Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014 of 24 October 2014 laying down standards regarding candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers (Text with EEA relevance)

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) No 1398/2014

of 24 October 2014

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(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps ('EU Aid Volunteers initiative')[(1)], and in particular Article 9(2) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 375/2014, the Commission should establish both standards and procedures covering the necessary conditions, arrangements and requirements to be applied by sending and hosting organisations when identifying, selecting, preparing, managing and deploying candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers to support humanitarian aid in third countries. Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 provides for these standards to be adopted through delegated acts and the procedures to be adopted through implementing acts.

(2) All stakeholders of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, including the volunteers themselves and the sending and hosting organisations, should be encouraged to share a sense of identity in the initiative.

(3) The competence framework to be used for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative must define transversal competences required in many sectors of volunteering and employment, and also set out the specific competences needed for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and for working in humanitarian aid. It should also give a non-exhaustive list of the technical competences. That should help to ensure effective and needs-based selection and preparation of candidate volunteers, on the basis of a common competence framework.

(4) In order for the competences, learning needs and outcomes of the EU Aid Volunteers to be documented and assessed, they should follow an easy-to-use learning and development plan throughout their participation in the initiative. The design of this plan will be based on lessons learnt from the Youth Pass[(2)] and Europass[(3)] initiatives.

(5) Participation in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative can improve volunteers' employability, as a result of the knowledge, skills and competences they acquire. It also demonstrates their solidarity with people in need and their commitment to visibly promoting a sense of European citizenship. Specific provisions should therefore facilitate, to the extent

possible, the validation of non-formal and informal learning undertaken by EU Aid Volunteers, in accordance with the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning[4].

(6) The standards governing the partnerships between sending and hosting organisations are of relevance for both the humanitarian sector and for volunteer organisations. They support the objective of building partnerships between the implementing organisations and reflect the mutual responsibility of these organisations both for achieving the objectives of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and for the EU Aid Volunteers as individuals. The principles on which the partnership is based need to be defined and the partnership agreement should meet minimum requirements in order for the partners to be able to apply for and manage projects involving the deployment of EU Aid Volunteers in third countries.

(7) Principles relating to equal opportunities and non-discrimination are enshrined in national and Union legislation and should always be respected and promoted by the sending and hosting organisations. Provision is made, however, for context-specific exceptions, where necessary, relating to the definition of the role and profile of the EU Aid Volunteers.

(8) Compliance with relevant national and Union law and with the law of the hosting country is of paramount importance. This is the responsibility of sending and hosting organisations, which are also obliged to inform EU Aid Volunteers of their rights and legal obligations deriving from that legislation and their right to insurance coverage. A clear legal status of the volunteers is a pre-condition for their deployment and should be therefore defined in a deployment contract between the sending organisations and the EU Aid Volunteer. Specific attention should also be given to the protection of personal data, to the need to act with integrity, in accordance with a code of conduct, and to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, including by establishing a principle of zero-tolerance to sexual abuse.

(9) In order to ensure a timely implementation of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, it is necessary for this Regulation to enter into force as an urgent matter as it sets the provisions based on which implementing organisations to deploy EU Aid Volunteers in third countries,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

***Changes to legislation:** There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014. (See end of Document for details)*

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Subject matter

This Regulation lays down standards regarding candidate volunteers and EU Aid Volunteers with respect to the following matters listed in Article 9(2) of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014:

(a) a competence framework used for the identification, selection and preparation of volunteers as junior or senior professionals;

(b) provisions to ensure equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the identification and selection process;

(c) provisions to ensure compliance of sending and hosting organisations with relevant national and Union law and law of the hosting country;

(d) standards governing the partnerships between sending and hosting organisations; and

(e) provisions for recognition of the skills and competences acquired by EU Aid Volunteers, in line with existing relevant Union initiatives.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the definitions in Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 and the definitions provided for in the Commission Implementing Regulation to be adopted on the basis of Article 9(3) of Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 shall apply. The following definitions shall also apply:

(a) ‘Competences’ mean according to the definition laid out in the European Reference Framework on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning[(5)] a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context, allowing EU Aid Volunteers to contribute to the provision of needs-based humanitarian aid;

