

2026 annual work programme for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme

C(2025) 7014 of 23 October 2025



Brussels, 23.10.2025
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 23.10.2025

**on the financing of the European Solidarity Corps Programme and the adoption of the
work programme for 2026**

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 23.10.2025

on the financing of the European Solidarity Corps Programme and the adoption of the work programme for 2026

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union¹ ('the Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 110(1) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/888² of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) 2018/1475 and (EU) No 375/2014 (hereinafter 'the European Solidarity Corps Regulation'), and in particular Article 19 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2026 in accordance with Article 110(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 ('the Financial Regulation').
- (2) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures³ adopted pursuant to Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
- (3) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (4) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the work programme, it is appropriate to determine the changes, which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (5) The activities should contribute to climate and biodiversity and gender-equality mainstreaming in line with the Commission Communication 'The European Green Deal'⁴ and the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management,

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.09.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 32.

³ See www.sanctionsmap.eu – Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In the case of discrepancy, the OJ prevails.

⁴ COM (2019) 640 final of 11 December 2019.

as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources⁵.

- (6) Pursuant to Article 62(1), first subparagraph, point (c), of the Financial Regulation, indirect management is to be used for the actions specified in the work programme.
- (7) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regard to persons and entities entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 157(3) of the Financial Regulation. To that end, and before a contribution agreement can be signed, such persons and entities are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 157(4) of the Financial Regulation⁶ and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 157(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (8) It is necessary to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants in accordance with Article 198 point (c) and (f) of the Financial Regulation.
- (9) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 31 of Regulation (EU) 2021/888,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The work programme

The annual financing decision, constituting the annual work programme for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme for 2026, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

Article 2

Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme for 2026 is set at EUR **175 300 000** and shall be financed on the **07 04 01** budget line from:

- general budget of the Union for 2026,
- Internal assigned revenues
- EFTA contributions to the programme,
- other participating countries contributions to the programme.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

⁵ Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources (OJ L 433I , 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj).

⁶ *Except for the cases of Article 157(7) of the Financial Regulation, where the Commission may decide, not to require an ex-ante assessment.*

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft general budget of the Union for 2026, following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths. Likewise, it is subject to the availability of the appropriations and contributions of EFTA and other participating countries to the programme.

Article 3 **Flexibility clause**

Cumulated changes to the allocations to specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum Union contribution set in Article 2 of this Decision shall not be considered to be substantial within the meaning of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation, where those changes do not significantly affect the nature of the actions and the objective of the work programme. The increase of the maximum Union contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2 of this Decision shall not exceed 20%.

As regards actions implemented by national agencies under the European Solidarity Corps Regulation and Article 62(1), first subparagraph, point (c), of the Financial Regulation, changes to the distribution of funds among programme countries are not considered to be substantial, provided that a possible budget change for a country does not exceed 20% of the total funds implemented under Article 62(1), first subparagraph, point (c).

The authorising officer responsible may apply the type of changes referred to in the first and second paragraph in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Article 4 **Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons**

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annex, may be entrusted to the persons or entities referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in the Annex.

Article 5 **Grants awarded without a call for proposals**

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annex to the bodies referred to in the Annex.

Done at Brussels, 23.10.2025

For the Commission
Glenn MICALLEF
Member of the Commission



COMMISSION
EUROPÉENNE

Bruxelles, le 23.10.2025
C(2025) 7014 final

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 23.10.2025

**relative au financement du programme «Corps européen de solidarité» et à l'adoption
du programme de travail pour 2026**

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 23.10.2025

relative au financement du programme «Corps européen de solidarité» et à l'adoption du programme de travail pour 2026

LA COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE,

vu le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne,

vu le règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 septembre 2024 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union¹ (ci-après le «règlement financier»), et notamment son article 110, paragraphe 1,

vu le règlement (UE) 2021/888² du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mai 2021 établissant le programme «Corps européen de solidarité» et abrogeant les règlements (UE) 2018/1475 et (UE) n° 375/2014 (ci-après le «règlement sur le corps européen de solidarité»), et notamment son article 19,

considérant ce qui suit:

- (1) Aux fins de la mise en œuvre du programme «Corps européen de solidarité», il y a lieu d'adopter une décision de financement annuelle, qui constitue le programme de travail annuel pour 2026 conformément à l'article 110, paragraphe 2, du règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509 (ci-après le «règlement financier»).
- (2) L'assistance envisagée doit respecter les conditions et procédures établies par les mesures restrictives³ adoptées conformément à l'article 215 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.
- (3) Il convient de permettre le paiement d'intérêts de retard sur la base de l'article 116, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier.
- (4) Pour permettre une certaine flexibilité dans la mise en œuvre du programme de travail, il y a lieu de déterminer les modifications qui ne devraient pas être considérées comme substantielles aux fins de l'article 110, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier.
- (5) Les activités devraient contribuer à intégrer les questions relatives au climat et à la biodiversité, et à l'égalité de genre, comme le prévoient la communication de la Commission intitulée «Le pacte vert pour l'Europe»⁴ et l'accord interinstitutionnel du 16 décembre 2020 sur la discipline budgétaire, la coopération en matière budgétaire et

¹ Règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 septembre 2024 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union (refonte) (JO L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² JO L 202 du 8.6.2021, p. 32.

³ Voir www.sanctionsmap.eu – Veuillez noter que la carte des sanctions est un outil informatique permettant de déterminer les régimes de sanctions. Les sanctions résultent d'actes juridiques publiés au *Journal officiel* (JO). En cas de divergence, le JO fait foi.

⁴ COM(2019) 640 final du 11 décembre 2019.

la bonne gestion financière, ainsi que sur de nouvelles ressources propres, comportant une feuille de route en vue de la mise en place de nouvelles ressources propres⁵.

- (6) Conformément à l'article 62, paragraphe 1, premier alinéa, point c), du règlement financier, les actions décrites dans le programme de travail seront mises en œuvre en gestion indirecte.
- (7) La Commission doit assurer un niveau de protection des intérêts financiers de l'Union en ce qui concerne les personnes et les entités chargées de l'exécution des fonds de l'Union en gestion indirecte, conformément à l'article 157, paragraphe 3, du règlement financier. À cette fin, et avant qu'une convention de contribution puisse être signée, ces personnes et entités doivent soumettre leurs systèmes et procédures à une évaluation conformément à l'article 157, paragraphe 4, du règlement financier⁶ et, le cas échéant, à des mesures de surveillance appropriées conformément à l'article 157, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier.
- (8) Il est nécessaire d'autoriser l'octroi de subventions sans appel à propositions et de prévoir les conditions d'octroi de ces subventions, conformément à l'article 198, points c) et f), du règlement financier.
- (9) Les mesures prévues par la présente décision sont conformes à l'avis du comité créé par l'article 31 du règlement (UE) 2021/888,

DÉCIDE:

Article premier

Le programme de travail

La décision de financement annuelle, constituant le programme de travail annuel destiné à mettre en œuvre le programme «Corps européen de solidarité» pour 2026, tel qu'il figure en annexe, est adoptée.

Article 2

Contribution de l'Union

Le montant maximal de la contribution de l'Union destinée à la mise en œuvre du programme pour 2026 est fixé à **175 300 000** EUR, à financer par les crédits inscrits sur la ligne budgétaire **07 04 01** provenant:

- du budget général de l'Union pour 2026,
- de recettes affectées internes,
- des contributions de l'AELE au programme,
- des contributions d'autres pays participants au programme.

Les crédits prévus au premier alinéa peuvent également couvrir les intérêts de retard.

⁵ Accord interinstitutionnel du 16 décembre 2020 entre le Parlement européen, le Conseil de l'Union européenne et la Commission européenne sur la discipline budgétaire, la coopération en matière budgétaire et la bonne gestion financière, ainsi que sur de nouvelles ressources propres, comportant une feuille de route en vue de la mise en place de nouvelles ressources propres (JO L 433 I du 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj).

⁶ À l'exception des cas prévus à l'article 157, paragraphe 7, du règlement financier, pour lesquels la Commission peut décider de ne pas exiger une évaluation ex ante.

La mise en œuvre de la présente décision est subordonnée à la disponibilité des crédits qui sont prévus dans le projet de budget général de l'Union pour 2026, après l'adoption de celui-ci par l'autorité budgétaire, ou qui sont prévus par le régime des douzièmes provisoires. De même, elle est subordonnée à la disponibilité des crédits et des contributions des pays de l'AELE et d'autres pays participants au programme.

Article 3

Clause de flexibilité

Les modifications cumulées des crédits alloués à des actions spécifiques ne dépassant pas 20 % du montant maximal de la contribution de l'Union fixé à l'article 2 de la présente décision ne sont pas considérées comme substantielles au sens de l'article 110, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier, lorsqu'elles n'ont pas d'incidence significative sur la nature des actions ni sur l'objectif du programme de travail. L'augmentation du montant maximal de la contribution de l'Union fixé à l'article 2, premier alinéa, de la présente décision ne peut dépasser 20 %.

En ce qui concerne les actions mises en œuvre par les agences nationales conformément au règlement sur le corps européen de solidarité et à l'article 62, paragraphe 1, premier alinéa, point c), du règlement financier, les modifications apportées à la répartition des fonds entre les pays participant au programme ne sont pas considérées comme substantielles si la modification budgétaire éventuelle pour un pays ne dépasse pas 20 % du total des fonds exécutés en application de l'article 62, paragraphe 1, premier alinéa, point c).

L'ordonnateur compétent peut appliquer le type de modifications visé aux premier et deuxième alinéas, dans le respect des principes de bonne gestion financière et de proportionnalité.

Article 4

Modes d'exécution et entités ou personnes chargées de l'exécution

L'exécution des actions menées en gestion indirecte, telles qu'exposées dans l'annexe, peut être confiée aux personnes ou aux entités mentionnées ou sélectionnées conformément aux critères fixés dans ladite annexe.

Article 5

Subventions octroyées sans appel à propositions

Des subventions peuvent être octroyées sans appel à propositions aux organismes mentionnés en annexe, dans les conditions précisées dans celle-ci.

Fait à Bruxelles, le 23.10.2025

Par la Commission
Glenn MICALLEF
Membre de la Commission

Brüssel, den 23.10.2025
C(2025) 7014 final

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 23.10.2025

**zur Finanzierung des Programms für das Europäische Solidaritätskorps und zur
Annahme des Arbeitsprogramms für 2026**

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 23.10.2025

zur Finanzierung des Programms für das Europäische Solidaritätskorps und zur Annahme des Arbeitsprogramms für 2026

DIE EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION —

gestützt auf den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. September 2024 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union¹ (im Folgenden „Haushaltsordnung“), insbesondere auf Artikel 110 Absatz 1,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) 2021/888 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 20. Mai 2021 zur Aufstellung des Programms für das Europäische Solidaritätskorps und zur Aufhebung der Verordnungen (EU) 2018/1475 und (EU) Nr. 375/2014² (im Folgenden „Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps“), insbesondere auf Artikel 19,

in Erwägung nachstehender Gründe:

- (1) Damit die Durchführung des Programms für das Europäische Solidaritätskorps gewährleistet werden kann, ist die Annahme eines jährlichen Finanzierungsbeschlusses erforderlich, der im Einklang mit Artikel 110 Absatz 2 der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 (im Folgenden „Haushaltsordnung“) das jährliche Arbeitsprogramm für 2026 darstellt.
- (2) Bei der geplanten Unterstützung sind die Bedingungen und Verfahren einzuhalten, die im Rahmen der nach Artikel 215 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union erlassenen restriktiven Maßnahmen³ festgelegt sind.
- (3) Es ist notwendig, die Zahlung von Verzugszinsen gemäß Artikel 116 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung vorzusehen.
- (4) Im Interesse einer flexiblen Durchführung des Arbeitsprogramms sollten die Änderungen festgelegt werden, die für die Zwecke des Artikels 110 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung nicht als substantiell anzusehen sind.
- (5) Die Maßnahmen sollten im Einklang mit der Mitteilung der Kommission „Der europäische Grüne Deal“⁴ und der Interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung vom 16. Dezember 2020 über die Haushaltsdisziplin, die Zusammenarbeit im Haushaltsbereich und die wirtschaftliche Haushaltsführung sowie über neue Eigenmittel, einschließlich eines Fahrplans im Hinblick auf die Einführung neuer

¹ Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. September 2024 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union (Neufassung) (ABl. L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² ABl. L 202 vom 8.6.2021, S. 32.

³ Siehe www.sanctionsmap.eu. Die Weltkarte der Sanktionen ist ein IT-Tool für die Erfassung von Sanktionsregelungen. Die Sanktionen beruhen auf den im Amtsblatt veröffentlichten Rechtsakten. Bei Abweichungen ist das Amtsblatt maßgebend.

⁴ COM(2019) 640 final vom 11.12.2019.

Eigenmittel⁵ zur durchgängigen Berücksichtigung des Klimaschutzes, der biologischen Vielfalt und der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter beitragen.

- (6) Gemäß Artikel 62 Absatz 1 Unterabsatz 1 Buchstabe c der Haushaltsordnung werden die im Arbeitsprogramm festgelegten Maßnahmen im Wege der indirekten Mittelverwaltung durchgeführt.
- (7) In Bezug auf Personen und Stellen, die mit der indirekten Verwaltung von Unionsmitteln betraut sind, hat die Kommission sicherzustellen, dass die finanziellen Interessen der Union in dem in Artikel 157 Absatz 3 der Haushaltsordnung vorgesehenen Maße geschützt werden. Zu diesem Zweck sind die Systeme und Verfahren dieser Personen und Stellen – bevor eine Beitragsvereinbarung unterzeichnet werden kann – nach Artikel 157 Absatz 4 der Haushaltsordnung⁶ zu bewerten und erforderlichenfalls nach Artikel 157 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung geeigneten Aufsichtsmaßnahmen zu unterziehen.
- (8) Es ist erforderlich, dass Finanzhilfen ohne Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen gewährt werden können und die Bedingungen für die Gewährung dieser Finanzhilfen im Einklang mit Artikel 198 Buchstaben c und f der Haushaltsordnung festgelegt werden.
- (9) Die in diesem Beschluss vorgesehenen Maßnahmen entsprechen der Stellungnahme des nach Artikel 31 der Verordnung (EU) 2021/888 eingesetzten Ausschusses —

BESCHLIEßT:

Artikel 1 **Arbeitsprogramm**

Der jährliche Finanzierungsbeschluss, der das im Anhang beschriebene jährliche Arbeitsprogramm für die Durchführung des Programms für das Europäische Solidaritätskorps für 2026 darstellt, wird angenommen.

Artikel 2 **Beitrag der Union**

Der Höchstbeitrag der Union für die Durchführung des Programms für 2026 beläuft sich auf **175 300 000** EUR und wird unter der Haushaltslinie **07 04 01** aus folgenden Quellen finanziert:

- dem Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union für 2026,
- internen zweckgebundenen Einnahmen,
- den EFTA-Beiträgen zum Programm,
- den Beiträgen anderer teilnehmender Länder zum Programm.

Die in Absatz 1 genannten Haushaltsmittel können auch Verzugszinsen abdecken.

⁵ Interinstitutionelle Vereinbarung vom 16. Dezember 2020 zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament, dem Rat der Europäischen Union und der Europäischen Kommission über die Haushaltsdisziplin, die Zusammenarbeit im Haushaltsbereich und die wirtschaftliche Haushaltsführung sowie über neue Eigenmittel, einschließlich eines Fahrplans im Hinblick auf die Einführung neuer Eigenmittel (ABl. L 433I vom 22.12.2020, S. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2020/1222/oj).

⁶ Außer in Fällen gemäß Artikel 157 Absatz 7 der Haushaltsordnung, wonach die Kommission beschließen kann, keine Ex-ante-Bewertung zu verlangen.

Dieser Beschluss kann nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die im Entwurf des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Union für 2026 vorgesehenen Mittel infolge des Erlasses des Haushaltsplans durch die Haushaltsbehörde verfügbar sind oder nach der Regelung der vorläufigen Zwölftel bereitstehen. Desgleichen kann er nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die Mittel und die Beiträge von EFTA-Ländern und anderer teilnehmender Länder zum Programm verfügbar sind.

Artikel 3 **Flexibilitätsklausel**

Änderungen der Mittelzuweisungen für einzelne Maßnahmen, die in der Summe 20 % des in Artikel 2 dieses Beschlusses festgesetzten Höchstbeitrags der Union nicht übersteigen, gelten als nicht substantiell für die Zwecke des Artikels 110 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung, wenn sie sich nicht wesentlich auf die Art der Maßnahmen und die Zielsetzung des Arbeitsprogramms auswirken. Der in Artikel 2 Absatz 1 dieses Beschlusses festgelegte Höchstbeitrag der Union darf sich nicht um mehr als 20 % erhöhen.

Für Maßnahmen, die gemäß der Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps und Artikel 62 Absatz 1 Unterabsatz 1 Buchstabe c der Haushaltsordnung von nationalen Agenturen durchgeführt werden, gilt, dass Änderungen bei der Aufteilung der Mittel auf die Programmländer nicht als substantiell anzusehen sind, wenn die mögliche Änderung der Mittelausstattung für ein Land nicht mehr als 20 % der Gesamtmittel ausmacht, die auf der Grundlage des Artikels 62 Absatz 1 Unterabsatz 1 Buchstabe c verwaltet werden.

Der zuständige Anweisungsbefugte kann die in den Absätzen 1 und 2 genannten Arten von Änderungen im Einklang mit den Grundsätzen der Wirtschaftlichkeit der Haushaltsführung und der Verhältnismäßigkeit vornehmen.

Artikel 4 **Art des Haushaltsvollzugs und mit dem Vollzug betraute Stellen oder Personen**

Mit der Umsetzung der im Anhang dargelegten Maßnahmen, bei denen die indirekte Mittelverwaltung zur Anwendung kommt, können die im Anhang genannten oder gemäß den im Anhang festgelegten Kriterien ausgewählten Personen oder Stellen betraut werden.

Artikel 5 **Ohne Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen gewährte Finanzhilfen**

Finanzhilfen können den im Anhang genannten Einrichtungen gemäß den im Anhang dargelegten Bedingungen ohne Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen gewährt werden.

Brüssel, den 23.10.2025

Für die Kommission
Glenn MICALLEF
Mitglied der Kommission

EN

ANNEX

**THE 2026 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS**

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European Solidarity Corps Programme in brief

The European Union is built on solidarity: solidarity between its citizens, solidarity across borders between its Member States, and solidarity in its action inside and outside the Union.

The European Solidarity Corps Programme ('the Corps' or 'the Programme') initiative was launched in December 2016. It aimed to create new opportunities for young people to engage in solidarity-related activities for the benefit of communities and people around Europe and first operated within the context of eight pre-existing EU programmes.

In 2018, the first European Solidarity Corps Programme Regulation¹ created a new, coherent framework for solidarity-related activities, with a dedicated budget of EUR 375.6 million for 2018-2020. It offered new formats and tools, with a sustained commitment to quality, in order to reach out to more young people and provide them with a valuable experience.

Between the launch of the Corps and the end of 2020, almost a quarter of a million young people registered on the Portal of the European Solidarity Corps, which demonstrates an extremely high interest in the initiative. Based on the positive reception of the initiative by young people and other stakeholders in the solidarity sector, the European Commission proposed an extension of the Corps to the programming period 2021-27.

The adoption of Regulation (EU) No 2021/888² gave the green light to a new generation of the Corps, covering the period of 2021-2027, with a budget of more than EUR 1 billion in current prices and activities that also now include volunteering in the area of humanitarian aid. The current generation programme now focusses fully on volunteering, in line with the wishes of the legislators.

By extending its scope to cover volunteering activities in support of humanitarian aid operations, the Corps now also contributes to needs-based humanitarian aid anchored on the fundamental principles of neutrality, humanity, independence and impartiality, and will help to deliver assistance, relief and protection where most needed. The Corps thus helps to address not only unmet societal needs in Europe but also humanitarian challenges in non-EU countries that have been or that could potentially be affected by man-made or natural disasters. Humanitarian aid volunteering actions of the European Solidarity Corps are guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid³.

Young people engaged in the Corps bring tangible benefits to places and communities in need. By participating in the Corps, they also gain essential personal, social and civic competences that will help them better cope in a rapidly changing world.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018 laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps and amending Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013, Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU, OJ L 250, 4.10.2018, p. 1–20, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1475/oj>.

² Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) 2018/1475 and (EU) No 375/2014, OJ L 202, 08/06/2021, p. 32–54, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/888/oj>.

³ Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, OJ C 25, 30.1.2008, p. 1–12.

One of the transversal priorities of the European Solidarity Corps is to support participation in democratic life, promote common values and foster active citizenship. This was a key focus of the European Year of Youth 2022 which aimed to help young people to become active and engaged citizens. The Programme will build on the achievements of the Year and contribute to its long-lasting legacy as outlined in the Communication on the European Year of Youth adopted by the Commission on 10 January, 2024⁴.

With the inclusion of a specific priority to enhance a culture of preparedness across the whole of society, the European Solidarity Corps is also contributing to develop a culture of preparedness in line with the Preparedness Union Strategy⁵.

The Corps contributes to achieving the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (the EUYS) which is the framework for EU cooperation in the youth field based on a 2018 Council Resolution⁶. The Commission has carried out an interim evaluation of the EUYS⁷ as foreseen in the Council Resolution, which was adopted on 11 April 2024. The evaluation complemented the Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022, both aiming to support future reflections on the post 2027 EUYS.

One of the key overall objectives of the EU Youth Strategy is to *‘Encourage young people to become active citizens, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values and a European identity’*. Under the ‘Connect’⁸ priority area, the Commission proposes to expand mobility actions under the Corps and support its implementation through stronger policy cooperation and community-building activities.

The programme also offers a strong international dimension and contributes to the delivery of the Global Gateway strategy for a Stronger Europe in the World. Cooperation in volunteering activities has gradually become an important instrument for the implementation of EU external policies, based on European values, trust and autonomy.

The indicative budget of the 2026 European Solidarity Corps work programme amounts to EUR **175 300 000**⁹. It is set out in the Financing Decision within the meaning of Article 110 of the

⁴ [COM\(2024\) 1 final](#).

⁵ Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Preparedness Union Strategy, 26 March 2025, [JOIN\(2025\) 130 final](#)

⁶ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, [OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1–22](#).

⁷ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, [COM\(2024\) 162 final](#).

⁸ The four priority areas of the Youth Strategy are: 1) ENGAGE: Fostering youth participation in democratic life; 2) CONNECT: Bringing young people together across the EU and beyond to foster voluntary engagement, learning mobility, solidarity and intercultural understanding; 3) EMPOWER: Supporting youth empowerment through quality, innovation and recognition of youth work; 4) MAINSTREAM: Addressing the needs of young people across sectors.

⁹ This amount includes a tentative estimate of the external assigned revenues (‘entry tickets’) and excludes the internal assigned revenues.

Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union¹⁰ (the ‘Financial Regulation’) to which this Work Programme is annexed.

¹⁰ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast), OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

1.1. STRUCTURE OF THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

1.1.1. Objectives and actions of the European Solidarity Corps

According to the Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 and Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 (hereafter ‘the European Solidarity Corps Regulation’), the general objective of the European Solidarity Corps Programme (hereafter the ‘Programme’) is to enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities, primarily volunteering, as a means to strengthen cohesion, solidarity, democracy, European identity and active citizenship in the Union and beyond, addressing societal and humanitarian challenges on the ground, with a particular focus on the promotion of sustainable development, social inclusion and equal opportunities. As such, it also contributes to European cooperation that is relevant to young people.

The Programme sets up the following strands of actions:

- (a) participation of young people in solidarity-related activities’ strand, as referred to in Chapter III of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation;
- (b) participation of young people in solidarity-related humanitarian aid activities’ strand (the ‘European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps’), as referred to in Chapter IV of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

The specific objective of the Programme is to provide young people, including young people with fewer opportunities, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity activities **that induce positive societal changes** in Europe and abroad, while improving and properly validating their competences, as well as facilitating their **continuous engagement as active citizens**.

To achieve its objective, the Corps implements the following operational actions:

- volunteering (volunteering under the ‘participation of young people in solidarity activities’ strand and under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps);
- solidarity projects;
- networking activities;
- quality and support measures.

1.1.2. Participating countries

EU Member States take part in the European Solidarity Corps Programme, as well as the overseas countries and territories. In addition, the following third countries are associated to

the Programme in 2026¹¹, in accordance with Article 13 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation and based on specific agreements covering their association to the Programme:

- Iceland;
- Liechtenstein;
- Republic of North Macedonia;
- Türkiye.

In accordance with Article 13 (2) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the third countries associated to the Programme may only participate in the Programme in its entirety provided that they fulfil all the obligations which the European Solidarity Corps Regulation imposes on EU Member States.

In accordance with Article 14 (2) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, in duly justified cases in the Union's interest, legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme may be eligible to participate in the actions referred to in Article 5 (networking activities, quality and support measures) and Article 7 (volunteering under the 'participation of young people in solidarity activities' strand) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation. Among this group of applicants, in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2021-2027¹², Council conclusions of 5 June 2020 on Youth in external action¹³ and the Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action 2022 – 2027¹⁴, special consideration will be given to candidate countries, Eastern Partnership countries and Western Balkan countries, as well as to other countries with whom the EU has association or cooperation agreements. The cooperation with these countries is in the EU's strategic interest as it fosters the connectedness of this group of applicants with the applicants of EU Member States. The participation of applicants from not associated countries not falling within the aforementioned categories of countries in the actions referred to in Article 5 and 7 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation needs to be further duly justified in the Union's interest.

Under the EU Enlargement Policy, the programme can be an important instrument to strengthen the informal and non-formal educational and volunteering systems of acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates and contribute to the process of aligning their legislation to meet the EU standards.

¹¹ Countries that are considered to be associated to the Programme as of 1 January 2021 are listed. If and when more third countries complete the association process, this information will be made available on the website of the European Solidarity Corps. For the purposes of the eligibility conditions, applicants established in third countries negotiating association to the programme will be treated as entities established in an Associated Country, if the programme association agreement with the third country concerned applies at the time of the signature of the grant agreement.

¹² As mentioned in Recital 2.b of the Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1–22.

¹³ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8629-2020-INIT/en/pdf>

¹⁴ Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action 2022 – 2027, Promoting meaningful youth participation and empowerment in EU external action for sustainable development, equality and peace, JOIN/2022/53 final.

Another crucial aspect of the European Solidarity Corps is its ability to attract new talents to the EU, ensuring the Union's competitiveness in the global labour market. Ultimately, the European Solidarity Corps can serve as a powerful tool for building bridges between diverse societies and fostering connections between like-minded individuals across Europe and the world.

The participation of entities from third countries not associated to the programme is limited to entities from acceding countries, candidate countries¹⁵ and potential candidates¹⁶ as well as from Norway and the European Neighbourhood Policy countries¹⁷. They can participate in volunteering activities (volunteering projects and Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas), subject to a substantiated Union's interest as spelt out under each of the programme actions concerned. They can, however, not participate in solidarity projects, which are reserved to entities from EU Member States and associated countries to the programme. For humanitarian aid volunteering, entities from any third country not associated to the programme where humanitarian aid activities and operations take place and where there are no ongoing international or non-international armed conflicts can participate as host organisation as long as they hold the specific Quality Label for humanitarian aid volunteering.

The participation of these countries is fully in line with the EU Youth Strategy which calls "to foster the connectedness between young people in the EU and candidate countries, Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan partners, as well as with other third countries with whom the EU has association or cooperation agreements." "Connections, relations and exchange of experience are a pivotal asset for solidarity and the future development of the European Union. This connection is best fostered through different forms of mobility."

In addition, the Council conclusions of 5 June 2020 on Youth in external action, stresses the contribution of young generations to building stronger, more legitimate, peaceful and democratic societies, the programme contributes to promoting the meaningful participation and engagement of all young people, and hence in strengthening exchanges and dialogue between young people from the Union and partner countries, including the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans and the Southern Neighbourhood.

This is further supported by the Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action 2022 – 2027. Specifically, the Youth Action Plan states that the EU will further promote young people-to-people contacts through the existing initiatives like the European Solidarity Corps, encouraging the participation of young people in volunteering and solidarity projects.

It is therefore concluded that participation of entities from – as well as participation by individuals legally residing in the countries mentioned in footnotes 15-17 below is in the

¹⁵ Candidate countries (not associated to the Programme): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Territory of Ukraine as recognised by international law: https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-enlargement_en.

¹⁶ Potential candidate (Kosovo): https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/eu-enlargement_en.

¹⁷ 1. EFTA country: Norway; European Neighbourhood Policy countries: 2. Neighbourhood East (Region 2): Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus; 3. South-Mediterranean (Region 3): Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia) and 4. Russian Federation (Region 4): Territory of Russia as recognised by international law.

Union's interest within the meaning of Article 14(2) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.¹⁸

Organisations and individuals of third countries not associated to the Programme, including subsidiaries of such organisations and entities held by such third country individuals, may not be considered eligible to take part in some or all actions of the European Solidarity Corps programme, based on restrictive measures or guidelines adopted at EU level.

1.1.3. Bodies implementing the programme

The European Commission (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture – DG EAC) is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps. It manages the budget in accordance with the Financial Regulation and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the Corps on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Programme at European level.

The Commission also bears overall responsibility for supervising and coordinating the structures in charge of implementing the Programme at national level and directly manages certain Programme actions. At European level, the European Education and Culture Executive Agency ('Executive Agency') is also responsible for implementing certain actions of the Corps (actions under direct management).

Implementation by the Executive Agency is according to the Commission Decision C(2022) 5057¹⁹ delegating powers to the European Education and Culture Executive Agency.

The actions of the Corps are mostly implemented through indirect management. The Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks to National Agencies²⁰ (NAs) established in each Member State and in third countries associated to the Programme. National authorities²¹ monitor and supervise the management of the Programme at national level. In accordance with Articles 62(1), first subparagraph, point c and 157 of the Financial Regulation, the Commission may entrust the National Agencies budget implementation tasks via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode.

1.2. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITIES

1.2.1. General policy framework

The European Union is built on solidarity, a shared value which is strongly felt throughout European society. Solidarity defines the European project and provides the necessary unity to cope with current and future crises. Solidarity provides a clear compass to guide European

¹⁸ Participation by entities from third countries not associated to the Programme cannot be directly funded, see Article 18 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

¹⁹ Commission Decision C(2022) 5057 final of 22.07.2022 delegating powers to the European Education and Culture Executive Agency with a view to the performance of tasks linked to the implementation of Union programmes in the field of education, audiovisual and culture, citizenship and solidarity comprising, in particular, implementation of appropriations entered in the general budget of the Union and repealing Decision C(2021)951 final, as amended by Commission Decisions C(2022) 9296, C(2023) 4617 and C(2024)8304.

²⁰ See Article 24 of European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

²¹ See Article 23 of European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

youth in their aspirations for a better Union. In the Rome Declaration, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, the leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission reaffirmed their commitment to enhance unity and solidarity in order to increase the strength and resilience of the EU²².

Young people need easily accessible opportunities to engage in solidarity activities, through which they can help communities while acquiring useful experience, skills and competences for their personal, educational, social, civic and professional development, thereby improving their employability, their societal engagement, participation in society and social inclusion.

The establishment of the European Solidarity Corps was announced in 2016 as part of the EU's effort to promote solidarity and increase its investment in young people. The initiative was launched in the same year, by mobilising various EU programmes offering solidarity-related opportunities to young people. Following the adoption of the first European Solidarity Corps Regulation for 2018-2020, the activities of the Corps further expanded, making it a single-entry point for organisations and young people engaged in solidarity-related activities in Europe.

The Corps opens new opportunities for young people to carry out volunteering activities in solidarity-related areas and to devise and develop solidarity projects based on their own initiative. The Corps also supports networking activities for participants and organisations, as well as measures to ensure the quality of the supported activities and provide for the validation of their learning outcomes.

The Corps builds on the strengths and synergies of existing and preceding programmes, notably the European Voluntary Service and the EU Aid Volunteers. Consistency and complementarity with other programmes operating in solidarity-related areas is also ensured.

The political guidelines²³ for the 2024-2029 European Commission underline the EU's commitment to empowering young people and addressing their concerns²⁴. The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027²⁵ is the framework for EU cooperation in the youth field. It promotes young people's participation in democratic life in line with Article 165 of the TFEU, supports their social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people can participate in society. The EU Youth Strategy encourages action to engage, connect and empower young people. It promotes youth participation, youth mainstreaming and cross-sectoral cooperation to address the needs of young people in various policy areas, such as employment, climate, environment, digitalization, and health. The strategy includes **11 European Youth Goals**²⁶, which were developed jointly with young people. The European Solidarity Corps is a key enabler of the EU Youth Strategy. Common priorities within the EU Youth Strategy have fed into the **EU Youth Strategy Work Plan 2025-2027**²⁷. This includes the 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (1

²² <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25-rome-declaration>.

²³ Political Guidelines 2024-2029 https://commission.europa.eu/document/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en

²⁴ This is, in particular, visible in the commitment to set up a President's Youth Advisory Board and to implement annual Youth Policy Dialogues with Commissioners.

²⁵ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027, [OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1-22](#).

²⁶ European Youth Goals | European Youth Portal

²⁷ Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the EU Youth Strategy Work Plan 2025-2027.

January 2025-30 June 2026) focusing on ‘Connecting EU with youth’. The EU Youth Report for 2022-2024 and the Commission report on the interim evaluation of the 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy²⁸ (adopted in 2024) will feed into further reflections on the future.

The Corps is aligned with the ambitions of the European Commission outlined in the Communication on the European Year of Youth adopted on 10 January 2024²⁹ to give young people a stronger role in EU policymaking and to address youth concerns across key areas: health and wellbeing, environment and climate, education and training, international cooperation and European values, employment and inclusion.

As a legacy of the European Year of Youth, in 2026 the European Commission will further increase volunteering opportunities for young people to address the green transition. This is one of the sixty actions put forward by the European Commission in the follow-up of the European Year of Youth.

Humanitarian aid volunteering actions of the European Solidarity Corps are guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid³⁰ and strive to contribute to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of Union humanitarian aid, in line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles. International humanitarian law and human rights law are promoted. In this regard, the European Solidarity Corps contributes to a **positive image of Europe in the world, spreading its fundamental values**, thus also facilitating **international policy dialogue and EU public diplomacy** actions.

The European Solidarity Corps also supports the implementation of the European Preparedness Union Strategy³¹, which foresees a key action to “Promote preparedness in youth programmes” in order to promote preparedness, resilience, participation in democratic life and civic engagement.

Finally, the activities of the Corps are in line with the Commission’s Reflection Paper – Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030³² as well as the EU Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³³. Just as with the Youth Goals, the Corps’ activities help to achieve several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As foreseen in the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the Commission and the Member States will cooperate on volunteering policies in the youth field via the open method of

²⁸ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027

²⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Year of Youth 2022, [COM/2024/1 final](#).

³⁰ Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, [OJ C 25, 30.1.2008, p. 1-12](#).

³¹ Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Preparedness Union Strategy, 26 March 2025, JOIN(2025) 130 final

³² European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030 – Reflection paper, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/676251>.

³³ EU Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/38a1e5be-e584-49df-82a9-0ebd9133e9d1_en?filename=SDG-Report-WEB.pdf

coordination. The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, among others, aims to encourage young people to become active EU citizens³⁴, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values as enshrined in the Treaties³⁵ and by a European identity.

More specifically, to give further meaning to the aspirations to involve young people in solidarity-related activities, and to ensure that the Corps can reach its full potential in cooperation with national schemes, the EU Youth Strategy suggests that the Commission and Member States cooperate on a supportive political, legal and administrative environment.

The 2022 **Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union**³⁶, promotes youth volunteering in the European Solidarity Corps and national schemes, aiming to address remaining barriers to cross-border volunteering and solidarity. The European Solidarity Corps also contributes to the objectives of the 2024 **Council Recommendation ‘Europe on the Move’**³⁷, which aims to make learning mobility abroad possible for more people.

Complementarity with existing EU-level information networks relevant to the activities of the Corps, such as the Eurodesk network, will be ensured, as well as complementarity with existing schemes (particularly national solidarity schemes and mobility schemes for young people). The 2021-2027 Corps strives to build on the successful experience of the 2018-2020 period and further extend the scale of volunteering opportunities to the area of humanitarian aid, to contribute to the provision of principled, needs-based assistance to communities in third countries, notably in the area of disaster preparedness and post-disaster relief³⁸.

Since 2018, the European Solidarity Corps has become a unique gateway for solidarity opportunities across the European Union and beyond. As Europe was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and by a series of natural disasters and extreme-weather events in 2021, the European Solidarity Corps demonstrated its resilience and adaptability, when participating organisations and young people stepped in to provide relief and assistance to communities and individuals wherever possible.

In 2026, in the context of the impact of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine that continues to affect the lives of millions of people in the direct vicinity of the EU borders, the Corps will continue demonstrating the value of solidarity, in its action inside and outside the Union, by offering relief and assistance to the communities and individuals whose lives have been disrupted by the war that started in 2022.

³⁴ The European Solidarity Corps is listed as a priority action in the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions under Article 25 TFEU On progress towards effective EU citizenship 2020-2023, [COM/2023/931 final](#)..

³⁵ The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

³⁶ Council Recommendation of 5 April 2022 on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union (Text with EEA relevance), 2022/C 157/01, [OJ C 157, 11.4.2022, p. 1–9](#).

³⁷ [Council Recommendation of 13 May 2024 ‘Europe on the Move’ — learning mobility opportunities for everyone](#).

³⁸ Including post-conflict relief.

1.2.2. Policy priorities

1.2.2.1. Transversal priorities

In addition to the objectives of the Programme outlined in section 1.1, the work programme 2026 will continue to pursue the following transversal priorities applicable to the EU actions in the field of youth, fully in line with the European Education Area³⁹, the Digital Education Action Plan⁴⁰ and the European Democracy Action Plan⁴¹. A gender equality perspective will be mainstreamed throughout the Programme, in line with the principles of the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-25⁴².

- **Inclusion and diversity**

The European Solidarity Corps supports projects and activities actively addressing the issue of inclusion and diversity of all young people in the society.

In general, the Corps aims to promote social inclusion, tolerance, human rights and the value of differences and diversity, and to provide all young people with equal access to the opportunities offered under its actions. An inclusion and diversity strategy for the Programme has been developed to support organisations in reaching out to more participants with fewer opportunities, including individuals who for economic, social, cultural, geographical⁴³ or health reasons, a migrant background, or for reasons such as disability and educational difficulties or for any other reasons, including those that can give rise to discrimination under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, face various obstacles compared to their peers. In addition, the rights of persons with disabilities will be mainstreamed throughout the Programme, including by ensuring accessibility, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Appropriate mechanisms and resources are available to make sure that the specific needs of participants with fewer opportunities can be catered for.

The thematic SALTO⁴⁴ Resource Centre for Inclusion and Diversity will also contribute to high-quality and inclusive implementation for this dimension of the Programme.

³⁹ About the European Education Area see <https://education.ec.europa.eu/about-eea>.

⁴⁰ About the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) see <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan>.

⁴¹ About the European Democracy Action Plan see https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/protecting-democracy_en.

⁴² EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-25 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>. A new gender equality strategy is planned to be developed in 2026, and the Programme will align with it in future.

⁴³ i.e. living in remote areas such as in the EU outermost regions (https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/themes/outermost-regions_en) or the Overseas Countries and Territories associated to the European Union (OCTs) (https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/overseas-countries-and-territories_en).

⁴⁴ Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities.

- **Environmental sustainability and climate goals**

Climate and environment mainstreaming

The actions supported by the Programme contribute to the overall climate and environment objective, as presented below, both by the prioritisation of the green transition and by the promotion of green practices at the level of the projects throughout the Programme.

The European Solidarity Corps aims to make a meaningful contribution to the Commission's commitment to tackling climate and environmental-related challenges⁴⁵. The Programme supports projects and activities aiming to protect, conserve and enhance natural capital, to reduce pollution, promote water resilience, boost circularity, to raise awareness about environmental sustainability and to enable behavioural changes linked to individual preferences, consumption habits and lifestyles. The Programme supports initiatives aimed at preventing and mitigating or repairing the adverse effects of extreme weather events and natural disasters, as well as activities that provide support to affected communities in the aftermath of such extreme weather events or natural disasters.

In general, the Corps promotes the incorporation of green practices in all projects, regardless of the main focus of their activities. Organisations and participants involved with the Corps should have an environmentally friendly approach when designing their activities⁴⁶. Activities contributing to other existing EU initiatives in the area of environmental sustainability (e.g. the New European Bauhaus⁴⁷, EU Missions⁴⁸ and the EU Forest Strategy - more specifically the "3 billion trees" initiative, as well as actions on oceans, rivers and beaches clean-up and conservation, ecosystem restoration, city decarbonisation, climate risk adaptation, and landscape regeneration) are highly encouraged. Furthermore, supported activities should strive to be as energy-efficient as possible and to make responsible choices in terms of energy use at the level of projects and in terms of climate and environmentally friendly mode of transport, as well as encourage other stakeholders and target groups of their activities - wherever relevant - to make such choices too.

The thematic SALTO Resource Centre on sustainable development set up in 2022 will contribute to high-quality and inclusive implementation of the green dimension of the Programme.

⁴⁵ In line with the Conclusions of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council – Fostering engagement among young people as actors of change in order to protect the environment, 2022/C 159/07, OJ C 159, 12.4.2022, p. 9–16.

⁴⁶ In line with the European Green Deal as a blueprint for sustainable growth, the actions supported by this programme should aim to respect the "do no significant harm" principle without changing the fundamental character of the programme. When designing their actions, applicants should incorporate measures that offset or at least considerably reduce the environmental impact of project activities, using for instance the online pledge platform of the Education for Climate Coalition or the European Climate Pact.

⁴⁷ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/about/about-initiative_en.

⁴⁸ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe_en.

- **Digital transformation**

The Political Guidelines of the European Commission⁴⁹ underline the need for Europe to lead the digital transition. The Digital Education Action Plan encourages action at all levels to contribute to the digital transformation through all forms of learning. The Corps aims to support Europeans, regardless of their gender, age and background, to live and thrive in the digital age through projects and activities that help to improve digital skills in general and/or foster digital literacy and to develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities of digital technology, including the combat against cyberbullying.

In general, the Corps promotes the use of appropriate and accessible information, communication and technology tools in all projects, regardless of the main focus of their activities.

Finally, the thematic digital SALTO Resource Centre set up in 2022 will contribute to high-quality and inclusive implementation for the digital dimension of the Programme.

- **Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement**

Participation, promotion of European common values and civic engagement are at the heart of the Corps. The activities supported by the Programme should aim to strengthen European identity (notably as regards common EU values, the principles of unity and diversity, and participating countries' social, cultural and historical heritage) and the participation of young people in democratic processes including European, national, regional and local elections, and through involvement in other EU initiatives, platforms revolving around participation and civic engagement.

Moreover, the European Solidarity Corps' implementation and therefore, the programme beneficiaries and the activities implemented under this Annual Work Programme have to respect the EU values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, in full compliance with the values and rights enshrined in the Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union and the rights and principles enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, particularly Article 21 on non-discrimination.

The thematic SALTO Resource Centre for Participation & Information will contribute to high-quality and inclusive implementation for this dimension of the Programme.

1.2.2.2. Annual priorities

In addition to the four transversal priorities outlined above, the work programme 2026 will also support the following specific annual policy priorities defined for the 'Volunteering teams in high priority areas' in 2026, addressing policy areas of relevance to young people as highlighted in the Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022. These priorities can also inspire projects in actions implemented at decentralised level.

⁴⁹ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age_en.

- **Enhancing a culture of preparedness across the whole of society and providing relief to persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of disasters from natural hazards and human-induced risks**

The Corps can contribute to developing a culture of preparedness that can help people across the whole of society, with particular attention to the most vulnerable groups, adapt to change and risks, such as those related to health, security, economy or any other emerging threat. The Corps can also add significant value by contributing to the provision of relief and assistance to those whose lives, livelihoods and communities have been disrupted by the disasters from natural hazards and human-induced risks, including armed conflicts and its environmental impacts. The importance of solidarity among individuals and communities, within or across borders, has become even more apparent with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting big inflow of displaced people into the EU, frequent occurrences of extreme weather events (e.g. floods, droughts and forest fires) as well as large-scale seismic events in certain countries. It is crucial to use the Corps' potential to implement community-based activities that foster sustained empathy and solidarity among young people and also facilitate exchange and cooperation between people from different backgrounds.

- **Fostering positive learning experiences and outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities**

Volunteers involved in Corps' activities can provide significant value by assisting children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, with disabilities or otherwise vulnerable groups with the attainment of adequate learning achievements, including improving basic skills. This can be done through organising recreational and educational activities for children and young people, as well as through mentoring that supplements formal learning. The volunteers should support young people and children to strengthen their literacy, numeracy, science, digital and citizenship skills to boost their creativity, innovation and critical thinking. The European Year of Youth and the European Year of Skills have fostered the efforts in reaching out to all young people, including those with fewer opportunities. The Commission Communication "Putting people first, securing sustainable and inclusive growth, unlocking the potential of the EU's outermost regions"⁵⁰ underlines that the European Solidarity Corps inclusion and diversity strategy helps young people from these regions to participate in the programme. The European Commission Action Plan on Basic Skills⁵¹ highlights that the European Solidarity Corps will enable supportive environments for developing basic skills.

- **Enhancing intergenerational fairness and solidarity**

The Corps can provide significant value by promoting activities intended to enhance intergenerational fairness and solidarity. It can support development of skills aimed at understanding intergenerational fairness and ensuring that interests of all generations are respected in society and policy making. Volunteers can also enhance and promote solidarity among different generations, by fostering dialogue on sustainability and inclusiveness, transfer of knowledge and experience, and supporting activities aimed at combating age discrimination

⁵⁰ [COM\(2022\) 198 final](#)

⁵¹ [COM\(2025\) 88 final](#)

and inequalities. This can be done, for example, by implementing community-based activities that foster empathy, culture of cooperation and solidarity among people from different generations and backgrounds.

While the specific priorities in this section formally apply to the direct management action “Volunteering teams in high priority areas”, all other actions of the European Solidarity Corps will continue to be mobilised to contribute to these areas as well.

1.2.2.3. Additional action priorities

Beyond the level of transversal and annual priorities, the activities of the European Solidarity Corps will strongly support action in the following areas:

European Solidarity Corps and the Legacy of the European Year of Youth

One of the transversal priorities of the European Solidarity Corps is to support participation in democratic life, promote common values and foster active citizenship. This was a key focus of the European Year of Youth 2022 which aimed to help young people to become active and engaged citizens, notably those that involve youth at risk of social exclusion and discrimination and those living in remote or EU outermost regions, including the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).

Building on the achievements and contributing to the long-lasting legacy of the Year, the Programme will continue to empower young people and to encourage their participation in democratic life in 2026.

European Solidarity Corps and promotion of health and wellbeing

Across all its actions, the Corps aims to support activities related to prevention, promotion and support in the field of health, in line with the HealthyLifeStyle4All, with special focus on supporting vulnerable or disadvantaged population groups. Volunteers may be mobilised around major health challenges, especially regarding wellbeing, mental health, as well as policy priorities such as cancer prevention and care (Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan is a flagship initiative of the current Commission).

European Solidarity Corps and Innovation

Across all its actions, the Corps also strives to add value by promoting and supporting new waves of innovation by mobilising young people and organisations to contribute to awareness of and innovative solutions to a wide range of societal challenges, for example in the context of rural innovation ecosystems (rural youth depopulation, sustainable energy systems, circular economy⁵², nature-based solution⁵³, health promotion and disease prevention etc.).

European Solidarity Corps and enhancing the culture of preparedness

Across all its actions, the Corps aims to support activities related to promotion and support of enhancing the culture of preparedness and enabling the active participation of young people in it. The Corps can help people adapt to change and risks in society, such as in health, security,

⁵² Novel circular business models to enable the just transition to a sustainable and circular economy, https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/HORIZON_HORIZON-CL6-2025-01-CIRCBIO-01

⁵³ Nature Restoration Regulation (OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.07.2024), https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-regulation_en

economy or any other emerging threat. It can do so by implementing community-based solidarity activities.

European Solidarity Corps and intergenerational fairness and solidarity

Across all its actions, the Corps aims to support activities related to promotion and support of intergenerational fairness and solidarity. It can support development of skills aimed at understanding intergenerational fairness and ensuring that interests of all generations are respected in society and policy making. It can also enhance and promote solidarity among different generations, by fostering dialogue, transfer of knowledge and experience, and supporting activities aimed at combating age discrimination and inequalities.

1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The next sections will highlight the main actions and initiatives that the Commission plans to carry out in 2026, in cooperation with the implementing structures of the Programme.

In 2026, the Commission is planning to launch an annual Call for proposals 2026 to cover actions under sections 1.3.1, 1.3.2 and 1.3.3.

In line with Article 29 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the National Agencies can draw up funding strategies that clarify the conditions for activities considered as complementary to their national schemes.

A complete and more detailed description of the grants and procurements that will be awarded in 2026 under the European Solidarity Corps is available in Part II of this work programme.

1.3.1. Volunteering

Volunteering under the ‘participation of young people in solidarity activities’ strand will be carried out through individual volunteering activities or activities by volunteering teams in 2026.

Individual volunteering activities are carried out as voluntary unpaid activities for a period of up to 12 months. This provides young people with the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations in solidarity-related activities to benefit the communities within which the activities are carried out, either in a country other than the country of residence of the participant (cross-border) or in the country of residence of the participant (in-country). Such volunteering must not substitute traineeships and/or jobs and must be based on a written volunteering agreement.

Activities by volunteering teams are designed to allow participants in the Corps carry out solidarity-related activities together (i.e. in teams) for a period of between 2 weeks and 2 months. Such activities could contribute especially to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Corps and/or be justified due to their specific aims.

Main actions planned for 2026

The following actions will be implemented under the general call for proposals:

- **The Volunteering Projects action** is implemented in indirect management and involves individual volunteering and/or activities by volunteering teams. Projects are expected to start in 2026 or at the beginning of 2027, with individual deployments beginning throughout the duration of the projects.
- **Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas** is an action implemented in direct management. Applications for funding under this action are expected to address one of the policy priorities “enhancing a culture of preparedness and providing relief to persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of disasters from natural hazards and human-induced risks”, “fostering positive learning experiences and outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities” and “enhancing intergenerational fairness and solidarity”, as defined in Section 1.2.2.2.
- **The European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps** is an action implemented in direct management which allows young people aged 18-35 to implement activities designed to contribute to providing needs-based humanitarian aid aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity, and to strengthen the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities. In the context of the continuing war of aggression against Ukraine - supported activities under this work programme could include for instance projects in support of refugees in third countries which are not directly part of the armed conflict but are affected by the resulting flows of refugees. Projects with volunteering activities in Ukraine itself, supporting for example reconstruction, would also be eligible, subject to the armed conflict having ceased by that time and the safety and security conditions allowing.

1.3.2. Solidarity projects

Solidarity projects aim to further foster the inclusiveness of the Corps and empower young people to address unmet societal challenges. They consist of bottom-up, solidarity-related activities, for a period of up to 12 months and are set up and carried out by groups of at least five Corps participants, addressing key challenges in their communities while presenting clear European added value. Such projects must not substitute traineeships and/or jobs.

Main actions planned for 2026

Under the general call for proposals, the Commission is planning to create opportunities for young people under the solidarity projects action. Awarded projects are expected to start in the course of 2026 or at the beginning of 2027.

1.3.3. Networking activities

Networking activities are national or transnational activities to support the Corps in fulfilling its objectives and priorities. This should be achieved by helping organisations to offer quality projects to an increasing number of participants, attracting newcomers - both young people and participating organisations - and providing opportunities to give feedback on solidarity-related activities. Such networking activities may also contribute to exchange of experiences and strengthening the sense of belonging among the individuals and entities participating in the Corps and thus support its wider positive impact.

Networking activities can consist of training, support and contact seminars, exchange of practices, establishment of alumni networks and post-placement guidance, evaluation and evidence-based analysis of results and impact. At direct management level, networking activities will include awareness raising activities and events, consultation fora, exchanges of practices and networking for participants and organisations prior to, during and after their participation, with a view to sustaining the spirit of solidarity and inspiring others.

Main actions planned for 2026

In 2026, the supported networking activities will include: organisation of trainings, support and contact seminars for potential participating organisations and participants; thematic activities to raise awareness and exchange of practices linked to the objectives, priority target groups and themes of the Programme; establishing and implementing community-building networks, alumni networks and post-placement guidance and support; evaluation and evidence-based analysis of results and impact.

Note: In addition to organising the networking activities described above, specific training for organisations and young persons involved in solidarity-related activities will be provided through the training and evaluation cycle for participants (i.e. young people) and participating organisations. Preparatory visits and complementary activities will also be supported in conjunction with volunteering and activities by volunteering teams.

1.3.4. Quality and support measures

The Corps aims to provide high-quality solidarity-related activities. Therefore, the following quality and support measures will be implemented:

- measures to ensure the quality and accessibility of volunteering or solidarity projects and equal opportunities for all young people in participating countries, including by taking into account the specific circumstances of participants with fewer opportunities, which equally include participants in rural, remote, peripheral and less developed areas, outermost regions and overseas countries and territories. This includes offline and online training, language learning support, administrative support for participants and participating organisations, insurance, and support before and, where necessary, after the solidarity activity. It also includes the further use of Youthpass, which identifies and documents the competences acquired during solidarity-related activities;
- the development and maintenance of quality labels for entities willing to participate in providing volunteering opportunities for the Corps, to ensure compliance with the principles and requirements of the Corps;
- the activities of the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre, which support and raise the implementation quality of the Corps' actions and address potential obstacles, with a view to ensuring a smooth and balanced experience for all participants and enhancing the validation of their learning outcomes. To take advantage of mutual overlaps in areas of common interest such as inclusion and diversity, the activities of the European Solidarity

Corps Resource Centre will be complemented by the activities of the SALTO Resource Centres, financed jointly with the Erasmus+ programme;

- the establishment, maintenance and updating of the European Solidarity Corps Portal and other relevant online services, as well as the necessary IT support systems and web-based tools, taking into account the need to overcome the digital divide.

Main actions planned for 2026

In 2026, the 5th year of implementation of the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps, the quality and support measures will include the following actions:

- **Quality Label:** a Quality Label system is in place to ensure that participating organisations comply with the principles and requirements of the European Solidarity Corps regarding their responsibilities during all project stages. In general (with the exception of individuals or organisations participating in solidarity projects), obtaining a Quality Label is a prerequisite for an organisation to participate in any activities supported by the Corps although it will not automatically lead to funding. The type of Quality Label awarded will depend on the role an organisation wishes to perform in a project: acting as a host organisation and/or a support organisation.
- **At indirect management level,** since 2021 there has been a new quality label process, which enables easier access to funding for applicants. A new type of Quality Label was introduced, the Quality Label for lead organisations. As a result, the process of applying for grants was significantly streamlined, allowing organisations to spend less energy and resources at application stage and instead enabling them to focus on the quality of the activities and implementation. The application process will be managed by the National Agencies.
- **At direct management level,** the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) will continue to manage the application process for the Quality Label for humanitarian aid volunteering. The procedure consists in validating the capacity of applicant organisations to safely engage young volunteers in humanitarian aid activities and certifying that they comply with the European Solidarity Corps programme quality standards.
- **Insurance:** complementary insurance will be offered to cover insurance-related expenses for participants in cross-border solidarity-related activities⁵⁴ that are not already covered by the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or other insurance schemes in which participants may be enrolled. Obtaining the EHIC prior to departure is mandatory in all cases, except in those where obtaining it proves impossible (due to national rules) or when it requires payment from the participant. Where the EHIC cannot be obtained for these reasons, primary coverage insurance may be proposed based upon

⁵⁴ With the exception of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

due justification. A comprehensive primary coverage insurance is offered to participants under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps⁵⁵.

- **Certificate:** at the end of the activity, participants will receive a certificate of participation, which must be issued by the organisation coordinating or providing the activity. To support the impact of European Solidarity Corps activities on the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of participants, the competences (combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) that are the non-formal and informal learning outcomes of these activities will be identified and documented, on a voluntary basis. For this, EU-level tools such as Youthpass and Europass can be used, in accordance with the specificities of the Corps' activities and national circumstances. Use of the Youthpass process and the certificate that identifies and documents non-formal and informal learning outcomes will be further developed for the Corps, and will be promoted and offered to participants (on a voluntary basis) and participating organisations (mandatory, insofar as the participant requests it).
- **Language learning opportunities:** participants in solidarity activities will benefit from online assessment and training through the fully revamped Online Language Support (OLS) tool. The tool aims to give users the possibility to choose the languages they want to study, as well as their main points of interest (learn more vocabulary, practice grammar, oral practice, etc.). To a certain extent, basic language online activities may also be made available for the benefit of the general public. Grants may be awarded to offer learning opportunities regarding languages and/or levels not covered by the OLS or to cater for specific needs of participants⁵⁶.
- **General online training:** open access training is available for young people registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal and consists of a general induction course and a range of specific courses. It is focused on issues such as the missions of the Corps, ethics, integrity, roles and responsibilities of the participants, EU values, intercultural awareness, insurance, health and safety, etc.
- **Training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps:** Apart from general online training for all young people registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal, specific preparatory training (online and face-to-face) is provided to young people intending to participate in the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps. In order to be ready to contribute to supporting humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries, candidate volunteers should be adequately prepared before starting their volunteering activity. Preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities aims to improve their level of preparedness and specific knowledge about the action.
- **European Youth Card:** participants will be offered a Youth Card, which allows its holders to benefit from reduced fares when purchasing certain goods or services. The granting of this card to the participants as an additional service helps to promote Corps and EU youth policy.
- **European Solidarity Corps and SALTO Resource Centre:** the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre provides assistance to the implementing bodies, participating organisations and stakeholders, to raise the quality and impact of the Corps' actions and

⁵⁵ Except where activities of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps take place in a country/countries where EHIC applies.

⁵⁶ See Section 2.3.3.2. (WPI 5.31).

activities and to enhance the identification and documentation of competences acquired through solidarity-related activities. Existing services offered by the SALTO Resource Centres under Erasmus+ will also continue to assist the Corps in line with their thematic or regional areas of responsibility⁵⁷.

- **European Solidarity Corps Portal:** the IT tools developed specifically for the Corps between 2016 and 2020, particularly the European Solidarity Corps Portal and its different modules and affiliated IT tools, will be further developed to improve the experience for end-users. These developments will build on the role of the Portal as the one-stop shop for interested individuals and organisations regarding, inter alia, registration, identification and matching of profiles and opportunities, networking and virtual exchanges. This includes involving future participants and alumni, online training, certificates, language learning and post-placement support, as well as the development of other functionalities to support the young people and organisations who wish to participate, participate or have participated in solidarity activities, including in the field of humanitarian aid. Links between the Portal and the IT tools supporting project management will continue to be developed to further simplify management for beneficiaries. Similarly, interoperability between the Corps Portal and the Youthpass and Europass IT environments will be developed.
- **Support for IT developments:** In 2026, the Commission will continue to focus on improving the working environment (application forms, reporting forms, etc.) put in place during the previous programming period, adapting it to newly introduced action formats. The main objective will be to maximise synergies with existing Erasmus+ IT tools, support the new IT landscape (including the transfer of information between eGrant system and the Portal, where relevant), and carry out evolutionary maintenance. This will allow the IT infrastructure to provide a seamless user experience, adapting and properly aligning it to support all European Solidarity Corps processes, while ensuring simplification and user-friendliness. The European Youth Portal, including the European Solidarity Corps section, will be further developed to improve user journey and accessibility.⁵⁸

Note: In 2026, the European Solidarity Corps may contribute financially to the Commission's corporate communication, in accordance with Article 22(2) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation. This contribution will cover corporate communication of the EU's political priorities to the extent that they are related to the general objective of the Corps.

⁵⁷ See Section 2.3.2.2. (WPI 5.50).

⁵⁸ See Section 2.3.3.2. (WPI 5.70).

Part II – Grants, Procurement and Other Actions

2.1. BUDGET LINES AND BASIC ACT

Budget line: 07 04 01

Basic act: European Solidarity Corps Regulation

2.2. METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

On the basis of the objectives set out in the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the 2026 work programme will be implemented through:

Implementation mode	Amount EUR	Section
Actions implemented through indirect management	150.100.000	2.2.1
Grants and actions implemented through direct management	15.595.000	
Procurement implemented through direct management	9.425.000	2.2.2
Experts and other actions	180.000	2.2.3
Total	175.300.000	

2.2.1. Grants and actions implemented through direct and indirect management

To achieve the objectives and policy priorities announced in Sections 1.1.1 and 1.2.2 of Part I of this work programme, calls for proposals will be published by the European Commission or by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in accordance with Article 192(1) of the Financial Regulation.

Following the adoption of the financing decision to which this Work Programme is annexed, an annual Call for proposals 2026 will be published by the Commission. The detailed conditions of this call, including priorities, will be included in the 2026 European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide.

The 2026 European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide constitutes an integral part of the Call for proposals 2026 and aims to assist all those interested in developing projects within the Programme. It helps them understand the objectives and the actions of the Programme. It also gives detailed information on what are the minimum requirements for applying and what level of grant is offered. Finally, it informs about the grant selection procedure as well as the rules applying to successful applicants that become beneficiaries of an EU grant. The Programme Guide provides also detailed information as regards the eligibility, selection and award criteria for each type of project to be implemented. The quality of the proposals will be assessed on the basis of the award criteria published per action in the guide.

Actions will be implemented both in direct and indirect management.

All actions implemented through the National Agencies (marked as NA), are implemented in indirect management. Grants through direct management will be those awarded by the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) or EACEA.

Some grants will be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with Article 198 (c) and (f) of the Financial Regulation.

The calls for proposals that will be published or launched to select actions for co-financing in 2026, as well as the grants awarded under specific conditions without issuing a call for proposals, are specified further in Part II of this work programme.

Any requests for grants will be assessed against the criteria defined in the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide 2026.

Selection criteria

Organisations, institutions and groups applying for any grant under the European Solidarity Corps, as detailed further in Part II of this work programme, will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

- **Financial capacity:** applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their regular activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out or the year for which the grant is awarded, to participate in its funding. The verification of financial capacity will not be done for public bodies, including Member State organisations, public legal entities, institutions and organisations in the fields of education and training, youth and sport that have received over 50% of their annual revenue from public sources over the last two years and for international organisations.
- **Operational capacity:** applicants must have the necessary professional competences and qualifications to carry out the proposed action. Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the projects and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

2.2.2. Procurement

This work programme also includes actions that will be implemented by public procurement procedures (via calls for tenders or the use of service or framework contracts) (Article 167 of the Financial Regulation). The amounts reserved, together with the indicative number of contracts and the timeframe for launching the procurement procedures, are indicated in Table 2 in Part III, Section 2 of this work programme.

