

OPEN LETTER by MEP Lukas MANDL

Ms Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission President

Ms Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Ms Stella Kyriakidou, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

Gerasdorf bei Wien, 25 March 2020

Honourable Commission President Von der Leyen,
Honourable Commissioners Gabriel and Kyriakidou,

Given the current unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, we need to mobilise every helping hand that could contribute to solutions in the fight against the further spread of this dangerous and unfortunately in many cases lethal virus. In this regard, I would like to suggest the mobilisation of the European Solidarity Corps for projects linked to the containment of the disease.

The European Solidarity Corps was established in 2016 in order to allow young people aged between 18 and 30 years old to engage in a wide variety of activities, such as dealing with natural disasters or assisting in centres for asylum seekers. This support can last up to twelve months and is usually located within the EU Member States.

Given the current spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, Europe can need any possible support. This entails activities in hospitals, but also logistical assistance in food production or delivery, as well as the support for elderly people who are not able to take care about their daily needs by themselves in times of increased infection risks.

Therefore, I would like to ask the following questions:

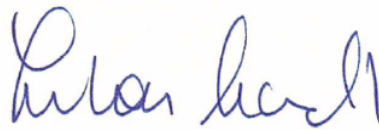
1. Has the Commission already considered the possibility of using the European Solidarity Corps in projects linked to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis response?
2. In which fields of activity could the European Solidarity Corps be used in order to contribute to solutions in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. In view of the urgency, how much time would be necessary according to the Commission in order to deploy the European Solidarity Corps to above-mentioned projects?

The deployment of the European Solidarity Corps would not only help the emergency forces on the ground, but it would also be a clear signal to people all around the European Union that we do everything possible in order to mitigate their difficult situations. Furthermore, it would give young people willing to help the opportunity to do something for their fellow citizens in need, whereas all necessary precautionary measures should be taken that in order prevent a situation in which these young people do not contribute to the further spread of the disease.

Therefore, I call for an immediate action without bureaucratic delays for the volunteers willing to help.

Thank you very much already in advance for a short feedback and all your efforts in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lukas Mandl', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MEP Lukas MANDL