(b) ‘Transversal competences’ mean competences required in many sectors of volunteering and employment and which are not specific to humanitarian aid;

(c) ‘Specific competences’ mean competences required for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and humanitarian aid more widely;

(d) ‘Technical competences’ mean competences resulting from specialized knowledge relevant in the context of humanitarian aid;

(e) ‘Learning outcomes’ mean according to the definition laid out in the European Qualifications Framework[(6)] statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. They are expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

Changes to legislation: *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014. (See end of Document for details)*

CHAPTER 2

COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

Article 3

Competence framework

1 The competence framework to be used for the EU Aid Volunteers initiative shall have three dimensions:

a Transversal competences;

b Specific competences; and

c Technical competences.

2 The competence framework shall be tailored to:

a junior professionals, in particular recent graduates with less than five years' professional experience and less than five years' experience in humanitarian action; and

b senior professionals with five or more years' professional experience in positions of responsibility or expert positions.

3 The competence framework shall both promote the continuous process of personal development that EU Aid Volunteers go through during the different stages of their participation in the initiative and shall measure their progress. The levels of proficiency in each competence shall be assessed consistently with the approach of the European Qualifications Framework and on the following scale:

a Level 4: Excellent proficiency;

b Level 3: Sustained proficiency;

c Level 2: Proficiency with development needs;

d Level 1: Poor proficiency.

4 Definitions of the main competences used are set out in Annex.

Article 4

Learning and development plan

1 A learning and development plan shall state the learning outcomes that EU Aid Volunteers are expected to achieve and shall provide information about the EU Aid Volunteers' expected competences, learning needs and achievements over the different stages of their participation in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

2 The following information shall be included in the learning and development plan:

a Basic information about the EU Aid Volunteer;

b Basic information about the volunteer placement and a description of the tasks to be carried out;

c The competences set out in the competence framework and an assessment of the volunteer's performance and learning outcomes according to these;

d Learning needs and planned development activities, where relevant;

e Courses attended during the training or placement; and

f Any other relevant information.

***Changes to legislation:** There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1398/2014. (See end of Document for details)*

3 The use of the different elements of the learning and development plan shall depend on the EU Aid Volunteer's individual needs and aspirations and shall be regularly updated, including at the following stages:

a Selection;

b Training, including apprenticeship placement, where relevant;

c Deployment; and

d Post-deployment debrief, where relevant.

CHAPTER 3

RECOGNITION OF THE SKILLS AND COMPETENCES ACQUIRED BY EU AID VOLUNTEERS

Article 5

Assessment and documentation process

1 The assessment and documentation of the competences acquired by EU Aid Volunteers during their participation in the EU Aid Volunteers initiative shall support:

a the professional recognition of competences acquired that would be usable in a professional context and that would improve the employability of a volunteer; and

b the social recognition of the volunteers' contribution to expressing the Union's values of solidarity with people in need and visibly promoting a sense of European citizenship.

2 The scope and process of assessment and documentation shall be adapted to make it suitable for junior or senior professionals and shall depend on the EU Aid Volunteer's individual needs and aspirations.

3 The assessment and documentation of learning experiences shall reflect the continuous process of development that EU Aid Volunteers go through, thereby acknowledging and supporting learning and development throughout the different stages of a volunteer's participation in the initiative. Assessment and documentation shall be carried out on the basis of the learning and development plan referred to in Article 4.

4 Sending and hosting organisations shall demonstrate ongoing commitment to the assessment and documentation of EU Aid Volunteers' learning experiences to facilitate professional and social recognition.

5 The Commission and EU Member States shall provide the competent national authorities responsible for the validation of non-formal and informal learning with relevant information about the EU Aid Volunteers initiative and about the assessment and documentation process in order to facilitate the formal validation processes of the learning experiences of the EU Aid Volunteers in their home countries, where appropriate.

Article 6

Professional recognition

1 EU Aid Volunteers shall receive, upon request, a certificate of completion of participation in the initiative. This shall be issued by the Commission and shall include at least the following information: