



European  
Commission

# **2023 annual work programme for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme**

*C(2022) 5757 of 22 August 2022*



Brussels, 22.8.2022  
C(2022) 5757 final

**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION**

**of 22.8.2022**

**on the financing of European Solidarity Corps and the adoption of the work programme  
for 2023**

# COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 22.8.2022

## on the financing of European Solidarity Corps and the adoption of the work programme for 2023

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 2018/1046<sup>1</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/888<sup>2</sup> 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, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2023. Article 110 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1046 ('the Financial Regulation') establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (2) The work programme contributes to climate and biodiversity mainstreaming in line with the European Green Deal and the inter-institutional agreement.
- (3) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals to the bodies identified in the work programme and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants.
- (4) Pursuant to Article 62(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation and Article 12 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the programme.
- (5) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regards to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation. To this end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of the Financial Regulation<sup>3</sup> and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Except for the cases laid down in Article 154(6) of the Financial Regulation, where the Commission may decide not to require an ex-ante assessment.

Article 154(5) of the Financial Regulation before a contribution agreement can be signed.

- (6) 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.
- (7) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the work programme, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (8) 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 for 2023, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

*Article 2*  
*Union contribution*

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme for 2023 is set at EUR **142 200 000** and shall be financed on the **07 04 01** budget line from:

- general budget of the Union for 2023,
- 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.

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft general budget of the Union for 2023, 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*  
*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 entities or persons referred to in the Annex.

*Article 4*  
*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 Article 62(1)(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)(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 5*  
*Grants*

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

Done at Brussels, 22.8.2022

*For the Commission*  
*Mariya GABRIEL*  
*Member of the Commission*



Bruxelles, le 22.8.2022  
C(2022) 5757 final

**DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION**

**du 22.8.2022**

**relative au financement du corps européen de solidarité et à l'adoption du programme  
de travail pour 2023**

# DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 22.8.2022

## relative au financement du corps européen de solidarité et à l'adoption du programme de travail pour 2023

LA COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE,

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

vu le règlement (UE, Euratom) 2018/1046<sup>1</sup> du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 juillet 2018 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union, modifiant les règlements (UE) n° 1296/2013, (UE) n° 1301/2013, (UE) n° 1303/2013, (UE) n° 1304/2013, (UE) n° 1309/2013, (UE) n° 1316/2013, (UE) n° 223/2014, (UE) n° 283/2014 et la décision n° 541/2014/UE, et abrogeant le règlement (UE, Euratom) n° 966/2012, et notamment son article 110,

vu le règlement (UE) 2021/888<sup>2</sup> 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) Afin de garantir la mise en œuvre du corps européen de solidarité, il convient d'adopter une décision annuelle de financement qui constitue le programme de travail annuel pour 2023. L'article 110 du règlement (UE) 2018/1046 (ci-après le «règlement financier») établit des règles détaillées en matière de décisions de financement.
- (2) Le programme de travail contribue à l'intégration des questions liées au climat et à la biodiversité, conformément au pacte vert pour l'Europe et à l'accord interinstitutionnel.
- (3) Il convient d'autoriser l'octroi de subventions sans appel à propositions aux organismes mentionnés dans le programme de travail annuel et de prévoir les conditions d'octroi de ces subventions.
- (4) Conformément à l'article 62, paragraphe 1, point c), du règlement financier et à l'article 12, du règlement relatif au corps européen de solidarité, le programme sera mis en œuvre en gestion indirecte.
- (5) La Commission doit assurer un niveau de protection des intérêts financiers de l'Union en ce qui concerne les entités et les personnes chargées de l'exécution des fonds de l'Union en gestion indirecte, conformément à l'article 154, paragraphe 3, du règlement financier. À cette fin, ces entités et personnes doivent soumettre leurs systèmes et procédures à une évaluation conformément à l'article 154, paragraphe 4, du règlement financier<sup>3</sup> et, le cas échéant, à des mesures de surveillance appropriées conformément

<sup>1</sup> JO L 193 du 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> JO L 202 du 8.6.2021, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Sauf dans les cas prévus à l'article 154, paragraphe 6, du règlement financier, où la Commission peut décider de ne pas exiger une évaluation ex ante.

à l'article 154, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier avant qu'une convention de contribution puisse être signée.

- (6) Il convient de permettre le paiement d'intérêts de retard sur la base de l'article 116, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier.
- (7) Pour permettre une certaine flexibilité dans la mise en œuvre du programme de travail, il y a lieu d'autoriser des modifications qui ne devraient pas être considérées comme substantielles aux fins de l'article 110, paragraphe 5, du règlement financier.
- (8) Les mesures prévues par la présente décision sont conformes à l'avis du comité institué par l'article 31 du règlement (UE) 2021/888,

DÉCIDE:

*Article premier*  
*Programme de travail*

La décision annuelle de financement, qui constitue le programme de travail annuel pour la mise en œuvre du corps européen de solidarité pour 2023, figurant en annexe, est adoptée.

*Article 2*  
*Contribution de l'Union*

La contribution maximale de l'Union pour la mise en œuvre du programme pour 2023 est fixée à **142 200 000** EUR et est financée par les crédits inscrits sur la ligne budgétaire **07 04 01**, provenant:

- du budget général de l'Union pour 2023,
- 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.

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 2023, 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*  
*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 entités ou aux personnes mentionnées dans cette annexe.

*Article 4*  
*Clause de flexibilité*

Les modifications cumulées des crédits alloués à des actions spécifiques ne dépassant pas 20 % de la contribution maximale de l'Union fixée 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 de la contribution maximale de l'Union fixée à l'article 2, premier alinéa, de la présente décision ne dépasse pas 20 %.