For actions implemented through framework contracts (FWC), in case an existing FWC cannot be used, the Commission will consider publishing calls for tenders to award new FWC.

Any submissions within the context of procurement procedures will be assessed against the criteria defined in the relevant procurement notice.

2.2.3. Experts and other actions

This work programme includes costs related to the experts involved in assessing requests for a Quality Label or funding.

Insofar as participating organisations are concerned, a Quality Label process is in place for applicants (under ‘quality and support measures’) to ensure the general quality framework in accordance with the European Solidarity Corps Regulation. Holding the relevant Quality Label is a pre-requisite to be eligible to receive a grant for most solidarity-related activities⁵⁹ and/or to participate in many other actions of the Corps.

2.3. SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

2.3.1. Expected results of supported activities

In line with the general and specific objectives and in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation framework of the European Solidarity Corps⁶⁰, the actions supported by the initiative are expected to bring positive and long-lasting effects to the participants and participating organisations involved, as well as the communities in which these actions take place.

For individual participants, solidarity-related activities supported in 2026, and any other supported activities related to them (e.g. quality and support measures), are meant to produce the main following outcomes:

- improved skills and competences for personal, educational, social, civic, cultural and professional development;
- more active participation in democratic life and in society in general;
- enhanced employability and transition to the labour market;
- increased sense of initiative and social entrepreneurship;
- increased self-empowerment and self-esteem;
- improved foreign language competences;
- enhanced intercultural awareness;
- better awareness of the European project, its foundations, history, functioning and EU values;
- increased motivation for further engagement in the solidarity sector;
- increased awareness of humanitarian aid-related themes and values.

Supported solidarity-related activities are also expected to produce the following outcomes on participating organisations:

⁵⁹ With the exception of grants concerning solidarity projects, to which the obligation for applicants for funding to have a relevant Quality Label does not apply.

⁶⁰ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) supplementing Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council with provisions on the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the European Solidarity Corps Programme, [C/2023/6085 final](#).

- increased capacity to operate at EU/international level;
- innovative and improved ways of operating towards their target groups;
- greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity;
- more modern, dynamic, committed and professional environment inside the organisations.

For communities where the supported solidarity-related activities are implemented, the following outcomes are expected:

- increased ability to address societal challenges;
- greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity;
- increased capacity building among local organisations and local communities in third countries.

In the long run, the combined effect of supported solidarity-related activities is expected to have an impact on the operations of a large number of stakeholders in participating countries.

In continuity with previous years and in relation with the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, a number of activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps in 2026 will result in direct relief for and improved capacity of communities to address needs arising from the consequences of the aggression, including refugee relief, assistance, support and integration.

2.3.2. Actions implemented under indirect management

This section of the work programme describes the actions implemented by the National Agencies (NA) of the European Solidarity Corps Programme. The budget implementation tasks will be entrusted to the National Agencies via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62(1), first subparagraph, point c, 110(3)(f) and 160(1) of the Financial Regulation. The country distribution of the budget (i.e. amounts entrusted to National Agencies in individual countries) is provided in Part III of this work programme.

The expected results for the actions described in this section are indicated in Section 2.3.1 above. More specific indications for these actions concerning 1) the main expected outputs, 2) the implementation mode, 3) and the estimated amount available are indicated in the programming tables in Part III, Section 2 of this work programme.

2.3.2.1 Grants awarded by means of a general call for proposals (European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide)

Volunteering Projects

Index references in budget table (WPI): 1.00

The financial envelope by country is indicated in table 3 of Part III.

This action provides young people with the opportunity to contribute, with their motivation and commitment, to the daily work of organisations active in solidarity-related fields by offering them volunteering opportunities.

These volunteering opportunities can be offered through Volunteering Projects. Projects are implemented through an appropriate mix of eligible activities, particularly individual volunteering and activities by volunteering teams.

Individual volunteering is a solidarity-related activity carried out as a voluntary unpaid activity for a period of up to 12 months. This provides young people with the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations engaged in solidarity-related activities to benefit the communities in which the activities are carried out. Such volunteering must not substitute traineeships and/or jobs and must be based on a written volunteering agreement.

Activities by volunteering teams are solidarity-related activities allowing teams of European Solidarity Corps participants to volunteer together for a period between 2 weeks and 2 months. Such solidarity-related activities could contribute especially to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Corps and/or be justified due to the specific aims of the solidarity-related activities.

Individual volunteering and/or activities by volunteering teams aim to:

- address clearly defined unmet societal challenges;
- promote solidarity across Member States;
- enable the young volunteer(s) to gain skills and competences which are useful for their personal, educational, social and professional development;
- provide tangible benefits to the communities within which the activities are carried out;
- ensure a direct contact between the participant and the beneficiaries of the solidarity-related activities, to enable the young volunteer to gain skills that are useful for their educational and social development;
- reach out to young people with fewer opportunities, including young persons with disabilities, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, as well as members of vulnerable groups, ethnic minorities and vulnerable communities;
- respect the principles set out in the EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017)⁶¹ and in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁶², including its Article 9 on Accessibility;
- promote diversity, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue - and the EU values of human dignity, freedom, equality and respect for human rights, including the rights of

⁶¹ EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child, 6 June 2017.

⁶² UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, Article 9, A/RES/61/106, 12 December 2006.

persons belonging to minorities - as well as projects enhancing media literacy, critical thinking and a sense of initiative among young people;

- reinforce the capacities and international scope of the participating organisations;
- raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries, offering them the opportunity to build networks of international contacts, to actively participate in society and to develop a sense of European citizenship and identity;
- promote environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among young people, raising their awareness of the importance of acting to reduce or compensate for the environmental footprint of activities.

In line with the conditions of the call for proposals, and depending on the format of activities for which financial support is requested (and without prejudice to the definition of individual eligible activities), supported activities may be:

- cross-border activities, i.e. activities taking place in a different country to the country of origin of the participant(s); or
- in-country activities, e.g. to encourage and facilitate the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, to provide opportunities where national schemes do not exist, or to cater for priorities identified at European level within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps initiative.

Types of applicants targeted by this action: any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, legally established in an EU Member State, a third country associated to the Programme or international organisations holding a valid Quality Label for lead organisation at the grant application deadline. Participating organisations may be from an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme and may also be from a third country not associated to the Programme⁶³ and must hold a valid Quality Label for host and/or support role at the latest at the start of the activities.

Only organisations holding a Quality Label for lead organisations may apply and receive grants to implement projects focused on volunteering opportunities.

Projects with exclusively in-country volunteering activities must involve at least one Quality Label organisation. Projects including individual cross-border volunteering activities must involve a Quality Label host organisation, and at least one Quality Label support organisation from each of the countries where the participants are legally residing. Volunteering teams require at least one (host or support) Quality Label organisation.

Against this background, the eligibility of legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme, as foreseen by Article 14.2 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, is in the Union's interest. However, their participation is limited as grant beneficiaries may only use

⁶³ See list of countries mentioned under section 1.1.2.

up to 25% of the project grant to involve participants from third countries not associated⁶⁴ to the programme⁶⁵.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies	100.000.000

Solidarity projects

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.00

The financial envelope by country is indicated in Table 3 of Part III.

Solidarity projects are non-profit solidarity activities, for a period of up to 12 months, that are set up and carried out by groups of at least five Corps participants, to address key challenges in their communities while presenting clear European added value. Such solidarity projects must not substitute traineeships and/or jobs.

Projects under this action promote a spirit of initiative, social commitment and active citizenship and mainly aim to:

- provide young people with easily accessible opportunities to engage in solidarity-related activities;
- foster active participation and social commitment by young people carrying out the project;
- help address concrete, unmet societal challenges and strengthen communities;
- help enhance the personal, educational, social and civic development of young people;
- have an impact on the local community by addressing local issues or common challenges and developing local opportunities, particularly in communities located in rural, isolated or marginalised areas and border regions, including the EU outermost regions;
- promote environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among young people implementing the project and other participants in project activities, raising their

⁶⁴ Given the immediate right to temporary protection granted to Ukrainian nationals under the Temporary Protection Directive (Council Directive 2001/55/EC), volunteers who are Ukrainian nationals (whether legally residing in the EU or in Ukraine) shall be exempted from this 25% limitation. For the purposes of applying the limitation, they shall be counted as participants coming from an EU Member State. The exemption shall apply at least until 4 March 2027 (or longer, if the temporary protection is extended beyond this date).

⁶⁵ In case of projects of four volunteers or less, the 25% limitation may be exceeded in order to allow participation of one volunteer from a third country not associated to the Programme.

awareness of the importance of acting to reduce or compensate for the environmental footprint of activities;

- enable active participation of young people in fostering the culture of preparedness,
- respect the principles set out in the EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017) and in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including its Article 9 on accessibility.

Type of applicants targeted by this action: groups of minimum 5 young people aged between 18 and 30 years old, who are legally residing in one and the same EU Member State or a third country associated to the Programme and have registered themselves in the European Solidarity Corps Portal. Any public or private body, legally established in an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme, may apply on behalf of the group that will implement the project.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies	14.000.000

2.3.2.2 Other actions under indirect management

a) Quality Label (indirect management)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.14

A Quality Label process is in place to ensure a general quality framework for most activities (in practice: volunteering, activities by volunteering teams, i.e. any projects involving one or more of these activities) that may be carried out with the support of the European Solidarity Corps. Obtaining a Quality Label is a pre-condition for organisations to:

- apply for funding;
- participate in the volunteering activities supported under the European Solidarity Corps.

There are three types of Quality Label, depending on the role(s) that the organisation wishes to play in the project:

- Host role;
- Support role;
- Quality Label for Lead organisations.

Award of a Quality Label for host or support role does not provide automatic access to funding. The Quality Label will be valid for the duration of the programming period (2021-2027) and subject to periodical reassessment.

Type of applicants targeted by this action: for the Quality Label for lead, host and support organisations, any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, legally established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to the Programme or any international organisation. They can have a host or support role or the combination of both. Organisations from a third country not associated to the Programme can have either a host or support role or both.

The participation in a host and/or support role of legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme, as foreseen by Article 14.2 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, is in the Union's interest.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies	N/A

b) Transnational and national Networking Activities

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 4.10

The Networking Activities aim to bring added value and increased quality to the overall implementation of the European Solidarity Corps and contribute to increasing its impact at systemic level.

In 2026, Networking Activities consist of transnational and national:

- training, support and contact seminars for potential organisations and participants, particularly a networking activities seminar to exchange practices and develop quality in Networking Activities;
- thematic activities to raise awareness and exchanges of practices linked to the objectives, priority target groups and themes of the Programme;
- establishment and implementation of alumni networks and post-placement guidance and support;
- evaluation and evidence-based analysis of results and impact.

Networking Activities are crucial support activities targeting potential beneficiaries and potential participants, practitioners and stakeholders of the European Solidarity Corps Programme. Through Networking Activities, the National Agencies provide trainings, thematic and research activities, support and contact seminars, which are key to ensure quality implementation of the Programme and to build closer links with the relevant elements of policy development.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies	7.000.000

c) Activities of the SALTO and European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.50

The Resource Centres are part of the quality and support measures mentioned in the Regulation establishing the European Solidarity Corps. They constitute additional entrusted tasks to be performed by designated National Agencies to support the development, implementation and

quality of actions under the European Solidarity Corps. The European Solidarity Corps benefits from the already well-established network of Resources Centres under the Erasmus+ programme and a dedicated European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre.

SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres are structures mainly supported through the Erasmus+ Programme aiming to improve the quality of projects in the field of youth. Through their thematic (participation, information, inclusion, diversity, training and recognition) or geographical (Eastern Partnership countries and Russia, Southern Mediterranean, Western Balkans) focus, they provide resources, information and training in specific areas for National Agencies and other actors involved in the youth field and foster the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The SALTO resource centres also offer support and develop trainings, tools and resources for the European Solidarity Corps.

The European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre assists the implementing bodies, participating organisations and young people taking part in the European Solidarity Corps, as well as stakeholders, to raise the quality and impact of its implementation in all participating countries, and to enhance the identification and documentation of competences acquired through the activities.

