

Bridging the Gap: How the European Solidarity Corps is building confidence and skills to empower young people with fewer opportunities

There is plenty to gain by participating in the European Solidarity Corps. Whether you're implementing a solidarity project or volunteering abroad, you can be sure of an enriching experience. Check out the real-life stories below to see how the European Solidarity Corps can help you gain new skills and experiences through volunteering.

Discovering the European Solidarity Corps through a volunteering project

Meet Fatoumata, Eva and Karim who come from low economic backgrounds. They discovered the European Solidarity Corps through the Be You project, implemented by [Parcours Le Monde IDF](#). This project gives young Parisians with fewer opportunities the chance to live and volunteer abroad. The aim is to provide them with important professional skills to gain employability in the future.

Fatoumata, who moved to France from Mali when she was just one year old, participated in a volunteering project in 2023. *'Through the Be You project, I was able to live in Bulgaria for the summer and discover a new country and culture,'* she says.

Fatoumata's passion for helping others found a perfect outlet at a day centre for people with disabilities. She organised a range of activities, from sports and leisure to games and artistry. The most rewarding part of her experience, she reflects, was *'helping people at the day centre and meeting the people who care for them on a daily basis.'*

Eva wanted a fresh, new experience. She felt that the Be You project would be perfect as it offered her the chance to experience life in Egypt: *'I wanted to have a year where I could discover myself,'* she explains. *'I wanted to become more independent, open myself up to new experiences and enrich my CV.'*

Eva's desire to gain a varied and well-rounded experience meant that she developed key job-related skills: *'I created content for social media, which involved creating videos, doing video montages and taking photos.'* But it wasn't all work for Eva. She also found joy in sharing her French culture with the local Egyptian community by hosting workshops.

Karim came across the Be You project while he was contemplating between job hunting and volunteering abroad. He decided to take part in the project, explaining: *'I wanted a unique experience that allowed me to feel useful.'*

Karim embarked on a volunteering scheme that took him to Pesaro in Italy. There, he worked in a local charity shop, immersing himself in all aspects of the shop's running: *'I sorted and categorised items that arrived, rotating tasks with my colleagues,'* Karim explains. *'I also created and distributed food boxes and provided customer support.'*

Through the transformative power of volunteering, each of these experiences showcase how you can gain new skills and improve your chances of finding a job.

Reaping the rewards

Fatoumata, Karim and Eva benefited a lot from volunteering in the European Solidarity Corps.

Fatoumata's time volunteering has developed her soft skills, which will benefit her in future job roles: *'I can add this experience to my resume, which is very interesting, because it shows my ability to adapt and take risks, as well as helping others.'* She has now secured an internship abroad thanks to the programme.

Karim, too, found the programme instrumental in boosting his confidence when trying to secure future jobs. He believes that his volunteering experience will make him an attractive prospect for future employers. *'I think that this project will help me to stand out among others during my job research, it made me more self-confident and made me want to discover other countries,'* he says.

Eva echoes similar sentiments, and attributes her performance at job interviews to her participation in the European Solidarity Corps. *'From a professional perspective, participating at the European Solidarity Corps changed everything,'* she says. *'My interviews are going very well as I have something interesting to talk about. It truly is a magnificent project!'*

A message to future participants

Fatoumata, Karim and Eva found their participation in the European Solidarity Corps to be a rewarding experience and encourage others to join. As Eva says, *'I would tell anyone who is thinking about participating to just try it. You have to take advantage of this kind of opportunity – it will be worth it.'*

Join the European Solidarity Corps and start your journey today!

With support from the European Solidarity Corps, Fatoumata, Karim and Eva were able to experience life abroad and make a difference in the communities they volunteered in.

Interested in joining? The European Solidarity Corps is open to all young people aged 18 to 30 regardless of your background and circumstances. You will have the chance to meet new people, develop new skills and make a real difference.

[Visit the European Solidarity Corps website](#) today to learn more about the opportunities available to you.

Have Fatoumata, Eva and Karim's stories inspired you? Check out our articles on other inspiring stories!