En ce qui concerne les actions mises en œuvre par les agences nationales conformément à l'article 62, paragraphe 1, 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, 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 5*  
*Subventions*

Des subventions peuvent être octroyées sans appel à propositions aux organismes mentionnés dans l'annexe, dans les conditions qui y sont précisées.

Fait à Bruxelles, le 22.8.2022

*Par la Commission*  
*Mariya GABRIEL*  
*Membre de la Commission*



EUROPÄISCHE  
KOMMISSION

Brüssel, den 22.8.2022  
C(2022) 5757 final

**DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION**

**vom 22.8.2022**

**über die Finanzierung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps und zur Annahme des  
Arbeitsprogramms 2023**

# DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 22.8.2022

## über die Finanzierung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps und zur Annahme des Arbeitsprogramms 2023

DIE EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION —

gestützt auf den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) 2018/1046<sup>1</sup> des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Juli 2018 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union und zur Änderung der Verordnungen (EU) Nr. 1296/2013, (EU) 1301/2013, (EU) Nr. 1303/2013, (EU) Nr. 1304/2013, (EU) Nr. 1309/2013, (EU) Nr. 1316/2013, (EU) Nr. 223/2014, (EU) Nr. 283/2014 und des Beschlusses Nr. 541/2014/EU sowie zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) Nr. 966/2012, insbesondere auf Artikel 110,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) 2021/888<sup>2</sup> 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. 375/2014 (im Folgenden „Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps“), insbesondere auf Artikel 19,

in Erwägung nachstehender Gründe:

- (1) Damit die Durchführung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps gewährleistet werden kann, ist die Annahme eines jährlichen Finanzierungsbeschlusses erforderlich, der das jährliche Arbeitsprogramm für das Jahr 2023 darstellt. In Artikel 110 der Verordnung (EU) 2018/1046 (im Folgenden „Haushaltsordnung“) sind ausführliche Vorschriften über Finanzierungsbeschlüsse festgelegt.
- (2) Das Arbeitsprogramm trägt zur durchgängigen Berücksichtigung des Klimaschutzes und der biologischen Vielfalt im Einklang mit dem europäischen Grünen Deal und der Interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung bei.
- (3) Es ist angezeigt, für die im Arbeitsprogramm angegebenen Einrichtungen die Gewährung von Finanzhilfen ohne Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen zu genehmigen und die Bedingungen für die Gewährung dieser Finanzhilfen festzulegen.
- (4) Gemäß Artikel 62 Absatz 1 Buchstabe c der Haushaltsordnung und Artikel 12 der Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps wird das Programm in indirekter Mittelverwaltung durchgeführt.
- (5) In Bezug auf Stellen und Personen, die mit der indirekten Verwaltung von Unionsmitteln betraut sind, muss die Kommission sicherstellen, dass die finanziellen Interessen der Union in dem in Artikel 154 Absatz 3 der Haushaltsordnung vorgesehenen Maße geschützt werden. Zu diesem Zweck sind die Systeme und Verfahren dieser Stellen und Personen nach Artikel 154 Absatz 4 der

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<sup>1</sup> ABl. L 193 vom 30.7.2018, S. 1.

<sup>2</sup> ABl. L 202 vom 8.6.2021, S. 32.

Haushaltsordnung<sup>3</sup> zu bewerten und erforderlichenfalls nach Artikel 154 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung geeigneten Aufsichtsmaßnahmen zu unterziehen, bevor eine Beitragsvereinbarung unterzeichnet werden kann.

- (6) Es ist notwendig, die Zahlung von Verzugszinsen gemäß Artikel 116 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung vorzusehen.
- (7) Im Interesse einer flexiblen Durchführung des Arbeitsprogramms sollten Änderungen zugelassen werden, die für die Zwecke des Artikels 110 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung nicht als substantiell anzusehen sind.
- (8) Die in diesem Beschluss vorgesehenen Maßnahmen entsprechen der Stellungnahme des nach Artikel 31 der Verordnung (EU) 2021/888 eingesetzten Ausschusses —

BESCHLIEßT:

#### *Artikel 1* *Das Arbeitsprogramm*

Der jährliche Finanzierungsbeschluss, der das im Anhang beschriebene Jahresarbeitsprogramm für die Durchführung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps für 2023 betrifft, wird angenommen.

#### *Artikel 2* *Beitrag der Union*

Der Höchstbeitrag der Union für die Durchführung des Programms für 2023 beläuft sich auf **142 200 000** EUR und wird unter der Haushaltslinie **07 04 01** aus folgenden Quellen finanziert:

- dem Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union für 2023,
- den Beiträgen der EFTA zum Programm,
- den Beiträgen anderer teilnehmender Länder zum Programm.

Die in Absatz 1 genannten Haushaltsmittel können auch Verzugszinsen abdecken.

Dieser Beschluss kann nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die im Entwurf des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Union für 2023 vorgesehenen Mittel infolge des Erlasses des Haushaltsplans durch die Haushaltsbehörde verfügbar sind oder nach der Regelung der vorläufigen Zwölfstel bereitstehen. Desgleichen kann er nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die Mittel und Beiträge der EFTA und der anderen teilnehmenden Länder zum Programm verfügbar sind.

#### *Artikel 3* *Art des Haushaltsvollzugs und mit dem Vollzug betraute Stellen oder Personen*

Die Maßnahmen, die nach Maßgabe des Anhangs in indirekter Mittelverwaltung durchgeführt werden, können Stellen oder Personen anvertraut werden, die im Anhang genannt sind.

