



European
Commission

2021 annual work programme for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps Programme

C(2021) 2390 of 13 April 2021



Brussels, 13.4.2021
C(2021) 2390 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 13.4.2021

**on the adoption of the 2021 annual work programme for the implementation of the
European Solidarity Corps**

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 13.4.2021

on the adoption of the 2021 annual work programme for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 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 and amending Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002, 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 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Decision No 541/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) [number] of the European Parliament and of the Council of [date] laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps ('the European Solidarity Corps Regulation')², and in particular to Article [number] thereof, and Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Whereas:

- (1) 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 2021. Article 110 of Regulation (EU) No 2018/1046 ('the Financial Regulation') establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (2) The 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps ('the programme') has not yet been adopted by the European legislative authority. Nonetheless, the Commission has decided to publish this work programme subject to specific conditions, in order to allow a smooth implementation of the programme as soon as its basic act has been adopted by the European legislative authority and to enable potential applicants to European Union funds to have sufficient time to prepare their applications. In accordance with article 33, paragraph (3) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation and point (a) of the second subparagraph of Article 193(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 and by derogation from Article 193(4) of that Regulation, if duly justified, activities and costs in grants incurred in 2021 and financed under this Decision may be eligible from 01 January 2021, even if implemented and incurred before the grant application was submitted. The same rules apply, mutatis mutandis, to the eligibility of activities and costs under indirect management.
- (3) It is appropriate to authorise award of grants without a call for proposals to the bodies identified in the work programme and for the reasons provided therein.

¹ OJ L193, 30.07.2018, p. 1.

² OJ L xx, xx.xx.2021, p. x

- (4) Pursuant to Article 62(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation and Article 12 of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, indirect management will be used for the implementation of the programme.
- (5) In accordance with Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation, with regard to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management, the Commission will ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union as referred to in Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation. To this end, such entities and persons will be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of the Financial Regulation and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with 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) 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 work programme was submitted to the committee established under existing European Solidarity Corps basic act for informal consultation.

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 2021, as set out in the Annex, is adopted, under the following suspensive conditions:

- (a) the final adoption of the basic act by the legislative authority and its entry into force without significant modifications, and
- (b) a positive opinion by the committee established under the basic act.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme for 2021 is set at EUR **138 873 000** and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the 07 04 01 budget line of the general budget of the Union for 2021.

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 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%.

For actions implemented by national agencies under Article 62(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation, changes to the distribution of funds among associated 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, 13.4.2021

For the Commission
Mariya GABRIEL
Member of the Commission



Bruxelles, le 13.4.2021
C(2021) 2390 final

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 13.4.2021

**relative à l'adoption du programme de travail annuel 2021 pour la mise en œuvre du
corps européen de solidarité**

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 13.4.2021

relative à l'adoption du programme de travail annuel 2021 pour la mise en œuvre du corps européen de solidarité

LA COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE,

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

vu le règlement (UE) 2018/1046 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 juillet 2018 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union et modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 2012/2002, 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 du Parlement européen et du Conseil et la décision n° 541/2014/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil et abrogeant le règlement (UE, Euratom) n° 966/2012¹, et notamment son article 110,

vu le règlement (UE) [numéro] du Parlement européen et du Conseil du [date] définissant le cadre juridique applicable au corps européen de solidarité (ci-après le «règlement relatif au corps européen de solidarité»)², et notamment son article [numéro], et la décision n° 1313/2013/UE relative au mécanisme de protection civile de l'Union,

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 2021. L'article 110 du règlement (UE) 2018/1046 (ci-après le «règlement financier») établit des règles détaillées en matière de décisions de financement.
- (2) La proposition relative au corps européen de solidarité 2021-2027 (ci-après le «programme»), n'a pas encore été adoptée par le législateur de l'Union. Néanmoins, la Commission a décidé de publier ce programme de travail sous réserve de conditions particulières afin d'en permettre la mise en œuvre harmonieuse, dès que le législateur de l'Union aura adopté son acte de base, et de permettre aux demandeurs potentiels de fonds de l'Union européenne de disposer de suffisamment de temps pour préparer leur dossier de demande. Conformément à l'article 33, paragraphe 3, du règlement relatif au corps européen de solidarité et à l'article 193, paragraphe 2, deuxième alinéa, point a), du règlement (UE, Euratom) 2018/1046 et par dérogation à l'article 193, paragraphe 4, de ce même règlement, si cela est dûment justifié, les activités et les coûts en subventions exposés en 2021 et financés au titre de la présente décision peuvent être éligibles à partir du 1^{er} janvier 2021, même si les activités sont mises en œuvre et que les coûts sont exposés avant le dépôt de la demande de subvention. Les mêmes règles s'appliquent, mutatis mutandis, à l'éligibilité des activités menées et des coûts exposés en gestion indirecte.

