in third countries that adhere to the standards referred to in Article 9(1)(b) shall be eligible as hosting organisations if they are active in the field of

humanitarian aid as defined in Article 5(d) and belong to any of the following categories:

- (a) Non-governmental not-for-profit organisations operating or established in a third country under the laws in force in that country;
 - (b) Public law bodies governed by the law of a third country;
 - (c) International agencies and organisations.
4. Without prejudice to the requirements referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3, sending and hosting organisations may implement actions of the EU Aid Volunteers in association with for-profit private organisations.
5. The functioning and modalities of the certification mechanisms shall be adopted through implementing acts in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 24(2).

Article 11

Identification and selection of candidate volunteers

1. Citizens of the Union, third country nationals who are long-term residents in a Member State of the Union and citizens from countries and organisations referred to in Article 23(1) under the conditions mentioned in that article, aged 18 years and over are eligible to apply as candidate volunteers.
2. On the basis of prior assessment of the needs in third countries by sending or hosting organisations or other relevant actors, certified sending organisations may identify and select candidate volunteers for training.
3. The identification and selection of candidate volunteers shall comply with the standards referred to in Article 9(1)(a).

Article 12

Training of candidate volunteers and apprenticeship placements

1. The Commission shall establish a training programme in order to prepare the candidate volunteers for undertaking humanitarian activities and for deployment in humanitarian aid operations.
2. Candidate volunteers who have been identified and selected in accordance with Article 11 shall be eligible to participate in the training programme. The individual scope and content of the training each candidate volunteer needs to accomplish shall be determined on the basis of his or her needs taking into account prior experience.
3. As part of their training and notably their preparation for deployment candidate volunteers may undertake apprenticeship placements in certified sending organisations, where possible in a country other than their country of origin.
4. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, candidate volunteers who have not benefited from an apprenticeship placement may be given, where appropriate, additional pre-

deployment preparation by certified sending organisations. This preparation and the apprenticeship placement shall comply with the standards for preparation referred to in Article 9(1)(a).

5. The training programme shall include an assessment of the candidate volunteers' readiness to be deployed in humanitarian aid operations.
6. The modalities of the training programme and the procedure of assessing the candidate volunteers' readiness to be deployed shall be adopted through implementing acts in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 24(2).

Article 13

Register of EU Aid Volunteers

1. Candidate volunteers who have successfully passed the assessment referred to in Article 12(5) shall be considered EU Aid Volunteers. They can be as such included in the Register of EU Aid Volunteers (hereinafter referred to as 'the Register') and shall be eligible for deployment.
2. The Commission shall establish, maintain and update the Register and shall regulate the access and the use of it.

Article 14

Deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries

1. EU Aid Volunteers included in the Register may be deployed in humanitarian aid activities and operations as defined in Article 5(d):
 - (a) by certified sending organisations to hosting organisations in third countries, or
 - (b) by the Commission to the Commission's humanitarian aid field offices or in response operations in third countries.
2. For deployment as referred to in paragraph 1(a), certified sending organisations shall ensure compliance with the standards referred to in article 9.
3. The specific terms of deployment of volunteers shall be set-out in a contract between the sending organisations and the volunteer, including the duration and location of deployment and the tasks of the volunteer.
4. For deployment as referred to in paragraph 1(b), the Commission shall sign a 'volunteer deployment contract' with the volunteers, defining specific terms and conditions of deployment. Volunteer deployment contracts shall not confer upon the volunteer rights and obligations arising from the 'Staff Regulations of the Officials of the European Union' and the 'Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union'.

Article 15
Capacity building of hosting organisations

The Commission shall support actions aimed at strengthening capacity of hosting organisations in order to ensure the effectiveness of EU Aid Volunteers and sustainable impact of their work, including:

- (a) training in volunteer management, coaching, disaster preparedness and response and other relevant areas for staff and volunteers from hosting organisations;
- (b) exchange of best practices, technical assistance, twinning programmes and exchange of staff and volunteers, creation of networks and other relevant actions aiming to improve the management of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries and to encourage and support quality volunteering in third countries.

Article 16
EU Aid Volunteers' Network

- 1. The Commission shall establish and manage a EU Aid Volunteers' Network (hereinafter referred to as 'the Network').
- 2. The Network shall facilitate interaction among candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers who are participating or have participated in the initiative; between these volunteers and other beneficiaries of the EU Aid Volunteers, notably by those referred to in Article 15; and among other relevant actors. It shall provide opportunities for virtual interaction, notably through knowledge sharing and dissemination of information on the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative; and shall support other appropriate activities such as seminars and workshops.
- 3. The Network shall also provide and promote opportunities for on-line volunteering to complement and reinforce the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers.