#### *Artikel 4* *Flexibilitätsklausel*

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<sup>3</sup> Dies gilt nicht in den in Artikel 154 Absatz 6 der Haushaltsordnung genannten Fällen, in denen die Kommission beschließen kann, keine Ex-ante-Bewertung zu verlangen.

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 Artikel 62 Absatz 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 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 5*  
*Finanzhilfen*

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

Brüssel, den 22.8.2022

*Für die Kommission*  
*Mariya GABRIEL*  
*Mitglied der Kommission*

## **ANNEX**

# **THE 2023 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS**

European Solidarity Corps in brief .....	4
1. Part I – General overview .....	6
1.1. Structure of the European Solidarity Corps .....	6
1.1.1. Objectives and actions of the European Solidarity Corps .....	6
1.1.2. Participating countries .....	6
1.1.3. Bodies implementing the programme.....	7
1.2. Policy framework and priorities.....	8
1.2.1. General policy framework .....	8
1.2.2. Policy priorities.....	10
1.2.3. European Solidarity Corps and the Legacy of the European Year of Youth.....	13
1.3. Implementation of the programme.....	13
1.3.1. Volunteering .....	13
1.3.2. Solidarity projects .....	14
1.3.3. Networking activities.....	14
1.3.4. Quality and support measures.....	15
2. Part II – Grants, Procurements and Other Actions.....	19
2.1. Budget lines and Basic Act .....	19
2.2. Methods of implementation .....	19
2.2.1. Grants and Actions implemented through direct and indirect management.....	19
2.2.1.1. Selection criteria .....	20
2.2.2. Procurements .....	20
2.2.3. Experts and other actions.....	20
2.3. Supported activities.....	20
2.3.1. Expected results of supported activities .....	20
2.3.2. Actions implemented under indirect management .....	21
2.3.2.1. Grants awarded by means of a general call for proposals (European Solidarity Corps Guide) .....	22
2.3.2.2. Other actions under indirect management .....	24
2.3.3. Actions implemented under direct management .....	26
2.3.3.1. Grants awarded by means of a general call for proposals (European Solidarity Corps Guide) .....	26
2.3.3.2. Grants awarded by exception to calls for proposals (Article 195 FR).....	28
2.3.3.3. Procurements.....	29
2.3.3.4. Experts .....	32
2.3.3.5. Other actions .....	32
2.4. Management fees of National Agencies .....	33
3. Part III – Budget.....	34
3.1. Indicative Budget .....	34

- 3.2. Distribution of estimated appropriations by actions – budget and programming tables 35
- 3.3. Breakdown by country of the funds allocated to the national agencies..... 37
  - 3.3.1. Criteria ..... 37
- 3.4. Funds to co-finance the management costs of National Agencies..... 39
- 3.5. Funds for the European Solidarity Corps resource centres ..... 41



## EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS 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 ('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 Regulation<sup>1</sup> 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 2021/888<sup>2</sup> 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 based on the fundamental principles of neutrality, humanity, independence and impartiality, and will help to deliver assistance, relief and protection where most needed. It 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 will be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid<sup>3</sup>.

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.

In November 2018, the Council adopted a renewed Youth Strategy for 2019-2027 ('Engaging, connecting and empowering young people'), which sets out the framework for European

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulation (EU) No 2018/1475 and Regulation (EU) No. 375/2014, OJ L 202, 8.6.2021, p. 32

<sup>3</sup> 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

cooperation in the youth field, for the benefit of young people, and which puts solidarity at the heart of EU youth policy<sup>4</sup>.

One of the key overall objectives of the renewed 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'<sup>5</sup> 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 indicative budget of the 2023 European Solidarity Corps work programme amounts to EUR **142 200 000**. It constitutes the Financing Decision within the meaning of Article 110 of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union<sup>6</sup> (the 'Financial Regulation' or 'FR').

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4 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 C456, 18.12.2018, p.1

5 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."

6 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, OJ L193, 30.07.2018, p.1

## 1. PART I – GENERAL OVERVIEW

### 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 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 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 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, in accordance with Article 13 of the Regulation, the following non-EU countries may be associated to the Programme in 2023<sup>7</sup>, subject to the

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<sup>7</sup> Countries that are considered to be associated to the Programme as of 1 January 2021 are listed (pending the expected conclusion of association agreements with retroactive effect). If and when more non-EU 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.

signature of specific agreements covering the association of these third countries to the Programme:

- members of the European Free Trade Association, which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the European Economic Area agreement: Iceland, Liechtenstein;
- acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidate countries, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union programmes established in the respective framework agreements and Association Council decisions, or similar agreements, and in accordance with the specific conditions laid down in agreements between the Union and those countries: Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Turkey.
- countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union programmes established in the respective framework agreements and Association Council decisions, or similar agreements, and in accordance with the specific conditions laid down in agreements between the Union and those countries;
- other third countries, in accordance with the conditions laid down in a specific agreement covering the participation of the third country to any Union programme, insofar as the conditions laid down in the Regulation are satisfied.

Third countries associated to the Programme may only participate in the Programme in its entirety and provided that they fulfil all the obligations, which the Regulation imposes on Member States.

In addition, in accordance with Article 14 (2) of the Regulation, legal entities from other third countries may be eligible for the actions referred to in Articles 5 and 7 of the Regulation (networking activities, quality and support measures and volunteering under the ‘participation of young people in solidarity activities’ strand) in duly justified cases and in the EU’s interest.

### **1.1.3. BODIES IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME**

The European Commission (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps. It manages the budget 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 European Education and Culture Executive Agency (Executive Agency) is according to the Commission Decision C(2021)951 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.