Support for the European Solidarity Resource Centres is identified in Article 5(2)(d) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

The budget implementation tasks will be entrusted to National Agencies via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Article 62(1), first subparagraph, point c, 110(3)(f), 157 and 160(1) of the Financial Regulation.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre	390.000
National Agencies (SALTO Resource Centres)	710.000

d) Specific training for participants, organisations and mentors in solidarity-related activities (training and evaluation cycle; indirect management)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.40

The training aims to improve the level of preparedness of young people participating in cross-border solidarity-related activities and consists of the following modules/activities:

- pre-departure training for volunteers ensures that, by the time they leave, participants are adequately prepared for their upcoming activities and equipped with practical and

technical information on matters such as insurance, visa, pocket money and working hours, etc.

- on-arrival training introduces the volunteers to the host country, helps to adapt to cultural and personal challenges and allows getting to know each other and build a network.
- mid-term evaluation allows participants in long-term volunteering to assess their experience up to that point and to reflect on the activities, role and support of the host organisation and on their own contribution.
- annual event is an opportunity to bring together former, current and potential participants.

The training also supports organisations with an objective to provide training to newly awarded Quality Label organisations on the core features of the Programme.

The training provides mentors with guidance on how to offer support and reinforced mentorship to the participants involved in volunteering activities.

The budget implementation tasks will be entrusted to National Agencies via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62(1), first subparagraph, point (c), 110(3)(f), 157 and 160(1) of the Financial Regulation.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
National Agencies	16.000.000

2.3.3. Actions implemented under direct management

The expected results for the actions described in this section are indicated in Section 2.3.1 above. More specific indications for these actions concerning 1) the main expected outputs, 2) the implementation mode and 3) the estimated amount available are indicated in the programming tables in Part III, Section 2 of this work programme.

2.3.3.1 Grants awarded by means of a general call for proposals (European Solidarity Corps Guide)

a) Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas⁶⁶

Index references in budget table (WPI): 1.30

This action provides young people with the opportunity to contribute, with their motivation and commitment, to the daily work of organisations active in solidarity-related fields by offering them volunteering opportunities.

⁶⁶ In 2026 these areas correspond to the policy priorities defined in Section 1.2.2.2.

These volunteering opportunities will be offered through Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas. Activities by volunteering teams are solidarity-related activities allowing teams of European Solidarity Corps participants to volunteer together for a period between 2 weeks and 2 months. Such solidarity-related activities are justified due to their specific aims.

Activities by volunteering teams in high-priority areas will aim to:

- address clearly defined unmet societal challenges in the area of either “Enhancing a culture of preparedness and providing relief to persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of disasters from natural hazards and human-induced risks” or “fostering positive learning experiences and outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities”, and “enhancing intergenerational fairness and solidarity” as defined in Section 1.2.2.2.;
- promote solidarity across the participating countries;
- enable the young volunteer(s) to gain skills and competences which are useful for their personal, educational, social and professional development;
- provide tangible benefits to the communities within which the activities are carried out;
- ensure a direct contact between the participant and the beneficiaries of the solidarity-related activities, to enable the young volunteer to gain skills that are useful for their educational and social development;
- reach out to young people with fewer opportunities, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, as well as members of vulnerable groups, ethnic minorities and vulnerable communities;
- promote diversity, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue - and the EU values of human dignity, freedom, equality and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities - as well as projects enhancing media literacy, critical thinking and a sense of initiative among young people;
- respect the principles set out in the EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017) and in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including its Article 9 on accessibility;
- reinforce the capacities and international scope of the participating organisations;
- raise participants’ awareness and understanding of other cultures and countries, offering them the opportunity to build networks of international contacts, to actively participate in society and to develop a sense of European citizenship and identity.

In line with the conditions of the call for proposals, and depending on the format of activities for which financial support is requested (and without prejudice to the definition of individual eligible activities), supported activities may be:

- cross-border activities, i.e. activities taking place in a different country to the country of origin of the participant(s); or
- in-country activities, e.g. to encourage and facilitate the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, to provide opportunities where national schemes do not exist, or to cater for priorities identified at European level within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps initiative.

Types of applicants targeted by this action: any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, legally established in an EU Member State, a third country associated to the Programme or international organisations holding a valid Quality Label for lead organisation at the grant application deadline. Participating organisations (host and/or support role) may be from an EU Member State, a third country associated to the Programme and may also be from a third country not associated to the Programme⁶⁷. All participating organisations (support or host role) must hold a valid volunteering Quality Label at the application deadline and during the entire duration of the project. Organisations who are hosting volunteers must hold a host role Quality Label. Projects must be submitted by a consortium of at least three eligible participating organisations with a Quality Label from at least two different EU Member States or third countries associated to the Programme.

Only organisations holding a Quality Label for lead organisations may apply as coordinator and receive grants on behalf of the consortium to implement projects focused on volunteering.

The eligibility of legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme, as foreseen by Article 14.2 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, is in the Union's interest. However, their participation is limited as grant beneficiaries may only use up to 25% of the project grant to involve participants from third countries not associated⁶⁸ to the programme⁶⁹.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	5.000.000

b) European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

Index references in budget table (WPI): 2.00

This action provides young people aged 18 to 35 years old with the opportunity to participate in volunteering activities, aiming at supporting humanitarian aid operations. These activities should:

- contribute to a needs-based humanitarian response and be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid⁷⁰. International humanitarian law and human rights law should be promoted;
- be carried out in compliance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, as well as with the "do no significant harm" principle;

⁶⁷ See list of countries mentioned under section 1.1.2.

⁶⁸ Given the immediate right to temporary protection granted to Ukrainian nationals under the Temporary Protection Directive (Council Directive 2001/55/EC), volunteers who are Ukrainian nationals (whether legally residing in the EU or in Ukraine) shall be exempted from this 25% limitation. For the purposes of applying the limitation, they shall be counted as participants coming from an EU Member State. The exemption shall apply at least until 4 March 2027 (or longer, if the temporary protection is extended beyond this date).

⁶⁹ In case of projects of four volunteers or less, the 25% limitation may be exceeded in order to allow participation of one volunteer from a third country not associated to the Programme.

⁷⁰ Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, OJ C 25, 30.1.2008, p. 1–12.

- respond to the humanitarian needs of local communities identified in cooperation with humanitarian and other relevant partners within the hosting country or region;
- be planned on the basis of risk assessments and undertaken in a way that ensures that there is a high level of safety and security for volunteers;
- where relevant, facilitate the transition from the humanitarian response to long-term sustainable and inclusive development;
- facilitate the active involvement of local staff and volunteers from the countries and communities where they are implemented;
- respect the principles set out in the EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (2017) and in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including its Article 9 on accessibility;
- strive to contribute to enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of the EU humanitarian aid, in line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles;
- contribute to an adequate humanitarian response strengthening the gender perspective in Union humanitarian aid policy, promoting adequate humanitarian responses to the specific needs of women and men of all ages, and seek to involve women and groups and networks of women. These actions should take into account the needs and capacities of those in the most vulnerable situations, including women and children, and those most at risk, e.g. members of vulnerable groups, ethnic minorities and vulnerable communities;
- contribute to efforts to strengthen local preparedness or the response to humanitarian crises.

Subject to an end to the ongoing war and to adequate guarantees of safety and security of the volunteers, volunteering activities could include supporting humanitarian aid operations in the aftermath of the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and deploying young volunteers in the rebuilding in Ukraine.

In practice, the following activities are supported under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps:

- Individual volunteering implementing a solidarity activity in the field of humanitarian aid that can be “long term”, with a duration of 2 to 12 months.
- Volunteering teams implementing a solidarity activity in the field of humanitarian aid of 5 to 40 participants coming from at least two different countries who volunteer together for a period between 2 weeks and 2 months.
- Preparatory meetings (before the deployment) and complementary activities (in parallel to the volunteering activity) as side activities aiming at ensuring high quality and increased impact at local/regional level.

Type of applicants targeted for a support role by this action: any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, legally established in an EU Member State, a third country associated to the Programme or international organisations. Participating organisations (host role) must be based in a third country not associated to the Programme where humanitarian aid activities and operations take place and where there are no ongoing international or non-international armed conflicts. All

participating organisations must hold a valid Quality Label for Humanitarian Aid volunteering at the application deadline and for the entire duration of the project. Eligible participating organisations are expected to form a consortium.

The participation of legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme in a host role for humanitarian volunteering is indispensable to implement this action, therefore it is in the Union's interest as foreseen by Article 14.2 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	10.595.000

2.3.3.2. Procurements

a) *Networking and communication activities and events organised at European level*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 4.20

The networking activities aim to bring added value and increased quality to the overall implementation of the European Solidarity Corps and so contribute to increasing its impact at systemic level. In addition, communication activities at European level shall enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities, as a means to strengthen cohesion, solidarity, democracy, European identity and active citizenship in the Union and beyond. The communication activities will follow the provisions laid down in Article 22 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, regarding information, communication and dissemination.

Networking activities and events organised at European level consist of:

- networking activities and events aimed at awareness raising, further dissemination and strengthening the effectiveness and broader impact of the European Solidarity Corps initiative;
- consultation fora to gather and assess the perspective of stakeholders on the implementation of the initiative;
- networking activities and events aimed at exchanging practices, awareness raising and community building for participants and organisations, including through the European Solidarity Corps Portal.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	500.000

b) European Solidarity Corps Insurance

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.20

The European Solidarity Corps insurance scheme aims to cover the risks run by the young people participating in Corps activities as volunteers in cross-border activities. Every participant must be enrolled in the European Solidarity Corps Insurance scheme foreseen by the European Solidarity Corps Programme. For participants in solidarity-related activities' strand, the offered insurance should complement coverage by the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and/or national social security systems and other insurance schemes in which participants may be enrolled. Those participants who are not eligible for the EHIC will be entitled to receive full coverage through the insurance provided by the European Commission. In cases in which obtaining the EHIC proves impossible (due to national rules), or when it requires the participant to pay, primary coverage insurance may be proposed based upon due justification. National Agencies must promote the fact that being in possession of an EHIC (when possible), and European Solidarity Corps Insurance is mandatory for all participants in cross-border activities.

A comprehensive primary coverage insurance is offered to participants under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps⁷¹.

The organisations are responsible for the enrolment of the participant(s) to the insurance scheme. This enrolment must be done before the departure of the participant(s) and cover the duration of the activity.

The multiannual framework contract in place following a procurement procedure provides an insurance scheme for participants in European Solidarity Corps projects selected in the programming period (2021-2027), including volunteers in humanitarian aid activities.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	5.000.000

c) Online language support (OLS)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.31

The scheme for systematic language support offers online assessment and training to volunteers.

The tool aims to give users the possibility to choose the languages they want to study (e.g. the language of the host country, the language of the activity), as well as their main points of interest (learn more vocabulary, practice grammar, oral practice, etc.). To a certain extent, basic language online activities may also be made available for the benefit of the general public.

⁷¹ Except where activities of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps take place in a country/countries where EHIC applies.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	700.000

d) Training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (direct management)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.32

Specific preparatory training (online and face-to-face) will continue to be provided to young people participating in the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps. Indeed, in order to be ready to support humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries, candidate volunteers must be adequately prepared before the start of their volunteering activity. Preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities aims to improve their level of preparedness and specific knowledge about the action.

In 2026, the preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities is provided through specific contracts under a framework contract.

A new call for tender will be launched in 2026 for the implementation of the training of candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps as of 2027.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	1. 785. 000

e) Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label, Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.11

Information and networking activities aim to increase the capacity of potential participating organisations to respect the general quality framework.

In 2026, these activities will consist mainly of:

- thematic activities to raise awareness and exchange of practices linked to the Quality Label, i.e. activities dedicated to helping potential participating organisations to understand their roles and responsibilities, the key features of the Programme (such as

specific support for young people with fewer opportunities, EU level recognition tools, mentoring etc.) and how to develop quality projects.

- thematic activities and events to raise awareness and exchange of practices linked to the Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas;
- information fora to provide advice and assistance to potential applicants in the Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas Action;
- thematic activities and events to raise awareness about the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps;
- information fora to provide advice and assistance to potential applicants to the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	200.000

f) European Solidarity Corps Portal

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.70

The European Solidarity Corps Portal, which is integrated into the European Youth Portal, offers information on solidarity-related opportunities across Europe and beyond. It provides young people with information about the Corps and access to organisations which have received the Quality Label and are registered in the Portal. Furthermore, the Portal and its integrated tools (PASS) enable registered organisations (holders of the Quality Label) to search for and contact suitable candidates for volunteering activities that they wish to offer.

The Portal allows young people to access online training, find out about opportunities, other youth initiatives and importantly, to build a community of young people sharing the common European values. The Portal will continue to integrate technical developments to reply to both young people, organisations' and national agencies' needs. A specific focus will be made on accessibility and mobile responsive design for the European Youth Portal.

Activities to disseminate and exploit results are also envisaged, linked to the European Solidarity Corps Portal's role as an information hub.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	440.000

g) Support for IT developments

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.65

The European Solidarity Corps Programme's allocated credits for IT tools and systems in 2026 will allow the Commission to support the IT landscape and simultaneously cover the expenses related to the existing IT tools (evolutionary maintenance).