¹ JO L 193 du 30.7.2018, p. 1.

² JO L xxx du xx.xx.2021, p. x

- (3) Il y a lieu d'autoriser l'octroi de subventions sans appel à propositions aux organismes mentionnés dans le programme de travail et pour les motifs qui y sont exposés.
- (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) Conformément à l'article 154, paragraphe 3, du règlement financier, pour ce qui est des entités et des personnes chargées de l'exécution des fonds de l'Union en gestion indirecte, la Commission assurera un niveau de protection des intérêts financiers de l'Union tel que visé audit article. 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 et, le cas échéant, à des mesures de surveillance appropriées conformément 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 le fondement 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) Le programme de travail a été soumis pour consultation informelle au comité institué par l'acte de base relatif au corps européen de solidarité

DÉCIDE:

Article premier
Programme de travail

La décision de financement annuelle, constituant le programme de travail annuel destiné à la mise en œuvre du corps européen de solidarité pour 2021, qui figure en annexe, est adoptée aux conditions suspensives suivantes:

- (a) l'adoption définitive de l'acte de base par l'autorité législative et son entrée en vigueur sans modifications significatives, et
- (b) un avis favorable du comité établi par l'acte de base.

Article 2
Contribution de l'Union

La contribution maximale de l'Union pour la mise en œuvre du programme pour 2021 est fixée à **138 873 000** EUR, à financer sur les crédits inscrits au poste 07 04 01 du budget général de l'Union pour 2021.

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

En ce qui concerne les actions mises en œuvre par les agences nationales conformément à l'article 62, paragraphe 1, point c), du règlement financier, les modifications apportées à la répartition des fonds entre les pays associés 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 13.4.2021

Par la Commission
Mariya GABRIEL
Membre de la Commission



Brüssel, den 13.4.2021
C(2021) 2390 final

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 13.4.2021

**zur Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2021 zur Umsetzung des Europäischen
Solidaritätskorps**

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 13.4.2021

zur Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2021 zur Umsetzung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps

DIE EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION —

gestützt auf den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) 2018/1046 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Juli 2018 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union und zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2012/2002, der Verordnungen (EU) Nr. 1296/2013, (EU) Nr. 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 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates und des Beschlusses Nr. 541/2014/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) Nr. 966/2012¹, insbesondere auf Artikel 110,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) [Nummer] des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom [Datum] zur Festlegung des rechtlichen Rahmens des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps (im Folgenden „Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps“)², insbesondere auf Artikel [Nummer], und den Beschluss Nr. 1313/2013/EU über ein Katastrophenschutzverfahren der Union,

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 2021 darstellt. In Artikel 110 der Verordnung (EU) 2018/1046 (im Folgenden „Haushaltsordnung“) sind ausführliche Vorschriften für Finanzierungsbeschlüsse festgelegt.
- (2) Das Europäische Solidaritätskorps 2021-2027 (im Folgenden das „Programm“) wurde vom europäischen Gesetzgeber noch nicht angenommen. Dennoch hat die Kommission beschlossen, dieses Arbeitsprogramm vorbehaltlich bestimmter Bedingungen zu veröffentlichen, um eine reibungslose Durchführung des Programms zu ermöglichen, sobald der europäische Gesetzgeber den Basisrechtsakt angenommen hat, und um potenziellen Antragstellern ausreichend Zeit zur Ausarbeitung ihrer Anträge auf Mittel der Europäischen Union zu geben. Gemäß Artikel 33 Absatz 3 der Verordnung über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps und Artikel 193 Absatz 2 Unterabsatz 2 Buchstabe a der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) Nr. 2018/1046 und abweichend von Artikel 193 Absatz 4 der letztgenannten Verordnung können Tätigkeiten und Kosten, die 2021 durchgeführt wurden bzw. entstanden sind und gemäß diesem Beschluss finanziert werden, in hinreichend begründeten Fällen ab dem 1. Januar 2021 förderfähig sein, auch wenn sie vor Einreichen des Finanzhilfeantrags durchgeführt wurden bzw. entstanden sind. Dasselbe gilt sinngemäß für die

¹ ABl. L 193 vom 30.7.2018, S. 1.