The actions of the Corps are mostly implemented through indirect management. The Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks to National Agencies (NAs) established in each Member State and third country associated to the Programme. National authorities monitor and supervise the management of the Programme at national level. In accordance with Articles 62 (1) (c) and 154 of the Financial Regulation, the Commission may entrust NAs budget implementation tasks via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode. The Commission authorizes the recognition of the eligibility of costs incurred from 1 January 2023. This retroactivity aims to ensure Programme implementation continuity.

## **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 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 EU<sup>8</sup>.

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 up 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.

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<sup>8</sup><http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25-rome-declaration>.

The activities of the Corps are coherent with the EU Youth Strategy for 2019-2027 Resolution, adopted by the Council on 26 November 2018<sup>9</sup>. The EU Youth Strategy promotes cooperation in core youth policy areas in order to engage, connect and empower young people. It promotes cross-sectoral approaches and addresses the needs of young people in various EU policy areas such as employment, but also climate change and environment, digitalisation, health. The strategy makes reference to 11 Youth Goals covering several fields that young people consider to be important. This overarching strategy is implemented through two of the main EU programmes supporting youth: Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps - both programmes aiming to support, engage, connect and empower young people even more effectively, notably through **mobility and cooperation activities**. In 2023 the European Solidarity Corps will also contribute to the legacy of the European Year of Youth, seeking to continue and or follow-up on the initiatives implemented in its context in 2022.

Humanitarian aid volunteering actions of the European Solidarity Corps are guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid<sup>10</sup> 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 will be promoted.

Finally, the activities of the Corps are in line with the Commission's Reflection Paper – Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030<sup>11</sup>. Just as with the Youth Goals, the Corps' activities help to achieve several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As foreseen in the Regulation, the Commission and the Member States will cooperate on volunteering policies in the youth field via the open method of coordination. The EU Youth Strategy, among others, aims to encourage young people to become active EU citizens<sup>12</sup>, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values as enshrined in the Treaties<sup>13</sup> 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 Council Resolution on the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027<sup>14</sup>, and the annexed EU work plan for youth 2019-2021, called for the review of the 2008 Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers<sup>15</sup>. The Commission proposed this review in 2021, and the new Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union was adopted in the spring of 2022, with the ambition to address the barriers that still hinder the involvement of youth in cross-border volunteering and solidarity.

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9 OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p.1.

10 OJ C25, 30.1.2008, p. 1

11 Reflection Paper – Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030, [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/rp\\_sustainable\\_europe\\_30-01\\_en\\_web.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/rp_sustainable_europe_30-01_en_web.pdf).

12 The European Solidarity Corps is listed as a priority action in the EU Citizenship Report 2017: Strengthening Citizens' Rights in a Union of Democratic Change, COM(2017)030, 24.01.2017.

13 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.

14 OJ C 456, 18.12.2018 p.1

15 OJ C 319, 13.12.2008 p.8

Complementarity with existing EU-level 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 relief<sup>16</sup>.

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 2023, in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine that severely affected the lives of millions of people in the direct vicinity of the EU borders, the European Solidarity 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 conflict that started in 2022.

### **1.2.2. POLICY PRIORITIES**

In addition to the transversal objectives of the Programme outlined in section 1.1.1, the work programme 2023 will also support the following specific annual policy priorities defined for the ‘Volunteering teams in high priority areas’. These priorities can also inspire projects in actions implemented at decentralised level.

- Relief for persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or man-made disasters

The Corps can add significant value by contributing to the provision of relief and assistance to those whose lives, livelihoods and communities have been disrupted by the natural or man-made disasters, including armed conflicts. 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 refugees into the EU.

- Prevention, promotion and support in the field of health

The Corps can add significant value by assisting with 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, including those linked to the impact of recent and ongoing crises (e.g. COVID-19, the Russian invasion of Ukraine etc.) on the general and mental health of people across Europe, as well as policy priorities such as cancer prevention and care (Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan is a flagship initiative of the current Commission)

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<sup>16</sup> Including post-conflict relief.

Furthermore, the following transversal priorities will be addressed across all actions of the European Solidarity Corps in 2023, fully in line with the European Education Area, the new Digital Education Action Plan and the European Democracy Action Plan<sup>16</sup>. A gender equality perspective will be mainstreamed throughout the Programme, in line with the principles of the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-25<sup>17</sup>.

- 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 the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the programme supports initiatives that address needs within local communities, such as refugee relief, assistance, support and integration, and contribute to overcoming important societal challenges on the ground linked to the conflict.

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. Appropriate mechanisms and resources are available to make sure that the specific needs of participants with fewer opportunities can be catered for.

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

- Environmental sustainability and climate goals

Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming

The actions supported by the Programme contribute to the overall climate and biodiversity 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 challenges<sup>17</sup>. The Programme supports projects and activities aiming to protect, conserve and enhance natural capital, 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

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<sup>17</sup> 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



have an environmentally friendly approach when designing their activities<sup>18</sup>. Activities contributing to other existing EU initiatives in the area of environmental sustainability (e.g. the New European Bauhaus, the EU Forest Strategy - more specifically its “3 billion trees” initiative - and the EU Climate Missions) 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, as well as encourage other stakeholders and target groups of their activities - wherever relevant - to make such choices too.

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

- Digital transformation

The Political Guidelines of the European Commission underline the need for Europe to lead the digital transition. The new 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.

In general, the Corps promotes the use of appropriate 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

Participation 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 through involvement in other EU initiatives and platforms revolving around participation and civic engagement.

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

### **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

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<sup>18</sup> 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 pledge platform or the European Climate Pact ([https://europa.eu/climate-pact/pledges\\_en](https://europa.eu/climate-pact/pledges_en)).

of rural innovation ecosystems (rural youth depopulation, sustainable energy systems, health promotion and disease prevention etc.).