Article 17
Communication, awareness raising and visibility

- 1. The Commission shall support public information, communication and awareness raising actions to promote the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative and to encourage volunteering in humanitarian aid within the Union and in the third countries benefitting from its actions.
- 2. The Commission shall develop an information and communication action plan on the objectives, actions and results of the EU Aid Volunteers which shall define communication and dissemination activities towards the public, in particular the European citizens and towards future potential candidate volunteers and beneficiaries of the EU Aid Volunteers' actions. All beneficiaries of the EU Aid Volunteers, notably sending and hosting organisations, shall implement this action plan.
- 3. EU Aid Volunteers shall, where necessary with the assistance and direction of the sending and hosting organisations, participate in appropriate information,

communication and awareness raising activities before, during and after deployment to promote the EU Aid Volunteers and their engagement therein. The Commission shall define those activities, which shall not impose disproportionate obligations on the volunteers.

CHAPTER III

Financial provisions

Article 18

Eligible actions

1. The actions referred to in Article 8 shall be eligible for financial assistance, including the measures necessary for their implementation as well as measures aimed at strengthening the coordination between the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative and other relevant schemes at national and international level.
2. The financial allocation referred to in paragraph 1 may also cover expenses pertaining to preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, which are required for the management of the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative and the achievement of its objectives.
3. Such expenditure may, in particular, cover studies, meetings of experts, information and communication actions, including corporate communication of the policy priorities of the Union, as far as they are related to the general objectives of this Regulation, expenses linked to IT networks focusing on information processing and exchange (including their interconnection with existing or future systems designed to promote cross-sectoral data exchange and related equipment), together with all other technical and administrative assistance expenses incurred by the Commission.

Article 19

Financial beneficiaries

Financial assistance under this Regulation may be awarded to natural persons and legal persons, whether governed by private or public law, which shall then be deemed financial beneficiaries in the sense of the Financial Regulation XX/2012.

Article 20

Budgetary resources

The financial reference amount for the implementation of this Regulation for the period 2014 to 2020 shall be EUR 239.100.000 at current prices. If necessary, appropriations could be entered in the budget beyond 2020 to cover similar expenses, in order to enable the management of actions not yet completed by 31 December 2020.

Article 21

Types of financial intervention and implementing procedures

1. The Commission shall implement the Union's financial assistance in accordance with the Financial Regulation XX/2012 applicable to the budget of the Union.
2. Financial assistance under this Regulation may take any of the forms provided by the Financial Regulation.
3. In order to implement this Regulation, the Commission shall adopt an annual work programme of the EU Aid Volunteers' initiative in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 24(2). It shall set out the objectives pursued, the expected results, the method of implementation and their total amount. It shall also contain the description of actions to be financed, an indication of the amount allocated to each action and an indicative implementation timetable. For grants, they shall include the priorities, the essential evaluation criteria and the maximum rate of co-financing.
4. The Commission may consider the added-value and management advantages of creating an EU Trust Fund.

Article 22

Protection of the financial interests of the Union

1. The Commission shall take appropriate measures ensuring that, when actions financed under this Regulation are implemented, the financial interests of the Union are protected by the application of preventive measures against fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities by effective checks and, if irregularities are detected, by the recovery of the amounts wrongly paid and, where appropriate, by effective, proportionate and deterrent penalties.
2. The Commission or its representatives and the Court of Auditors shall have the power of audit, on the basis of documents and on the spot, over all grant beneficiaries, contractors and subcontractors, who have received Union funds under this Regulation.
3. The European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections on economic operators concerned directly or indirectly by such funding in accordance with the procedures laid down in Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union in connection with a grant agreement, grant decision or a contract concerning Union funding.
4. Without prejudice to paragraphs 1 and 2, cooperation agreements with third countries and international organisations, grant agreements, grant decisions and contracts resulting from the implementation of this Regulation shall expressly empower the Commission, the Court of Auditors and OLAF to conduct such audits, on-the-spot checks and inspections.

CHAPTER IV GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 23

Cooperation with other countries and international organisations

1. The EU Aid Volunteers shall be open to participation of:
 - (a) citizens and sending organisations from acceding countries, candidate countries, potential candidates countries and partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;
 - (b) citizens and sending organisations from European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement;
 - (c) citizens and sending organisations from other European countries, subject to the conclusion of bilateral agreements with those countries.
 - (d) staff from international organisations who meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Article 11(1).
- (2) This cooperation shall be based, where relevant, on additional appropriations from these participating countries to be made available in accordance with procedures to be agreed with these countries.

Article 24

Committee procedure

1. The Commission shall be assisted by the committee established under Article 17 (1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid. That committee shall be a committee within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.
2. Where reference is made to this paragraph, Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

Article 25

Exercise of the delegated powers to the Commission

1. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission subject to the conditions laid down in this Article.