² ABl. L xxx vom xx.xx.2021, S. x.

Förderfähigkeit von Tätigkeiten und Kosten, die im Rahmen der indirekten Mittelverwaltung durchgeführt wurden bzw. entstanden sind.

- (3) Für die im Arbeitsprogramm angegebenen Einrichtungen sollte aus den dort dargelegten Gründen die Gewährung von Finanzhilfen ohne Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen genehmigt werden.
- (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) Gemäß Artikel 154 Absatz 3 der Haushaltsordnung hat die Kommission in Bezug auf Stellen und Personen, die mit der indirekten Verwaltung von Unionsmitteln betraut sind, sicherzustellen, dass die finanziellen Interessen der Union in dem in Artikel 154 Absatz 3 der Haushaltsordnung vorgesehenen Maße geschützt werden. Zu diesem Zweck werden die Systeme und Verfahren dieser Stellen und Personen nach Artikel 154 Absatz 4 der Haushaltsordnung bewertet und erforderlichenfalls nach Artikel 154 Absatz 5 der Haushaltsordnung geeigneten Aufsichtsmaßnahmen unterzogen, 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) Das Arbeitsprogramm wurde dem gemäß dem geltenden Basisrechtsakt über das Europäische Solidaritätskorps eingesetzten Ausschuss zur informellen Konsultation vorgelegt —

BESCHLIEßT:

Artikel 1
Das Arbeitsprogramm

Der jährliche Finanzierungsbeschluss, der das im Anhang beschriebene Jahresarbeitsprogramm für die Durchführung des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps für 2021 betrifft, wird vorbehaltlich der folgenden aufschiebenden Bedingungen angenommen:

- (a) der endgültigen Annahme des Basisrechtsakts durch den Gesetzgeber und dessen Inkrafttreten ohne wesentliche Änderungen und
- (b) einer befürwortenden Stellungnahme des gemäß dem Basisrechtsakt eingerichteten Ausschusses.

Artikel 2
Beitrag der Union

Der Höchstbeitrag der Union für die Durchführung des Programms für 2021 beläuft sich auf **138 873 000** EUR und wird aus Mitteln finanziert, die unter der Haushaltslinie 07 04 01 des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Union für 2021 eingestellt wurden.

Die in Absatz 1 genannten Haushaltsmittel können auch Verzugszinsen abdecken.

Dieser Beschluss kann nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die Mittel und Beiträge der EFTA-Staaten und anderer an dem Programm teilnehmender Länder bereitgestellt werden.

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

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 im Sinne 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 assoziierte Länder 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 13.4.2021

Für die Kommission

Mariya GABRIEL

Mitglied der Kommission

ANNEX

**THE 2021 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 |
| 1.3. Implementation of the programme..... | 11 |
| 1.3.1. Volunteering | 11 |
| 1.3.2. Solidarity projects | 12 |
| 1.3.3. Networking activities..... | 12 |
| 1.3.5. Quality and support measures..... | 13 |
| 2. Part II – Grants, Procurements and Other Actions..... | 16 |
| 2.1. Budget lines and Basic Act | 16 |
| 2.2. Methods of implementation | 16 |
| 2.2.1. Grants..... | 17 |
| 2.2.1.1. Selection criteria | 17 |
| 2.2.2. Procurements | 17 |
| 2.2.3. Experts and other actions..... | 18 |
| 2.3. Supported activities..... | 18 |
| 2.3.1. Expected results of supported activities | 18 |
| 2.3.2. Actions implemented under indirect management | 19 |
| 2.3.2.1. Grants awarded by means of a general call for proposals (European Solidarity Corps Guide)..... | 19 |
| 2.3.2.2. Other actions under indirect management | 22 |
| 2.3.3. Actions implemented under direct management | 25 |
| 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..... | 28 |
| 2.3.3.4. Experts | 32 |
| 2.3.3.5. Other actions | 32 |
| 2.4. Management fees of National Agencies | 32 |
| 3. Part III – Budget..... | 34 |
| 3.1. Available appropriations and distribution by budget line..... | 34 |
| 3.2. Distribution of available 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
 - 3.3.2. Correction mechanism 38
- 3.4. Funds to co-finance the management costs of National Agencies..... 40
- 3.5. Funds for the European Solidarity Corps resource centres 42