### **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 where the objectives were to listen to, engage and empower the European Youth.

Building on the achievements and contributing to the long-lasting legacy of the 2022 European Year of Youth, the Programme will continue to empower young people and to encourage their participation in democratic life in 2023.

## **1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME**

The next sections will highlight the main actions and initiatives that the Commission plans to carry out in 2023, in cooperation with the implementing structures of the Programme.

In 2023, the second full year of implementing the European Solidarity Corps under the new legal base, the Commission is planning to launch a general call for proposals to cover actions under sections 1.3.1, 1.3.2 and 1.3.3.

In line with Article 29 of the 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 2023 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 2023.

**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 2023**

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

- The **Volunteering Projects** action will involve individual volunteering and/or activities by volunteering teams. Projects are expected to start in 2023 or at the beginning of 2024, with individual deployments beginning throughout the duration of the projects.
- **Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas** is a centralised action. Applications for funding under this action are expected to address one of the policy priorities “relief for persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or man-made disasters” and “prevention, promotion and support in the field of health”, in line with the *HealthyLifeStyle4All*, as defined in Section 1.2.2.
- **The European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps** is a centralised action 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. Volunteering activities of the first young people under this strand will start in early 2023 and – in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine - supported activities 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 2023

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 2023 or at the beginning of 2024. In the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, numerous project applications are expected to address needs arising from the aggression, including refugee relief, assistance, support and integration.

### 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 centralised 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 2023**

In 2023, 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. This includes offline and online training, language support, administrative support for participants and participating organisations, complementary 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 2023**

In 2023, the second full year of implementation of the European Solidarity Corps under its new legal base, the quality and support measures will include the following actions:

- **Quality Label:** a Quality Label system has been put 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 but 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 decentralised 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 centralised level,** the Executive Agency will manage the application process for the Quality Label for humanitarian aid volunteering. The procedure consists in validating the capacity of applicant organisations to engage 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 activities<sup>19</sup> 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 due justification. A comprehensive primary coverage insurance will be offered to participants under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps<sup>20</sup>.
- **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

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<sup>19</sup> With the exception of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

<sup>20</sup> Except where activities of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps take place in a country/countries where EHIC applies.

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 not covered by the OLS or to cater for specific needs of participants<sup>21</sup>.
- **General online training and training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps:** 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 mission of the Corps, ethics, integrity, roles and responsibilities of the participants, EU values, intercultural awareness, insurance, health and safety, etc.<sup>22</sup> Following the migration to EU Academy, actions planned for 2023 will include i.a. maintenance and updates, as well as possible webinars (e.g. Youth Talks) on the topics of the general online training.

Apart from general online training for all young people registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal, specific preparatory training (online and face-to-face) will be provided to young people intending to participate in the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps. In order to be ready to support 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.<sup>23</sup>
- **European Solidarity Corps and SALTO Resource Centres:** 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 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 responsibility<sup>24</sup>.
- **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

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21 See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.31).

22 See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.32).

23 See Section 2.3.2.2 (WPI 5.60).

24 See Section 2.3.2.2 (WPI 5.50).

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 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 2023, 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 ESC app will be further developed to improve access to the European Solidarity Corps Portal and facilitate exchange of experiences and inspirational ideas between current, former and future participants.<sup>25</sup>
- **Programme evaluation:** In 2023, the Commission shall conduct the final evaluation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme 2018-2020, in order to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the 2018-2020 programme, and the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 Programme. The results of the final evaluation will feed both into the interim evaluation and into resource allocation proposals in the following years.

**Note:** In 2023, the European Solidarity Corps may contribute financially to the Commission's corporate communication, in accordance with Article 21(2) of the 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. The main purpose of the information and communication activities developed at European and national levels is to enhance the visibility of the Corps through different tools and channels.

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<sup>25</sup> See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.70).

## 2. 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 Regulation, the 2023 work programme will be implemented through:

Implementation mode	Amount EUR	Section
Actions implemented through indirect management	120 970 000	2.2.1
Grants and actions implemented through direct management	10 950 000	
Procurement implemented through direct management	10 100 000	2.2.2
Experts and other actions	180 000	2.2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>142 200 000</b>	

#### **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, general and specific calls for proposals are published by the Commission or by the Executive Agency in accordance with Article 189(1) of the Financial Regulation.

Each year, after adoption of the financing decision, based on Article 110 of the Financial Regulation, a general call for proposals are published. The general call for proposals for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps includes the Programme Guide. The European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide aims to assist all those interested in developing projects under the Programme and help them understand the objectives and actions of the Corps. It also gives detailed information on what is needed in order to apply, what level of grant is offered, the grant selection procedure and the rules for successful applicants who become beneficiaries of an EU grant. The Programme Guide also provides detailed information on the award criteria for each type of project to be implemented; the quality of proposals will be assessed on the basis of the award criteria published in the Guide for each project.

Actions will be implemented both in direct and indirect management. All actions implemented through the National Agencies (marked as NA), are to be considered as indirect management. Grants through direct management will be those awarded by EAC or EACEA.

Some grants will be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with indents (c), (d) and (f) of Article 195 of the FR.

The calls for proposals that will be published or launched to select actions and work programmes for co-financing in 2023, 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.



For the beneficiaries of all grants awarded under the European Solidarity Corps, the following selection criteria will apply:

#### **2.2.1.1. 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:

- 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 and to participate in its funding. The verification of financial capacity does not apply to public bodies, including Member State organisations and international organisations.
- Applicants must have the professional competences and qualifications required to complete 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 164 of the FR). The amounts reserved, together with the indicative number of contracts and the time-frame 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 existing FWC cannot be used, the Commission will consider publishing calls for tender to award new FWC.