2. The power to adopt delegated acts referred to in Articles 7(2) and 9 shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of 7 years from the date of entry into force of this Regulation.
3. The delegation of power may be revoked at any time by the European Parliament or by the Council. A decision of revocation shall put an end to the delegation of the power specified in that decision. It shall take effect the day following the publication of the decision in the Official Journal of the European Union or at a later date specified therein. It shall not affect the validity of any delegated acts already in force.
4. As soon as it adopts a delegated act, the Commission shall notify it simultaneously to the European Parliament and to the Council.
5. An adopted delegated act shall enter into force only if no objection has been expressed either by the European Parliament or the Council within a period of 2 months of notification of that act to the European Parliament and the Council or if, before the expiry of that period, the European Parliament and the Council have both informed the Commission that they will not object. That period shall be extended by 2 months at the initiative of the European Parliament or the Council.

Article 26 **Monitoring and evaluation**

1. Actions receiving financial assistance shall be monitored regularly in order to follow their implementation, and regularly evaluated through independent external evaluation to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and their impacts against the objectives of the EU Aid Volunteers. This monitoring and evaluation shall include the reports referred to in paragraph 5 and other activities on specific aspects of this Regulation which may be launched at any time during its implementation.
2. In the evaluation phase, the Commission shall ensure regular consultation of all relevant stakeholders, including volunteers, sending and hosting organisations, assisted local population, humanitarian organisations and workers in the field. The results of the evaluation shall feed back into the programme design and resource allocation.
3. Sending organisations deploying volunteers in operations outside the Union shall be responsible for the monitoring of their activities and shall submit to the Commission monitoring reports on a regular basis.
4. The Commission shall regularly inform the EEAS and the EU Delegations about the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers in accordance with relevant working agreements.
5. The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council:
 - (a) an interim evaluation report on the results obtained and the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of this Regulation during the first three years of its implementation no later than 31 December 2017;
 - (b) a Communication on the continued implementation of this Regulation no later than 31 December 2018;

(c) an ex post evaluation report no later than 31 December 2021.

The conclusions of the reports shall be accompanied, if appropriate, by proposals for amendment of this Regulation.

CHAPTER V

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 27

Entry into force

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

[to be used for any proposal or initiative submitted to the legislative authority

(Articles 28 of the Financial Regulation and 22 of the implementing rules)]

1. FRAMEWORK OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

- 1.1. Title of the proposal/initiative**
- 1.2. Policy area(s) concerned in the ABM/ABB structure**
- 1.3. Nature of the proposal/initiative**
- 1.4. Objective(s)**
- 1.5. Grounds for the proposal/initiative**
- 1.6. Duration and financial impact**
- 1.7. Management method(s) envisaged**

2. MANAGEMENT MEASURES

- 2.1. Monitoring and reporting rules**
- 2.2. Management and control system**
- 2.3. Measures to prevent fraud and irregularities**

3. ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

- 3.1. Heading(s) of the multiannual financial framework and expenditure budget line(s) affected**
- 3.2. Estimated impact on expenditure**
 - 3.2.1. Summary of estimated impact on expenditure*
 - 3.2.2. Estimated impact on operational appropriations*
 - 3.2.3. Estimated impact on appropriations of an administrative nature*
 - 3.2.4. Compatibility with the current multiannual financial framework*
 - 3.2.5. Third-party participation in financing*
- 3.3. Estimated impact on revenue**

LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1. FRAMEWORK OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

1.1. Title of the proposal/initiative

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council
Establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

1.2. Policy area(s) concerned in the ABM/ABB structure²⁷

Policy Area concerned and associated Activity/Activities:
Policy Area 23 Humanitarian Aid
23 02 04 – European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

1.3. Nature of the proposal/initiative

☐ The proposal/initiative relates to **a new action**

☒ The proposal/initiative relates to **a new action following a pilot project/preparatory action²⁸**

☐ The proposal/initiative relates to **the extension of an existing action**

☐ The proposal/initiative relates to **an action redirected towards a new action**

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. The Commission's multiannual strategic objective(s) targeted by the proposal/initiative

Title 4 – Global Europe

1.4.2. Specific objective(s) and ABM/ABB activity(ies) concerned

Operational objective No 1

Increase in and improvement of the capacity of the Union to provide humanitarian aid.

Operational objective No 2

²⁷

ABM: Activity-Based Management – ABB: Activity-Based Budgeting.

²⁸

As referred to in Article 49(6)(a) or (b) of the Financial Regulation.

Improvement of the skills and competences of volunteers in the field of humanitarian aid and the conditions under which they are working.

Operational objective No 3

Building the capacity of hosting organisations and foster volunteering in third countries.

Operational objective No 4

Promotion of the visibility of the Union's humanitarian aid values.

Operational objective No 5

Enhancement of coherence and consistency of volunteering across Member States in order to improve opportunities for Union citizens to participate in humanitarian aid activities and operations.

ABM/ABB activity(ies) concerned

23 02 04 – EU Aid Volunteers (European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps).