This will mainly concern IT tools and systems destined to be directly used by, or to benefit directly, multiple categories of external stakeholders, including applicants, beneficiaries, National Agencies, National Authorities and participants in general, such as young people, in line with Programme objectives. These include the IT systems on indirect management PMM - Project Management Module, BM - Beneficiary Module, AF - Application Forms, management reporting (DAP-Data Analytics Platform), dissemination platform (VALOR), as well as supporting the direct management IT landscape (including the transfer of information between the eGrant system and the European Youth Portal, where relevant) etc.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	800.000

2.3.3.3. Experts

- a) *Support for evaluating requests for the Quality Label and requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (direct management)*

Index references in budget table (WPI): 5.81

These costs cover the services provided by the experts involved in the assessment of requests for the Quality Label (see the Section on 'Quality Label (centralised)' WPI.5.13 below) as well as requests for funding (see Section 2.3. 3.1 a) and b) above, insofar as they refer to Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps). This item will be implemented through recourse to experts based on existing lists established following calls for expression of interest in compliance with Article 242 of the Financial Regulation.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	180.000

2.3.3.4. Other actions

Quality Label (direct management) for the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.13

A Quality Label system is in place to ensure the general quality framework for humanitarian aid related activities. Organisations may apply for a Quality Label for humanitarian aid related activities. Obtaining the Quality Label is a pre-condition to:

- apply for funding under the humanitarian aid action;
- participate in the humanitarian aid related activities organised under the European Solidarity Corps.

Type of applicants targeted by this action: for the Quality Label for support role any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, legally established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to the Programme or any international organisation. Participating organisations with a host role must also be based in a third country not associated to the Programme where humanitarian aid activities and operations take place and where there are no ongoing international or non-international armed conflicts. All participating organisations must hold a valid Quality Label for Humanitarian Aid volunteering at the application deadline and for the entire duration of the project. Eligible participating organisations are expected to form a consortium.

The participation of legal entities from third countries not associated to the Programme in a host role for humanitarian volunteering is indispensable to implement this action, therefore it is in the Union's interest as foreseen by Article 14.2 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	N/A

2.4. MANAGEMENT FEES OF NATIONAL AGENCIES

a) *Management Fees of National Agencies*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 6.00

Financial support to National Agencies is identified in Article 25 paragraph 2, point (b) of the Regulation. Financial support is provided to National Agencies as a contribution to their management costs linked to the implementation of the tasks that will be entrusted to them via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62(1), first subparagraph, point (c), 110(3)(f) and 160(1) of the Financial Regulation.

The calculation method and the country distribution of the management fees are provided in Part III, Section 4 of this work programme.

Implementation	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC-National Agencies	12.000.000

Part III – Budget

This part of the work programme indicates the funds that will be available in 2026 to finance activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps Programme.

3.1. INDICATIVE BUDGET

The total indicative operational appropriations foreseen under the 2026 work programme are **EUR 175 300 000⁷²**.

Table 1 – Available appropriations

Budget European Solidarity Corps 2026	Budget line	EU	EFTA/EE A	Internal assigned revenue	Third countries entry tickets	Total
European Solidarity Corps	07 04 01	142.523.651, 00	299.299,67	25.502.963,33	6.974.086,00	175.300.000,00
TOTAL		142.523.651, 00	299.299,67	25.502.963,33	6.974.086,00	175.300.000,00

⁷² This amount is subject to the availability of the appropriations and contributions of EFTA and other participating countries to the programme.

3.2. DISTRIBUTION OF ESTIMATED APPROPRIATIONS BY ACTIONS – BUDGET AND PROGRAMMING TABLES

The budget and programming tables below show the distribution of available appropriations among the actions funded by budget line 07 04 01, taking into account the amounts adopted in the EU-Budget.

The overall allocation of funds to the Programme is established by Article 11 of the Regulation. It should be noted, however, that in line with the Regulation, these percentages of the total budget are fixed for the entire programming period 2021-2027. Therefore, for a given year of implementation, they do not need to be respected in full (e.g. because of reprogramming or a change in political priorities). However, the trend will have to be respected for the overall duration of the Programme.

Legend	
APEL	Award procedure for European Label
CFP	Call for proposals
IM	Indirect management
MF	Management fees awarded to the National Agencies
PP	Public procurement
SE	Experts - [Article 242 of the Financial Regulation]
MON	Grants for bodies with a de facto or de jure monopoly - [Article 198(c) of the Financial Regulation]
WPI	Work programme index
EAC	Actions implemented directly by DG EAC (direct management)
Executive agency	Actions implemented directly by the Executive Agency (direct management)
NA	Actions implemented indirectly by National Agencies (indirect management)
EAC-NA	Management Fees of National Agencies provided by DG EAC under Contribution Agreements

Table 2 – Total budget

WPI	Actions	2026 draft budget allocation	Implementation mode	Implementing body
1.00	Volunteering projects	€ 100.000.000	IM	NA
1.30	Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas	€ 5.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.00	European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	€ 10.595.000	CFP	EACEA
3.00	Solidarity projects	€ 14.000.000	IM	NA
4.10	Transnational and national networking activities	€ 7.000.000	IM	NA
4.20	Networking and communication activities and events organised at European level	€ 500.000	PP	EAC
5.11	Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label, Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas and the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	€ 200.000	PP	EACEA
5.13	Quality Label (direct management) for European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	- € ⁷³	CFP	EACEA
5.14	Quality Label (indirect management)	- € ⁷⁴	IM	NA
5.20	European Solidarity Corps Insurance	€ 5.000.000	PP	EACEA
5.31	Online language support (OLS)	€ 700.000	PP	EACEA
5.32	Training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (direct management)	€ 1.785.000	PP	EACEA
5.40	Specific training for participants and organisations and mentors in solidarity-related activities (training and evaluation cycle; indirect management)	€ 16.000.000	IM	NA
5.50	Activities of the SALTO and European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres	€ 1.100.000	IM	NA
5.60	European Solidarity Corps Youth Card	- € ⁷⁵	MON	EACEA
5.65	Support for IT development	€ 800.000	PP	EAC
5.70	European Solidarity Corps Portal	€ 440.000	PP	EAC
5.81	Support for evaluating requests for the Quality Label and requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas and the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (direct management)	€ 180.000	SE	EACEA
6.00	Management Fees of National Agencies	€ 12.000.000	MF	EAC-NA
	TOTAL	€ 175.300.000		

⁷³ No budget allocated in 2026. This budget line refers to expenses on assessing and promoting Quality Label applications (WPI 5.11 and 5.81).

⁷⁴ No budget allocated in 2026. This budget line refers to expenses on assessing and promoting Quality Label applications (WPI 5.40).

⁷⁵ No budget allocated in 2026 as the selection is made every second year.

3.3. BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY OF THE FUNDS ALLOCATED TO THE NATIONAL AGENCIES

The 4 criteria used for the allocation of funds for the EU contribution to grant support indirectly managed by the National Agencies are the following:

- a) Country Population;**
- b) Cost of Living;**
- c) Distance between capitals;**
- d) Performance.**

The relative weight of the criteria is calculated as follows:

Minimum allocation of 20% of the budget for each action is applied. The criteria a) to c) account for the allocation of 70% of funds. The criterion of past performance d) accounts for the remaining 10%. Therefore, the country allocation and, more specifically, the level of contribution and grant agreements is based on the figures resulting from the above-mentioned criteria.

In order to guarantee that there are no excessive imbalances in the annual budget allocated to countries from one year to another, a correction mechanism is applied to the allocations resulting from the pure application of the above-mentioned criteria.

Table 3⁷⁶ – Country allocation (in EUR)^{77 78}:

	Volunteering	Solidarity Projects	Transnational and national networking activities	Specific training (training and evaluation cycle)	Total
BE	3.069.366	428.386	204.226	472.977	4.174.954
BG	2.651.946	322.790	152.839	329.058	3.456.633
CZ	2.654.170	379.656	194.590	429.148	3.657.563
DK	1.698.950	252.303	130.009	280.082	2.361.343
DE	12.982.460	1.666.844	815.585	2.071.037	17.535.926
EE	1.300.549	194.401	102.657	160.340	1.757.948
EL	2.238.914	402.719	200.507	458.176	3.300.316
ES	8.811.145	1.134.371	583.804	1.415.527	11.944.846
FR	9.565.818	1.400.158	680.792	1.735.961	13.382.729
HR	1.814.710	234.916	124.053	239.389	2.413.068
IE	1.517.233	246.701	128.158	278.504	2.170.596
IT	8.612.860	1.287.044	652.499	1.680.096	12.232.499
CY	1.014.606	188.893	99.750	129.227	1.432.476
LV	1.303.396	204.136	107.799	184.778	1.800.109
LT	1.699.671	219.335	115.825	202.612	2.237.443
LU	723.371	138.265	73.014	111.807	1.046.457
HU	2.821.571	375.665	190.599	405.229	3.793.064
MT	799.567	137.256	72.482	106.514	1.115.819
NL	3.251.584	509.357	242.827	563.374	4.567.142
AT	2.170.642	330.121	155.784	368.959	3.025.507
PL	7.431.325	926.017	466.375	1.068.539	9.892.256
PT	3.101.421	417.996	209.438	466.505	4.195.360
RO	4.391.248	600.313	283.290	652.844	5.927.694
SI	1.567.133	203.228	107.320	172.904	2.050.585
SK	1.982.157	259.338	132.925	278.558	2.652.978
FI	2.112.807	261.802	133.186	274.302	2.782.098
SE	2.167.893	362.254	184.189	420.844	3.135.179
IS	708.968	99.042	46.738	108.348	963.096

⁷⁶ Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 refer exclusively to WPIs implemented by National Agencies.

⁷⁷ For third countries associated to the programme, amounts are provisional and pending the results of negotiations on the respective financial contributions to the programme.

⁷⁸ Amounts rounded up/down to the nearest Euro after applying the methodology described in section 3.3.

LI	270.745	37.767	19.274	44.158	371.944
EU + EFTA	94.436.226	13.221.072	6.610.536	15.109.796	129.377.630

	Volunteering	Solidarity Projects	Transnational and national networking activities	Specific training	Total
TR	5.496.027	769.444	384.722	879.364	7.529.558
MK	67.746	9.484	4.742	10.839	92.812
Total	100.000.000	14.000.000	7.000.000	16.000.000	137.000.000

3.4. FUNDS TO CO-FINANCE THE MANAGEMENT COSTS OF NATIONAL AGENCIES

The breakdown by Member State is to be done in line with the approach adopted since 2018. The calculation method sets a minimum allocation with a correction factor for smaller countries⁷⁹ plus Belgium. The remaining amount is allocated to each country based on its population, cost of living and distance between capitals.

The Commission may also decide to set a minimum and a maximum percentage for increases in the management fees.

⁷⁹ Country with population lower than 0,2% of total population: Cyprus, Malta, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Iceland.

Table 4 – Management fees – breakdown by country (in EUR)^{80 81} -

	Management fee
BE	383.460 €
BG	265.804 €
CZ	320.878 €
DK	205.897 €
DE	1.536.632 €
EE	125.750 €
EL	339.564 €
ES	1.045.003 €
FR	1.278.751 €
HR	186.217 €
IE	200.601 €
IT	1.187.501 €
CY	100.542 €
LV	140.221 €
LT	160.800 €
LU	83.276 €
HU	311.231 €
MT	81.988 €
NL	433.952 €
AT	271.841 €
PL	814.514 €
PT	361.757 €
RO	494.621 €
SI	139.559 €
SK	213.551 €
FI	214.427 €
SE	300.949 €
IS	81.559 €
LI	51.499 €

⁸⁰ For third countries associated to the programme, amounts are provisional and pending the results of negotiations on the respective financial contributions to the programme.

⁸¹ Amounts rounded up/down to the nearest Euro after applying the methodology described in 3.3.

EU + EFTA	11.332.347 €
TR	659.523 €
MK	8.130 €
Overall total	12.000.000 €

3.5. FUNDS FOR THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS RESOURCE CENTRES

The following table indicates the breakdown of the budget to support activities by the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres.

Table 5 – European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre and SALTO Resource Centres – breakdown by structure

European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre	390.000 €
SALTO Resource Centres	710.000 €
Total	1.100.000 €

Table 6 – Breakdown of funding allocated to SALTO Resource Centres

SALTO Resource Centres	Budget 2026
European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre	390.000 €
SALTO Training and Cooperation	75.000 €
Digital dimension	55.000 €
Green dimension	55.000 €
SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus	170.000 €
SALTO South East Europe	165.000 €
SALTO EuroMed	190.000 €
Total	1.100.000 €