#### **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. Holding the relevant Quality Label is a pre-requisite to be eligible to receive a grant for most solidarity-related activities<sup>26</sup> 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 of the European Solidarity Corps, 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.

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<sup>26</sup> 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.

For individual participants, solidarity-related activities supported in 2023, 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:

- 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 activities related to 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.

Specifically in 2023 and in relation with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a number of activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps will improve 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)(c), 110 (3)(f) and 157 (1) of the FR. 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 Guide)**

#### **a) Volunteering Projects**

Index references in budget table (WPI): 1.00

The financial envelope by country is indicated in table 3 of Part III. Furthermore, in addition to implementing the budget foreseen in table 3, the European Solidarity Corps will also work together with the Horizon Europe Programme in 2023<sup>27</sup>, in order to facilitate a financial contribution of Horizon Europe to Volunteering Projects. More specifically, the contribution of the Horizon Europe Programme (co-delegated from DG RTD) will be earmarked for Volunteering Projects supporting the EU Climate Missions and Green Deal goals and key strategies.

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 will 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 will aim to:

- address clearly defined unmet societal challenges;

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<sup>27</sup> Subject to the adoption of the work programme for 2023-2024 within the framework of the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and on its financing.

- 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 refugees and persons under temporary protection, 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;
- 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.

Organisations holding a Quality Label for lead organisations may receive support from the European Solidarity Corps to carry out projects focused on volunteering opportunities. Projects with exclusively in-country volunteering activities and volunteering teams may involve at least one Quality Label organisation. Projects including cross-border volunteering activities must involve a Quality Label host organisation, and at least one Quality Label support organisation from each country of origin of the young people who are expected to participate.

b) *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 consist of unpaid solidarity-related 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;
- promote environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among young people implementing the project and other participants in project activities, raising their awareness of the importance of acting to reduce or compensate for the environmental footprint of activities.

Groups of young people active in solidarity-related areas may receive support from the European Solidarity Corps to carry out projects. In addition, any public or private entity may apply on behalf of the group that will implement the project.

#### ***2.3.2.2. Other actions under indirect management***

##### *a) Quality Label*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.14

A Quality Label process is in place to ensure the 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.

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.

A Quality Label process is in place for any public or private entity wishing to participate in the European Solidarity Corps' volunteering projects and volunteering in high priority areas. National Agencies will review applications.

##### *b) 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 2023, 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.

c) *Activities of the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.50

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. Where relevant, SALTO Resource Centres that exist under Erasmus+ provide assistance in line with their thematic or regional areas of responsibility. Their functions consist of providing expertise, support, services, tools and resources to the National Agency network and European Solidarity Corps stakeholders. Resource Centres involve additional functions being entrusted to designated National Agencies to support the development and implementation of activities under the European Solidarity Corps.

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

d) *Specific training for participants and organisations in solidarity-related activities (training and evaluation cycle)*

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.

### 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 Areas*<sup>28</sup>

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.

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 “relief for persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or man-made disasters” or “prevention, promotion and support in the field of health” in line with the *HealthyLifeStyle4All*, as defined in Section 1.2.2.;
- 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;

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<sup>28</sup> In 2023 these areas correspond to the policy priorities of “relief for persons fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or man-made disasters” and “prevention, promotion and support in the field of health”, in line with the *HealthyLifeStyle4All*, as defined in Section 1.2.2.

- reach out to young people with fewer opportunities, including refugees and persons under temporary protection, 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;
- 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.

Organisations holding the relevant Quality Label<sup>29</sup> may receive support from the European Solidarity Corps to carry out projects focused on volunteering opportunities. Projects must involve at least three accredited organisations from at least two different programme countries.

Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

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. Subject to adequate guarantees of safety and security of the volunteers, this could include supporting such operations in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and deploying young volunteers in the rebuilding in Ukraine. These activities should:

- contribute to a needs-based humanitarian response and be guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid<sup>30</sup>. 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;
- 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;

<sup>29</sup> Or an accreditation for volunteering awarded under Erasmus + (2013-2020).

<sup>30</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/consensus\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/consensus_en.pdf)



- 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 Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- take into account, where appropriate, the central and overall coordinating role of UN-OCHA ([unocha.org](http://unocha.org)) in promoting a coherent international response to humanitarian crises;
- 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.

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

- **Individual volunteering** is 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.

The European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

### ***2.3.3.2.Grants awarded by exception to calls for proposals (Article 195 FR)***

#### ***a) European Solidarity Corps Youth Card***

Index reference in budget table: 5.60

European Solidarity Corps participants in activities entailing mobility are offered a Youth Card, which allows its holders to benefit from reduced fares when purchasing certain goods or services. The granting of this card is provided as an additional service to participants. It also contributes to the promotion of the European Solidarity Corps and of EU youth policy by providing young people access to quality youth information through the organisation of awards ceremonies and events.

The objective is to renew the agreement between the Commission and the EYCA (European Youth Card Association), the only body that issues such a Youth Card and thus has a *de facto* monopoly within the meaning of Article 195 (c) FR with a two-years grant, covering 2023 and 2024.

This action will be implemented by DG EAC and/or the Executive Agency.

### **2.3.3.3. 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 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.

This action will be implemented by DG EAC.

- 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 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 where 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 will be offered to participants under the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Except where activities of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps take place in a country/countries where EHIC applies.

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.

A new contract will be in place to provide an insurance scheme for participants in European Solidarity Corps projects selected in the programming period (2021-2027), including volunteers in humanitarian aid activities and if necessary participants from the previous programming period. The previous contract will be still used to cover some participants in the European Solidarity Corps activities from the transition period.