1.4.3. *Expected result(s) and impact*

Specify the effects which the proposal/initiative should have on the beneficiaries/groups targeted.

The proposal will:

- establish a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (EU Aid Volunteers) as a framework for joint contributions from European volunteers in humanitarian aid operations;
- be aiming at enhancing the Union's capacities to deal with humanitarian crisis, build knowledge and experience and provide visibility for the Union's humanitarian values and solidarity with the victims of natural disasters and man-made crises in third countries;
- respond to the needs of the vulnerable or affected communities and contribute to building capacity in third countries and resilience to disasters;
- adhere to the principles of humanity, non-discrimination, neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian aid and shall aim to contribute to the professionalization of the provision of humanitarian aid;
- ensure that the safety and security of EU Aid Volunteers is a priority;
- deploy EU Aid Volunteers in third countries while avoiding the crowding out of local employment and local volunteering;

1.4.4. *Indicators of results and impact*

Specify the indicators for monitoring implementation of the proposal/initiative.

- The number of EU Aid Volunteers deployed or ready for deployment;
- The number of people reached by humanitarian aid provided by the Union;
- The number of volunteers trained and the quality of the training on the basis of peer reviews and level of satisfaction;
- The number of certified sending organisations applying the standards for deployment and management of EU Aid Volunteers;
- The number and type of capacity building actions;
- The number of third country staff and volunteers participating in the capacity building actions;
- The EU Aid Volunteers' level of knowledge about EU humanitarian aid;
- The level of awareness about the Humanitarian Voluntary Corps among the targeted population in the Union, the participating and benefitting third country communities and other humanitarian actors.
- Dissemination and replication of the standards on management of EU Aid Volunteers by other volunteering schemes.

1.5. Grounds for the proposal/initiative

1.5.1. Requirement(s) to be met in the short or long term

The Lisbon Treaty foresees 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. The European Parliament and the Council, acting by means of regulations in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall determine the rules and procedures for the operation of the Corps."

Communication "How to express EU citizens' solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps", COM(2010)683.

Council Conclusions adopted in May 2011

EP Written Declaration in November 2011

1.5.2. Added value of EU involvement

The EU added value comes in the form of:

- (a) the European and transnational character of the EU Aid Volunteers which brings together Union citizens from different Member States for joint contributions in humanitarian aid operations;
- (b) fostering transnational cooperation of humanitarian aid organisations and stakeholders in implementation of the actions of the Corps;
- (c) allowing for economies of scale and effects through complementarities and synergies with other relevant national, international and Union programmes and policies;
- (d) providing for a tangible expression of the European values in general and in particular the solidarity of the Union and its citizens with the people who are most vulnerable and in need;
- (e) contributing to reinforcing active European Union citizenship by empowering Union citizens of a different age and from different social, educational and professional background to engage in humanitarian aid activities;

1.5.3. Lessons learned from similar experiences in the past

These proposals build upon:

- experience gained as a result of the pilot projects financed within the framework of the calls launched in 2011 and 2012 respectively "European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps - Call for proposal for pilot projects";
- a review concerning the establishment of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps;
- Communication from the Commission "How to express EU citizen's solidarity through volunteering: First reflections on a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps" – COM(2010)683.

1.5.4. *Coherence and possible synergy with other relevant instruments*

Consistency with:

- Treaty Art. 215.4;
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid;
- Actions receiving financial assistance under this Regulation shall not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments.

The Commission shall ensure that the applicants for financial assistance under this Regulation and financial beneficiaries of such assistance provide it with information about financial assistance received from other sources, including the general budget of the Union, and about on-going applications for receiving such assistance.

- Synergies and complementarities shall be sought with other financial instruments of the Union.

1.6. Duration and financial impact

☐ Proposal/initiative of **limited duration**

– ☐ Proposal/initiative in effect from [DD/MM]YYYY to [DD/MM]YYYY

– ☐ Financial impact from YYYY to YYYY

X Proposal/initiative of **unlimited duration**

Financial provisions of limited duration:

Budget allocation covers 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2020

Financial impact from 1/1/2014 to 31/12/2020 (payments until 31/12/2023)

1.7. Management mode(s) envisaged²⁹

X **Centralised direct management** by the Commission

X **Centralised indirect management** with the delegation of implementation tasks to:

– X executive agencies

– ☐ bodies set up by the Communities³⁰

– ☐ national public-sector bodies/bodies with public-service mission

– ☐ persons entrusted with the implementation of specific actions pursuant to Title V of the Treaty on European Union and identified in the relevant basic act within the meaning of Article 49 of the Financial Regulation

☐ **Shared management** with the Member States

☐ **Decentralised management** with third countries

☐ **Joint management** with international organisations

If more than one management mode is indicated, please provide details in the "Comments" section.

Comments

The programme could be implemented either directly by the Commission (DG ECHO) via the centralised direct management mode, or through an executive agency (indirect management mode). These two options remain open and a decision will be taken in due time.