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

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

A political agreement between the co-legislators, achieved on 11 December 2020, confirmed the new generation of the Corps for 2021-2027, with a budget of EUR 1.009 billion in current prices (indicative estimate of EUR 0.895 billion in 2018 prices) and activities that also now include volunteering in the area of humanitarian aid. Besides the extension of volunteering to humanitarian aid in non-EU countries, the "traineeships and jobs" strand tested in the first iteration of the Corps (2018-20) will be discontinued. This will permit the programme to focus 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 will contribute to needs-based emergency 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 will thus help to address not only unmet societal needs in Europe but also humanitarian challenges in non-EU countries affected by man-made or natural disasters.

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 cooperation in the youth field, for the benefit of young people, and which puts solidarity at the heart of EU youth policy².

1 OJ L 250, 4.10.2018, p. 1.

2 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL&from=EN>

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’³ priority area, the Commission proposes to expand mobility actions under the Corps and support its implementation through stronger policy cooperation and community-building activities.

This work programme covers the annual budget of the European Solidarity Corps, which amounts to **EUR 138 873 000** for 2021. 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 Union⁴ (the ‘Financial Regulation’ or ‘FR’).

3 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.”

4 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, 30.07.20182, 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) of the European Parliament and of the Council of xxx establishing the European Solidarity Corps Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) 2018/1475 and (EU) No 375/2014** (hereafter ‘the Regulation’), the **general objective** of 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.

As of 2021, the programme will set 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 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 European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the following non-EU countries are associated to the programme

in 2021⁵, subject to the 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).

⁵ 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.

Implementation by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) 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. It will only become effective subject to and from the moment of adoption of the European Solidarity Corps' basic act.

The actions of the Corps are mostly implemented through indirect management. The Commission delegates implementation tasks to National Agencies (NAs) insofar as 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) and 154 of the Financial Regulation, the Commission may entrust NAs budget implementation tasks via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode.

1.2. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITIES

1.2.1. GENERAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

The European Union is built on solidarity, a shared value which is strongly felt throughout European society. Solidarity defines the European project and provides the necessary unity to cope with current and future crises. Solidarity provides a clear compass to guide European 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 EU⁶.

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.

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

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

well as measures to ensure the quality of the supported activities and provide for the validation of their learning outcomes.

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

The activities of the Corps are coherent with the EU Youth Strategy for 2019-2027 Resolution, adopted by the Council on 26 November 2018⁷. 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, 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**.

Finally, the activities of the Corps are in line with the Commission's Reflection Paper – Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030⁸. Just as with the Youth Goals, the Corps' activities help to achieve several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As foreseen in the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the Commission and the Member States will cooperate on volunteering policies in the youth field via the open method of coordination. The EU Youth Strategy, among others, aims to encourage young people to become active EU citizens⁹, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values as enshrined in the Treaties¹⁰ 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 2019-2027¹¹, and the annexed EU work plan for youth 2019-2021, called for the review of the 2008 Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers¹². The Commission will propose this review in 2021, to address the barriers that still hinder the involvement of youth in cross-border volunteering and solidarity.

7 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, 2018/C 456/01, 18.12.2018.

8 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.

9 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.

10 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.

11 OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>

12 OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008H1213\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008H1213(01)&from=EN)

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 provide principled, needs-based relief to communities in third countries.

1.2.2. POLICY PRIORITIES

In addition to the transversal objectives of the European Solidarity Corps outlined in section 1.1.1, the following priorities will be addressed through its actions in 2021, fully in line with the European Education Area, the new Digital Education Action Plan and the European Democracy Action Plan¹³:

- Inclusion and diversity

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

In general, the Corps aims to promote social inclusion, tolerance, human rights and the value of differences and diversity, and to provide all young people with equal access to the opportunities offered under its actions. An inclusion and diversity strategy for the programme has been developed to support organisations in reaching out to more participants with fewer opportunities. Appropriate mechanisms and resources are available to make sure that the specific needs of participants with fewer opportunities can be catered for.