This scheme will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

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.

The action will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

d) *General online training and training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.32

Young people who register in the European Solidarity Corps Portal and those who will participate in the Corps' activities are supported through open access to general online training. Existing training programmes, and online courses will be further developed and/or updated to better support Corps participants engaged in high-quality solidarity-related activities (also covering new horizontal priorities) and help to further develop the Corps community through a range of channels and formats (including webinars, talks, etc.).

Specific preparatory training (online and face-to-face) will be provided to young people participating in the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps. In order to be ready to support humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries, candidate volunteers should 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 2023, preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities will be provided through a framework contract. This action will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

- e) *Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label, Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and 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 2023, 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.

This action will be implemented by the Executive Agency.

- 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 follow online training, to access other services and, importantly, to build a community of young people sharing the common European values. The Portal will be integrated into all front- and back-end processes of the Corps. To further improve access to the European Solidarity Corps Portal and facilitate exchange of experiences and inspirational ideas between current, former and future participants, the existing mobile application will be further developed and enhanced with new features.

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

This action will be implemented by DG EAC.

- g) *Support for IT developments (WPI): 5.65*

The European Solidarity Corps Programme's allocated credits for IT tools and systems in 2023

will allow the Commission to support the new 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 future IT systems corresponding to the current EPlusLink (PMM -- Project Management Module), Mobility Tool (BM -- Beneficiary Module), AF -- Application Forms, management reporting (DAP-Data Analytics Platform), dissemination platform (VALOR), as well as supporting the new IT landscape (including the transfer of information between the eGrant system and the Portal, where relevant) etc.

This action will be implemented by DG EAC.

h) *Final evaluation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme 2018-2020 and interim evaluation of European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 7.00

In accordance with the provisions of the legal base, Art 21(2), the Commission shall carry out an interim evaluation of the Programme, no later than 31 December 2024. That interim evaluation needs to be accompanied by a final evaluation of the 2018-2020 European Solidarity Corps Programme, which shall feed into the interim evaluation. The final evaluation will assess the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the 2018-2020 programme and recommendations for the current programme and will be carried out as an independent evaluation, using a framework service contract. The results of the evaluation shall feed back into i.a. resource allocation proposals in the following years.

The contract will be implemented by DG EAC.

**2.3.3.4. Experts**

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

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 expressions of interest in compliance with Article 237 of the FR.

This action will be implemented by the Executive Agency through direct management.

**2.3.3.5. Other actions**

- a) *Quality Label*

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 will be 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.

This action will be implemented by the Executive Agency through direct management.

#### **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)(c), 110 (3)(f) and 157 (1) of the Financial Regulation. The Commission authorizes the recognition of the eligibility of costs incurred from 1 January 2023. This retroactivity aims to ensure Programme implementation continuity.

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

### 3. PART III – BUDGET

This part of the work programme indicates the funds that will be available in 2023 to finance activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps Programme.

#### **3.1. INDICATIVE BUDGET**

The total indicative operational appropriations foreseen under the 2023 work programme are **EUR 142 200 000**<sup>32</sup>.

**Table 1 – Available appropriations**

<b>Budget European Solidarity Corps 2023</b>	<b>Budget line</b>	<b>EU</b>	<b>EFTA/EEA</b>	<b>External assigned revenue</b>	<b>Total</b>
European Solidarity Corps	07 04 01	134 298 196	255 167	7 646 637	142 200 000
<b>TOTAL</b>		134 298 196	255 167	7 646 637	142 200 000

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<sup>32</sup>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
DB	Grants to bodies identified by a basic act - [Art. 195(d) FR]
IM	Indirect management
MF	Management fees awarded to the National Agencies
PP	Public procurement
SE	Experts - [Art. 237 FR]
MON	Grants for bodies with a de facto or de iure monopoly - [Art. 195(c) FR]
WPI	Work programme index
EAC	Actions implemented directly by DG EAC (direct management)
Executive agency	Actions implemented directly by the Executive Agency (direct management)
EAC-NA	Actions implemented indirectly by National Agencies (indirect management)



**Table 2 – Total budget**

<b>WPI</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>2023 draft budget allocation</b>	<b>Implementation mode</b>	<b>Implementing body</b>
1.00	Volunteering activities	<b>76 020 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
1.30	Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas	<b>4 000 000</b>	CFP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
2.00	European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	<b>6 800 000</b>	CFP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
3.00	Solidarity projects	<b>11 000 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
4.10	Transnational and national networking activities	<b>7 000 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
4.20	Networking and communication activities and events organised at European level	<b>450 000</b>	PP	EAC
5.11	Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label, Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	<b>200 000</b>	PP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.13	Quality Label (centralised)	<b>0</b>	CFP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.14	Quality Label (decentralised)	<b>0</b>	IM	EAC-NA
5.20	Insurance	<b>5 000 000</b>	PP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.31	Online language support (OLS)	<b>650 000</b>	PP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.32	General online training and training for candidate volunteers of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (centralised)	<b>2 500 000</b>	PP	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.40	Specific training for participants and organisations in solidarity-related activities (training and evaluation cycle; decentralised)	<b>16 350 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
5.50	Activities of the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres	<b>950 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
5.60	European Youth Card	<b>300 000</b>	MON	EAC/EXECUTIVE AGENCY
5.65	Support for IT development	<b>500 000</b>	PP	EAC
5.70	European Solidarity Corps Portal	<b>800 000</b>	PP	EAC
5.81	Support for evaluation of requests for the Quality Label and requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas and European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps	<b>180 000</b>	SE	EXECUTIVE AGENCY
6.00	Management fees	<b>9 500 000</b>	IM	EAC-NA
7.00	Ex-post evaluation of ESC 2018-2020 and interim evaluation of ESC 2021-2027	<b>0</b>	PP	EAC
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142 200 000</b>		

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

#### **3.3.1. CRITERIA**

The 4 criteria used for the allocation of funds for 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%.