²⁹ Details of management modes and references to the Financial Regulation may be found on the BudgWeb site: http://www.cc.cec/budg/man/budgmanag/budgmanag_en.html

³⁰ As referred to in Article 185 of the Financial Regulation.

The EU Aid Volunteers shall be open to participation of:

- (a) citizens and sending organisations from acceding countries, candidate countries, potential candidates countries and partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union's programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar arrangements;
- (b) citizens and sending organisations from European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement;
- (c) citizens and sending organisations from other European countries, subject to the conclusion of bilateral agreements with those countries.
- (d) staff from international organisations who meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Article 11(1).

2. This cooperation shall be based, where relevant, on additional appropriations from these participating countries to be made available in accordance with procedures to be agreed with these countries.

2. MANAGEMENT MEASURES

2.1. Monitoring and reporting rules

Specify frequency and conditions.

Actions receiving financial assistance shall be monitored regularly in order to follow their implementation, and regularly evaluated through independent external evaluation to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and their impacts against the objectives of the EU Aid Volunteers and its EU added value. This monitoring shall include the reports referred to in Article 25(5) and other activities on specific aspects of this Regulation which may be launched at any time during its implementation.

In the evaluation phase, the Commission shall ensure regular consultation of all relevant stakeholders, including volunteers, sending and hosting organisations, humanitarian organisations and workers in the field. The results of the evaluation shall feed back into the programme design and resource allocation.

Sending organisations deploying volunteers in operations outside the Union shall be responsible for the monitoring of their activities and shall submit to the Commission monitoring reports on a regular basis.

The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council:

- (a) an interim evaluation report on the results obtained and the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of this Regulation during the first three years of its implementation no later than 31 December 2017;
- (b) a Communication on the continued implementation of this Regulation no later than 31 December 2018;
- (c) an ex post evaluation report no later than 31 December 2021.

The conclusions of the reports shall be accompanied, if appropriate, by proposals for amendment of this Regulation.

The Commission shall also regularly inform EEAS and the EU Delegations about the activities of the EU Aid Volunteers.

2.2. Management and control system

2.2.1. Risk(s) identified

The programme could be implemented either directly by DG ECHO (centralised direct management) or through an existing Executive Agency (central indirect management), and will encompass the attribution of grants and services contracts.

In both scenarios, the following risks have been identified:

- (a) Risk relating to the capacity of partner organisations (particularly low-sized Non-Governmental Organisations) to internally adapt their organisational structures in order to respond to the contractual financial and performance obligations;

(b) Security and access constraints derived from the implementation of activities in armed and/or in difficult access regions, which may put in danger the physical integrity of the implementers (volunteers) and impact the attainability of the operational objectives;

(c) Reputational risk for the Commission linked to the inherent risk of fraudulent misuse of funds.

If the option of an executive agency is eventually chosen, an additional risk may relate to:

(d) coordination failures with an executive agency resulting from the absence of a clear definition of the limits of the responsibilities in the management and the control of tasks delegated to the executive agency.

Most of these risks are expected to be reduced and, in any case, will be constantly subject to close monitoring. For instance, simplification measures will be applied, in compliance with the revised Financial Regulation (e.g. extended use of lump sums and flat rates).

Based on the identified error rates in the last three years, the potential error rate in case of centralised direct management by DG ECHO will likely stand below 2%.

As for the implementation through an executive agency, assuming the global error rate of an agency (the EACEA executive agency for instance presented in its 2011 annual activity report an error rate of 0.81%) the level of non-compliance is expected to be below 2%.

2.2.2. *Control method(s) envisaged*

As for centralised direct management, general DG ECHO control structure will apply. Control will therefore focus on the compliance and effectiveness of administrative, operational and financial procedures in place and in the respect of the legislation in force. These will be also in the scope of DG ECHO Internal Audit Capability (IAC).

In addition, grants and contracts awarded under the Instrument will be subject to ex-post audit from the External Audit Sector of DG ECHO and to evaluation by external partners. As usual, actions can be subject to audits and investigations by the Internal Audit Service (IAS), the Court of Auditors and OLAF. The expected cost of control of DG ECHO based on 2011 figures ranges from 2.7% to 3.1%.

In case of implementation via an executive agency, the Commission will apply the control measures required for executive agencies in accordance with Art. 59 of the Financial Regulation and with Council Regulation (EC) N° 58/2003 on executive agencies. In addition, the Commission will monitor and control that the executive agency realises appropriate control objectives for the actions that it will be entrusted to manage. This supervision will be integrated in the terms of cooperation between the parent DG and the executive agency and in the bi-yearly reporting of the agency.