- Environmental sustainability and climate goals

The European Solidarity Corps aims to make a meaningful contribution to the Commission's commitment to tackling climate and environmental-related challenges. 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.

In general, the Corps promotes the incorporation of green practices in all projects, regardless of the main focus of their activities. Organisations and participants involved with the Corps should have an environmentally friendly approach when designing their activities¹⁴.

- Digital transformation

¹³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European democracy action plan COM/2020/790 final

¹⁴ 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 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).

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.

- 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.

- Prevention, promotion and support in the field of health

The Corps can add significant value to the work ahead of Europe, and elsewhere, in addressing the impact of COVID-19 and the recovery, particularly by supporting the health and social care system with activities related to prevention, promotion and support in the field of health. Beyond the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the Corps should also aim to mobilise volunteers around other major health challenges, such as those related to cancer, and around health, sport and well-being in general.

1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The next sections will highlight the main actions and initiatives that the Commission plans to carry out in 2021, in cooperation with the implementing structures of the programme.

In 2021, the first 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 European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the National Agencies can draw up funding strategies that clarify the conditions for activities considered as complementary to their national schemes.

A complete and more detailed description of the grants and procurements that will be awarded in 2021 under the European Solidarity Corps is available in Part II of this work programme, including those related to preparing the implementation of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

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 2021. **Volunteering under European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps will not be covered by the 2021 general call.**

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 2021

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 2021 or at the beginning of 2022, 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 the policy priority of ‘prevention, promotion and support in the field of health’, defined in Section 1.2.2.

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 2021

Under the general call for proposals, the Commission is planning to create opportunities for young people under the solidarity p action. Awarded projects are expected to start in the course of 2021 or at the beginning of 2022.

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 2021

In 2021, the supported networking activities will include: organisation of training, 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 and projects will be provided through training and evaluation cycles 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.

1.3.5. 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 2021

In 2021, the first year of implementing the European Solidarity Corps under its new legal base, the quality and support measures will include the following actions:

- **Quality Label:** a Quality Label 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 stages of a project. 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 supporting organisation.
- **At decentralised level,** starting in 2021, there will be a new quality label process, which will enable easier access to funding for applicants. As a result, the process of applying for grants will be 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. Transition measures are applicable to organisations that were accredited under the European Solidarity Corps 2018-2020. These measures will help to create a stable framework for participating organisations and ultimately also a safe and secure environment for the young people seeking to take part in any activity supported by the Corps. The application process will be carried out by the National Agencies.

At centralised level, the Executive Agency will launch and manage the application process for a Quality Label for humanitarian aid activities. The procedure consists of 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. The new Quality Label will replace the European Union Aid Volunteering certification procedure. Transition measures are applicable to organisations that held a certification awarded under the EU Aid Volunteers initiative (programme period 2014-2020).

- **Insurance:** complementary insurance will be offered to cover insurance-related expenses for participants in cross-border solidarity-related activities 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, sufficient proof must be obtained from the relevant national health system in order to obtain primary coverage insurance.
- **Certificate:** at the end of the activity, participants will receive a certificate of participation, which must be issued by the organisation coordinating or providing the activity. To support the impact of European Solidarity Corps activities on the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of participants, the competences (combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) that are the non-formal and informal learning outcomes of these activities will be identified and documented,

on a voluntary basis. For this, EU-level tools such as Youthpass and Europass can be used, in accordance with the specificities of the Corps' activities and national circumstances. Use of the Youthpass process and the certificate that identifies and documents non-formal and informal learning outcomes will be further developed for the Corps, and will be promoted and offered to participants (on a voluntary basis) and participating organisations (mandatory, insofar as the participant requests it).

- **Language learning opportunities:** participants in volunteering 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 two 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 participants¹⁵.
- **General online training:** open access training is available for young people registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal and consists of a general induction course and a range of specific courses, focusing 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.¹⁶ In 2021, the course content will be extended to cover further topics, including (but not limited to) those related to volunteering in humanitarian aid. Actions planned for 2021 will also include preparatory work on migration of the current and future training offer for Corps participants towards a corporate platform, indicatively foreseen for 2022.
- **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, that helps to promote Corps and EU youth policy. This continues the granting of such a card under the previous European Voluntary Service¹⁷.
- **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 responsibility¹⁸.
- **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 continue to be developed to improve the experience for end-users. These developments will build on the role of the Portal as the one-stop shop for interested individuals and organisations regarding, inter alia, registration, identification and matching of profiles and opportunities, networking and virtual exchanges. This includes involving future participants and alumni, online