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 3 – Country allocation (in EUR)<sup>33 34</sup>:**

	<b>Volunteering</b>	<b>Solidarity Projects</b>	<b>Networking activities and Quality Label</b>	<b>Specific training (training and evaluation cycle)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>BE</b>	2 323 264	343 681	204 477	503 232	<b>3 374 654</b>
<b>BG</b>	2 068 139	237 887	145 845	320 115	<b>2 771 986</b>
<b>CZ</b>	1 997 158	288 274	197 110	417 484	<b>2 900 026</b>
<b>DK</b>	1 248 146	191 575	124 060	272 470	<b>1 836 251</b>
<b>DE</b>	10 124 461	1 355 921	851 181	2 203 517	<b>14 535 080</b>
<b>EE</b>	955 458	147 610	97 960	155 982	<b>1 357 010</b>
<b>EL</b>	1 644 835	315 053	203 104	475 341	<b>2 638 333</b>
<b>ES</b>	7 079 658	942 034	609 284	1 506 075	<b>10 137 050</b>
<b>FR</b>	7 459 969	1 131 825	710 505	1 847 006	<b>11 149 305</b>
<b>HR</b>	1 333 191	178 373	118 377	232 882	<b>1 862 823</b>
<b>IE</b>	1 114 647	187 321	122 294	270 935	<b>1 695 197</b>
<b>IT</b>	6 716 798	1 068 820	680 978	1 787 569	<b>10 254 165</b>
<b>CY</b>	745 389	143 427	95 185	125 715	<b>1 109 716</b>
<b>LV</b>	957 549	155 002	102 866	179 756	<b>1 395 173</b>
<b>LT</b>	1 248 676	166 542	110 524	197 106	<b>1 722 849</b>
<b>LU</b>	531 430	101 898	69 673	108 768	<b>811 769</b>
<b>HU</b>	2 132 554	276 855	186 848	394 217	<b>2 990 473</b>
<b>MT</b>	587 407	101 153	69 165	103 619	<b>861 345</b>
<b>NL</b>	2 388 801	400 118	237 893	590 491	<b>3 617 304</b>
<b>AT</b>	1 594 679	243 291	148 656	358 932	<b>2 345 557</b>
<b>PL</b>	5 970 988	769 007	486 730	1 136 890	<b>8 363 615</b>
<b>PT</b>	2 347 528	327 004	208 886	467 578	<b>3 350 996</b>
<b>RO</b>	3 424 546	498 528	295 653	674 175	<b>4 892 902</b>
<b>SI</b>	1 151 306	154 311	102 410	168 205	<b>1 576 232</b>
<b>SK</b>	1 456 207	196 916	126 843	270 988	<b>2 050 954</b>
<b>FI</b>	1 594 501	198 788	127 092	266 848	<b>2 187 228</b>
<b>SE</b>	1 592 659	266 971	180 176	410 762	<b>2 450 568</b>
<b>IS</b>	520 849	75 203	44 599	105 404	<b>746 055</b>
<b>LI</b>	198 905	28 676	18 393	42 958	<b>288 932</b>
<b>EU + EFTA</b>	<b>72 509 697</b>	<b>10 492 063</b>	<b>6 676 768</b>	<b>15 595 022</b>	<b>105 273 549</b>

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

34 Amounts rounded up / down to the nearest Euro after applying the methodology described in 3.3.1

	<b>Volunteering</b>	<b>Solidarity Projects</b>	<b>Networking activities and Quality Label</b>	<b>Specific training</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>TR</b>	3 457 964	500 363	318 413	743 721	<b>5 020 461</b>
<b>MK</b>	52 340	7 573	4 819	11 257	<b>75 990</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>76 020 000</b>	<b>11 000 000</b>	<b>7 000 000</b>	<b>16 350 000</b>	<b>110 370 000</b>

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

The breakdown by Member State carries forward the approach adopted since 2018. The calculation method sets a minimum allocation with a correction factor for smaller countries 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.

**Table 4 – Management fees – breakdown by country (in EUR)**<sup>35 36</sup>

	Management fee
BE	287 746
BG	199 457
CZ	240 785
DK	154 504
DE	1 286 162
EE	94 362
EL	264 156
ES	883 107
FR	1 049 634
HR	139 736
IE	150 530
IT	1 003 528
CY	75 446
LV	105 221
LT	120 663
LU	62 490
HU	233 546
MT	61 524
NL	335 480
AT	203 988
PL	682 451
PT	274 176
RO	401 759
SI	104 724
SK	160 247
FI	160 905
SE	225 830
IS	61 202
LI	38 644
<b>EU + EFTA</b>	<b>9 062 004</b>
TR	431 465
MK	6 531
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>9 500 000</b>

<sup>35</sup> For third countries associated to the programme, amounts are provisional and pending the results of negotiations on the respective financial contributions to the programme

<sup>36</sup> Amounts rounded up / down to the nearest Euro after applying the methodology described in 3.3.1

### 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	290 000
SALTO Resource Centres	660 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>950 000</b>

**Table 6 – Breakdown of funding allocated to SALTO Resource Centres**

<b>SALTO Resource Centres</b>	<b>Budget 2023 ESC</b>
European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre	290 000
SALTO Training and Cooperation	70 000
Digital dimension	50 000
Green dimension	50 000
SALTO Eastern Partnership	160 000
SALTO South East Europe	155 000
SALTO EuroMed	175 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>950 000</b>