The main features of an executive agency's internal control system (based on EACEA) are the following:

(a) Financial circuits and segregation of duties;

(b) Control of eligibility of costs through ex-ante controls (desk reviews, monitoring missions);

(c) Supervision procedure;

(d) Simplification measures and harmonisation implemented within the same programme and between different programmes (sharing of best practices);

- (e) Use of lump sums and flat rates for some strands/actions;
- (f) Management reporting (monthly, quarterly and yearly like AAR);
- (g) Centralised ex-ante control for public procurement, calls for proposals & grant agreements;
- (h) Internal audit capability.

The executive agency's activities are subject to audits and investigations by the Internal Audit Service (IAS), the Court of Auditors and OLAF.

Regarding cost of controls, their estimate is based on the past experience of the EACEA executive agency. The latter has estimated the cost of control of two programs to be implemented in the period 2014-2020: according to the figures presented in the 2011 annual activity report, the estimated cost of controls amounts to 2.8% and 2.9% of the total budget of the two programs. By applying the same results, the estimated cost of control of the establishment of the EU Aid Volunteers would range from €6.7M to €6.9M for the period 2014-2020.

With respect to DG ECHO, it is estimated that the cost of control linked to its role of co-parent DG would be around €210K, representing 0.1% of the total budget. The implementation of such controls, coupled with the likely effect of the new FR simplifications, would allow for the avoidance of material errors (>2%).

2.3. Measures to prevent fraud and irregularities

Specify existing or envisaged prevention and protection measures.

DG ECHO will further devise its anti-fraud strategy in line with the Commission's new anti-fraud strategy (CAFS) adopted on 24 June 2011 in order to ensure inter alia that:

DG ECHO's internal anti-fraud related controls are fully aligned with the CAFS;

DG ECHO's fraud risk management approach is geared to identify fraud risk areas and adequate response;

The European Anti-fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out on-the-spot checks and inspections.

In order to mitigate potential fraud and irregularities, the following measures are envisaged:

- The prevention of potential fraud and irregularities is considered already at the programme set up, by the simplification of rules and the wider use of flat rates and lump sums.
- Systematic check of potential double funding and identification of beneficiaries of several grants will be done.
- Ad hoc audits will be implemented when there are serious concerns in terms of irregularities and/or suspected fraud.

3. ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

3.1. Heading(s) of the multiannual financial framework and expenditure budget line(s) affected

- Existing expenditure budget lines

In order of multiannual financial framework headings and budget lines

Heading of multiannual financial framework	Budget line	Type of expenditure	Contribution			
	Global Europe	Diff./non-diff. ⁽³¹⁾	from EFTA ³² countries	from candidate countries ³³	from third countries	within the meaning of Article 18(1)(aa) of the Financial Regulation
4	23 02 04 (European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps) EU Aid Volunteers	Diff.	YES	YES	NO	YES/NO

Participation in the EU Aid Volunteers will be open to other European countries subject to conditions referred to under Article 23.

³¹ Diff. = Differentiated appropriations / Non-diff. = Non-Differentiated Appropriations

³² EFTA: European Free Trade Association.

³³ Candidate countries and, where applicable, potential candidate countries from the Western Balkans.

3.2. Estimated impact on expenditure

3.2.1. Summary of estimated impact on expenditure

EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

Heading of multiannual financial framework:			Number	4. GLOBAL EUROPE							
DG: ECHO			Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020	Subsequent years	TOTAL 2014 TO 2020
• Operational appropriations											
23 02 04	Commitments	(1)	21.200	23.800	27.600	32.700	37.900	44.500	51.400		239.100
	Payments	(2)	13.780	18.650	23.630	29.895	34.680	40.640	47.145	30.680	239.100
Appropriations of an administrative nature financed from the envelope for specific programmes ³⁴											
		(3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL appropriations for DG ECHO	Commitments	=1+3	21.200	23.800	27.600	32.700	37.900	44.500	51.400		239.100
	Payments	=2+3	13.780	18.650	23.630	29.895	34.680	40.640	47.145	30.680	239.100
• TOTAL operational appropriations	Commitments	(4)	21.200	23.800	27.600	32.700	37.900	44.500	51.400		239.100
	Payments	(5)	13.780	18.650	23.630	29.895	34.680	40.640	47.145	30.680	239.100

³⁴ Technical and/or administrative assistance and expenditure in support of the implementation of EU programmes and/or actions (former "BA" lines), indirect research, direct research.

• TOTAL appropriations of an administrative nature financed from the envelope for specific programmes		(6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL appropriations under HEADING 4 of the multiannual financial framework	Commitments	=4+ 6	21.200	23.800	27.600	32.700	37.900	44.500	51.400		239.100
	Payments	=5+ 6	13.780	18.650	23.630	29.895	34.680	40.640	47.145	30.680	239.100

Heading of multiannual financial framework:	5	"Administrative expenditures"
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EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

		Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020	TOTAL 2014 - 2020
DG: ECHO									
• Human resources		1.146	1.146	1.146	1.146	1.274	1.274	1.593	8.725
• Other administrative expenditure		0.063	0.063	0.143	0.063	0.065	0.122	0.045	0.564
TOTAL DG ECHO	Appropriations	1.209	1.209	1.289	1.209	1.339	1.396	1.683	9.289

TOTAL appropriations under HEADING 5 of the multiannual financial framework	(Total commitments = Total payments)	1.209	1.209	1.289	1.209	1.339	1.396	1.683	9.289
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EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

		Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020	Sub- sequent years	TOTAL 2014 - 2020
TOTAL appropriations under HEADINGS 1 to 5 of the multiannual financial framework	Commitments	22.409	25.009	28.889	33.909	39.239	45.896	53.083		248.434
	Payments	14.989	19.859	24.919	31.104	36.019	42.036	48.828	30.680	248.434

3.2.2. Estimated impact on operational appropriations

- ☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of operational appropriations
- ☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of operational appropriations, as explained below:

Commitment appropriations in EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

Indicate objectives and outputs ⇓			Year 2014		Year 2015		Year 2016		Year 2017		Year 2018		Year 2019		Year 2020		TOTAL 2014 - 2020	
OUTPUTS																		
	Type of output ³⁵	Average cost output	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. outputs	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	Total number outputs	Total cost
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE No 1 Increase in and improvement of the capacity of the Union to provide humanitarian aid																		
- Output	Register, No of apprenticeships, No of volunteers deployed	0.014	376	5.271	941	13.367	1130	15.976	1356	20.222	1560	22.867	1950	27.361	2291	32.074	9604	137.136
Sub-total for operational objective 1			376	5.271	941	13.367	1130	15.976	1356	20.222	1560	22.867	1950	27.361	2291	32.074	9604	137.136

³⁵

Outputs are products and services to be supplied (e.g.: number of student exchanges financed, number of km of roads built, etc.).

Indicate objectives and outputs ↓			Year 2014		Year 2015		Year 2016		Year 2017		Year 2018		Year 2019		Year 2020		TOTAL 2014 - 2020	
OUTPUTS																		
	Type of output ³⁶	Average cost output	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. outputs	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	Total number outputs	Total cost
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE No 2 Improvement of the skills and competences of volunteers in the field of humanitarian aid and the conditions under which they are working																		
- Output	Training of volunteers, development of standards	0.0075	938	7.034	711	5.330	837	6.280	863	6.476	1193	8.946	1535	11.511	1600	12.000	7677	57.576
Sub-total for operational objective 2			938	7.034	711	5.330	837	6.280	863	6.476	1193	8.946	1535	11.511	1600	12.000	7677	57.576
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE No 3 Building the capacity of hosting organisations and foster volunteering in third countries																		
- Output	No of volunteer managers / local volunteers / train the trainers/number of participants seminars/	0.00471	1418	6.681	785	3.700	857	4.038	901	4.244	1037	4.886	849	3.999	1263	6.000	7110	33.549
Sub-total for operational objective 3			1418	6.681	785	3.700	857	4.038	901	4.244	1037	4.886	849	3.999	1263	6.000	7110	33.549

³⁶

Outputs are products and services to be supplied (e.g.: number of student exchanges financed, number of km of roads built, etc.).

Indicate objectives and outputs ⇓			Year 2014		Year 2015		Year 2016		Year 2017		Year 2018		Year 2019		Year 2020		TOTAL 2014 - 2020	
OUTPUTS																		
	Type of output ³⁷	Average cost output	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	No. outputs	Cost	No. out puts	Cost	Total number outputs	Total cost
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE No 4 To promote the visibility of the Union's humanitarian aid values																		
- Output	Development of EU Aid Volunteers' Network; conferences, communication, visibility; number of online volunteer assignments	0,00081	300	1.737	700	0.940	1300	0.769	1700	1.395	2000	0.769	2000	1.053	2000	0.826	10000	7.488
Sub-total for operational objective 4			300	1.737	700	0.940	1300	0.769	1700	1.395	2000	0.769	2000	1.053	2000	0.826	10000	7.488
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE No 5 Enhancement of coherence and consistency of volunteering across Member States in order to improve opportunities for Unions' citizens to participate in humanitarian aid activities and operations																		
- Output	Development of standards, revision, certification mechanism			0.477		0.464		0.538		0.364		0.433		0.575		0.500		3.351
Sub-total for operational objective 5				0.477		0.464		0.538		0.364		0.433		0.575		0.500		3.351
TOTAL COST			3032	21.200	3137	23.800	4124	27.600	4820	32.700	5790	37.900	6334	44.500	7154	51.400	34391	239.100

³⁷

Outputs are products and services to be supplied (e.g.: number of student exchanges financed, number of km of roads built, etc.).