15 See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.31).

16 See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.32).

17 See Section 2.3.2.2 (WPI 5.60).

18 See Section 2.3.2.2 (WPI 5.50).

training, certificates, language and post-placement support, as well as other useful functionalities which may arise in the future. It also includes supporting solidarity projects as initiatives launched by young people who have pursued an activity. Links between the Portal and the IT tools supporting project management will 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 2021, 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, 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. IT solutions 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.¹⁹

Note: In 2021, the European Solidarity Corps may contribute financially to the Commission’s corporate communication, in accordance with Article 21(2) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation. This contribution will cover corporate communication of the EU’s political priorities to the extent that they are related to the general objective of the Corps. 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.

2. PART II – GRANTS, PROCUREMENTS AND OTHER ACTIONS

2.1. BUDGET LINES AND BASIC ACT

Budget line: 07 04 01

Basic act: European Solidarity Corps Regulation

2.2. METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

On the basis of the objectives set out in the European Solidarity Corps Regulation, the 2021 work programme will be implemented through:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Actions implemented through indirect management | 114 357 0000 EUR |
| Grants | 8 100 000 EUR |
| Procurements | 16 296 000 EUR |
| Experts and other actions | 120 000 EUR |
| Total | 138 873 000 EUR |

¹⁹

See Section 2.3.3 (WPI 5.70).

2.2.1. GRANTS

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 will be published by the Commission or by the Executive Agency in accordance with Article 189(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

Each year, after adoption of the financing decision, based on Article 110 of the Financial Regulation, a general call for proposals will be published. The general call for proposals for the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps makes reference to a programme guide for practical information. This 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 aims to give 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 call; the quality of proposals will be assessed on the basis of the award criteria published per action in the guide, as elaborated upon in the call for proposals.

Grants will be implemented either in indirect management by the National Agencies (NAs) or in direct management by either EAC or by the Executive Agency.

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 2021, 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. PROCUREMENTS

This work programme also includes actions that will be implemented by public procurement procedures (via calls for tenders or the use of 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 activities²⁰ 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.

For individual participants, solidarity-related activities supported in 2021, 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 foundation, history, functioning and EU values;
- increased motivation for further engagement in the solidarity sector;

20

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.

- 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 participating countries.

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 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.

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 opportunities²¹.

²¹ This does not concern volunteering in humanitarian aid, which will not be included in the general call for proposals in 2021.

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;
- 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, asylum seekers and migrants;
- 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 Label²² may receive support from the European Solidarity Corps to carry out projects focused on volunteering opportunities. Projects with exclusively in-country volunteering activities may involve one or more accredited organisations. Projects including cross-border volunteering activities must involve an accredited hosting organisation, and at least one accredited support organisation from each country of origin of the young people who are expected to participate. Depending on the type of organisation involved, as well as the duration and type of activities, the following types of projects are supported under this action:

| Action type | Essential eligibility criteria |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteering Projects | <p><u>Eligible participating organisations:</u> any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, that has been attributed the relevant European Solidarity Corps Quality Label or an accreditation for volunteering awarded under Erasmus+.</p> <p><u>Eligible applicants:</u> any participating organisation holding a valid Quality Label for lead organisation at the application deadline established in one of the EU Member States, overseas countries and territories or third countries associated to the Programme, or an international organisation. Eligible applicants apply on behalf of all other participating organisations involved in the project.</p> <p><u>Eligible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual volunteering • activities by volunteering teams • preparatory activities |

Volunteering Projects will be implemented by National Agencies through indirect management.

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.

²² Or an accreditation for volunteering awarded under Erasmus + (2013-2020)

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.

| Action type | Essential eligibility criteria |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Solidarity projects | <p><u>Eligible applicants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a group of (minimum 5) young people aged between 18 and 30, who are legally residing in one of the EU Member States, overseas countries and territories or third countries associated to the Programme and who have registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal. One of the young people in the group assumes the role of legal representative and takes responsibility for submitting the application; • a public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, established in one of the EU Member States, overseas countries and territories or third countries associated to the Programme, can apply on behalf of the group that will implement the project. <p><u>Eligible activities:</u> activities that help to attain the objectives of the action.</p> |

Solidarity Projects will be implemented by National Agencies through indirect management.

2.3.2.2. Other actions under indirect management

a) Quality Label (decentralised)

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 many of the activities supported under the European Solidarity Corps.

Award of a Quality Label 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 decentralised Quality Label process (National Agencies will review applications) 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.

This action will be implemented by National Agencies through indirect management

b) *Networking Activities (decentralised)*

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 so contribute to increasing its impact at systemic level.

In 2021, 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. If the implementation could not start on 1st of January 2021, the Networking Activities aiming to reach out, mobilise and support potential beneficiaries and potential participants would be put at risk. This would jeopardise the successful launch of the programme and endanger the quality of its implementation, especially in the challenging context of the pandemic and transition between two programming periods.

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 of the FR.

National Agencies will be invited to submit, within their annual work programmes, a budget to support Networking Activities based on the strategy and overview of the planned activities at macro level.

Costs incurred for these Networking Activities may be considered eligible as of 1 January 2021, even if they were implemented and incurred before the proposal was submitted. In view of the delayed entry into force of the legal basis of the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027, this is needed in 2021 in order to ensure a smooth transition to the new European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027.

The country distribution of the budget is provided in Part III of this Work Programme.

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)(c) of the European Solidarity Corps Regulation.

Costs incurred for activities of these resource centres may be considered eligible as of 1 January 2021, even if they were implemented and incurred before the application was submitted. In view of the delayed entry into force of the legal basis of the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027, this is needed in 2021 in order to ensure a smooth transition to the new European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027. The Resource Centres provide the National Agencies' network and stakeholders of the European Solidarity Corps with crucial expertise, support, services, tools and resources underpinning the implementation of the programme. If the implementation could not start on 1 January 2021, their on-going activities would be put at risk, jeopardising the successful launch and implementation of the programme, especially in the challenging context of the pandemic and transition between two programming periods.

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 of the FR.

| Implementation | Indicative amount (EUR) |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| NA | European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre: 290 000 |
| | SALTO Resource Centres:560 000 |

- d) *Specific training for participants and organisations in solidarity-related activities (decentralised)*²³

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.40

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

- **pre-departure training for volunteers** ensures that, by the time they leave, participants are adequately prepared for their upcoming activities and equipped with practical and technical information on matters such as insurance, visa, pocket money and working hours, etc.
- **on-arrival training** introduces the volunteers to the host country, helps to adapt to cultural and personal challenges and allows getting to know each other and build a network.
- **mid-term evaluation** allows participants in long-term volunteering to assess their experience up to that point and to reflect on the activities, role and support of the host organisation and on their own contribution.
- **annual event** is an opportunity to bring together former, current and potential participants.

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

The 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 of the FR.

The country distribution of the budget is provided in Part III of this Work 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)

²³ These training activities will not concern participants in volunteering in humanitarian aid in 2021, as this will not be implemented until 2022.

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 Areas²⁴

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 opportunities²⁵.

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 “prevention, promotion and support in the field of health”, as defined in Section 1.2.2 ;
- 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, asylum seekers and migrants;
- 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;

²⁴ In 2021 this corresponds to the policy priority of ‘prevention, promotion and support in the field of health’, as defined in Section 1.2.2.

²⁵ This does not concern volunteering in humanitarian aid, which will not be included in the general call for proposals in 2021.

- 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 Label²⁶ may receive support from the European Solidarity Corps to carry out projects focused on volunteering opportunities. Projects with exclusively in-country volunteering activities may involve one or more accredited organisations. Projects including cross-border volunteering activities must involve an accredited hosting organisation, and at least one accredited support organisation from each country of origin of the young people who are expected to participate. The following type of projects is supported under this action:

| Action type | Essential eligibility criteria |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas | <p><u>Eligible participating organisations:</u> any public or private entity, whether non-profit or profit making, local, regional, national or international, that has been attributed the relevant European Solidarity Corps Quality Label or an accreditation for volunteering awarded under Erasmus+.</p> <p><u>Eligible applicants:</u> any participating organisation holding a valid Quality Label for lead organisation at the application deadline established in one of the EU Member States, overseas countries and territories or third countries associated to the Programme, or an international organisation. Eligible applicants apply on behalf of all other participating organisations involved in the project.</p> <p><u>Eligible activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities by volunteering teams • preparatory visits • complementary activities |

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

²⁶ Or an accreditation for volunteering awarded under Erasmus + (2013-2020).