3.2.3. Estimated impact on appropriations of an administrative nature

3.2.3.1. Summary

- ☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of administrative appropriations
- ☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of administrative appropriations, as explained below:

EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020	TOTAL
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HEADING 5 of the multiannual financial framework								
Human resources	1.146	1.146	1.146	1.146	1.274	1.274	1.593	8.725
Other administrative expenditure	0.063	0.063	0.143	0.063	0.065	0.122	0.045	0.564
Subtotal HEADING 5 of the multiannual financial framework	1.209	1.209	1.289	1.209	1.339	1.396	1.683	9.289

Outside HEADING 5³⁸ of the multiannual financial framework	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Human resources								
Other expenditure of an administrative nature								
Subtotal outside HEADING 5 of the multiannual financial framework	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

TOTAL	1.209	1.209	1.289	1.209	1.339	1.396	1.683	9.289
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The above figures will be adjusted in accordance with the results of the envisaged externalisation process.

³⁸ Technical and/or administrative assistance and expenditure in support of the implementation of EU programmes and/or actions (former "BA" lines), indirect research, direct research.

3.2.3.2. Estimated requirements of human resources

- ☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of human resources
- ☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of human resources, as explained below:

Estimate to be expressed in full amounts (or at most to one decimal place)

	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020
• Establishment plan posts (officials and temporary agents)							
XX 01 01 01 (Headquarters and Commission's Representation Offices)	6	6	6	6	6	6	7
XX 01 01 02 (Delegations)							
XX 01 05 01 (Indirect research)							
10 01 05 01 (Direct research)							
• External personnel (in Full Time Equivalent unit: FTE)³⁹							
XX 01 02 01 (CA, INT, SNE from the "global envelope")	6	6	6	6	8	8	11
XX 01 02 02 (CA, INT, JED, LA and SNE in the delegations)							
XX 01 04 yy 40	- at Headquarters 41						
	- in delegations						
XX 01 05 02 (CA, INT, SNE - Indirect research)							
10 01 05 02 (CA, INT, SNE - Direct research)							
Other budget lines (specify)							

³⁹ CA= Contract Agent; INT= agency staff ("Intérimaire"); JED= "Jeune Expert en Délégation" (Young Experts in Delegations); LA= Local Agent; SNE= Seconded National Expert;

⁴⁰ Under the ceiling for external personnel from operational appropriations (former "BA" lines).

⁴¹ Essentially for Structural Funds, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Fisheries Fund (EFF).

TOTAL	12	12	12	12	14	14	18
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23 is the policy area or budget title concerned.

The human resources required will be met by staff from the DG who are already assigned to management of the action and/or have been redeployed within the DG, together if necessary with any additional allocation which may be granted to the managing DG under the annual allocation procedure and in the light of budgetary constraints.

The above figures will be adjusted in accordance with the results of the envisaged externalisation process.

Description of tasks to be carried out:

Officials and temporary agents	Policy Development and concepts. Implementing acts and measures.
External personnel	Management of grant agreements and contracts; implementation and follow-up of policy work; administrative support.

3.2.4. *Compatibility with the current multiannual financial framework*

- ☒ Proposal/initiative is compatible with the Commission proposal for the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 as per Communication "A Budget for Europe 2020" (COM(2011)500 final).
- ☐ Proposal/initiative will entail reprogramming of the relevant heading in the multiannual financial framework.

Explain what reprogramming is required, specifying the budget lines concerned and the corresponding amounts.

- ☐ Proposal/initiative requires application of the flexibility instrument or revision of the multiannual financial framework⁴².

Explain what is required, specifying the headings and budget lines concerned and the corresponding amounts.

[...]

3.2.5. *Third-party contributions*

- The proposal/initiative does not provide for co-financing by third parties
- The proposal/initiative provides for the co-financing estimated below:

Appropriations in EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

	Year N	Year N+1	Year N+2	Year N+3	... enter as many years as necessary to show the duration of the impact (see point 1.6)	Total
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⁴² See points 19 and 24 of the Interinstitutional Agreement.

<i>Specify the co-financing body</i>								
TOTAL appropriations cofinanced								

The proposal provides for third-party contributions from the EFTA countries which are members of the EEA, , acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates benefiting from a pre-accession strategy and from partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

3.3. Estimated impact on revenue

– X Proposal/initiative has no financial impact on revenue.

– ☐ Proposal/initiative has the following financial impact:

☐ on own resources

☐ on miscellaneous revenue

EUR million (to 3 decimal places)

Budget revenue line:	Appropriations available for the ongoing budget year	Impact of the proposal/initiative ⁴³						
		Year N	Year N+1	Year N+2	Year N+3	... insert as many columns as necessary in order to reflect the duration of the impact (see point 1.6)		
Article								

For miscellaneous assigned revenue, specify the budget expenditure line(s) affected.

[...]

Specify the method for calculating the impact on revenue.

[...]

⁴³

As regards traditional own resources (customs duties, sugar levies), the amounts indicated must be net amounts, i.e. gross amounts after deduction of 25% for collection costs.