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 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.

In accordance with Article 33, paragraph (3) of the Regulation, costs incurred for activities within the context of the European Solidarity Corps Youth Card may be considered eligible as of 1 January 2021, even if they were implemented and incurred before the proposal was submitted. In view of the delayed entry into force of the legal basis of the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027, this is needed in 2021 in order to ensure programme implementation continuity, avoid any disruptions, and continuing the community building activities in the fields of youth participation and young democratic involvement carried out by the grant holder for those who are in possession of their Youth Card or start their mobilities as of 1 January 2021.

This action will be implemented by EAC through direct management.

2.3.3.3.Procurements

a) Networking activities and events organised at European level

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 4.20

The centralised 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.

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 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, which complements coverage by the EHIC and/or national social security systems. 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, sufficient proof must be obtained from the relevant national health system in order to obtain full coverage insurance. 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.

The supporting organisation, in cooperation with the host organisation, is responsible for the enrolment of the participant(s). This enrolment must be done before the departure of the participant(s) and cover the duration of the activity.

The existing contract will be used to cover participants in European Solidarity Corps activities in projects selected on the basis of the 2021 general call for proposals.

A tender procedure will also be organised in 2021 to select a contractor 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.

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

c) *Online language support*

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 two 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 contract will be implemented by the Executive Agency through direct management. In 2021, online language support will be financed entirely via the budget of the Erasmus+ programme.

d) *General online training and specific training for participants in cross-border activities (centralised)*

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 will be supported through open access general online training. Existing training programmes, and online courses available via the dedicated web platform since late 2020, will be further developed 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.). Among other topics, the general online training will include courses specially targeted at future participants in the humanitarian aid strand.

In addition, specific preparatory training will be provided to young people participating in the humanitarian aid strand of the programme.

In order to be ready to support humanitarian aid operations in non-EU countries, candidate volunteers should be adequately prepared before their deployment. Preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities aims to improve their level of preparedness and specific knowledge about the action.

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

In 2021, it will cover a call for tender for preparatory training for volunteers in humanitarian aid activities and for additional general online training services.

Actions planned for 2021 will also include preparatory work on migration of the current and future training offer for Corps participants towards a corporate platform, indicatively foreseen for 2022.

e) *Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label*

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 2021, 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.

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

f) *Information and networking activities focused on Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.15

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

In 2021, these activities will consist mainly of:

- 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.

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

g) *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, and interoperability between the Corps Portal and the Youthpass and Europass IT environments will be developed. 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 EAC through direct management.

h) *Support for IT developments* (WPI): 5.65

The European Solidarity Corps programme's allocated credits for IT tools and systems in 2021 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), eForms (AF -- Application Forms), the OEET (AM assessment module for experts), LifeCard (NAM -- the National Agencies Module), management reporting (DAP-Data

Analytics Platform), dissemination platform (VALOR), etc.).

This action will be implemented by EAC through direct management.

2.3.3.4. Experts

- a) *Support for evaluating requests for the Quality Label*

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). 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.

- b) *Support for evaluating requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas*

Index references in budget table (WPI): 5.82

These costs cover the services provided by the experts involved in assessing requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas (see Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2.1 a) above, insofar as they refer to Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas). 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 (centralised)*

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 5.13

A Quality Label system will be put in place to ensure the general quality framework for humanitarian aid related activities. A call for expressions of interest will be published, with a view to issuing organisations with 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

ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED UNDER INDIRECT MANAGEMENT

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 of the FR..

Costs incurred by the National Agencies may be considered eligible as of 1 January 2021, even if they were implemented and incurred before the submission of their proposal. In view of the delayed entry into force of the legal basis of the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027, this is needed in 2021 in order to ensure programme implementation continuity and avoid any disruption.

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 2021 to finance activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps programme.

3.1. AVAILABLE APPROPRIATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION BY BUDGET LINE

The total available operational appropriations foreseen under the 2021 work programme are EUR 138 873 000²⁷.

Table 1 – Available appropriations

| Budget European Solidarity Corps 2021 | Budget lines | EU | EFTA/EEA | External assigned revenue | Total |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| European Solidarity Corps | 07 04 01 | 129 127 673.00 | 245 342.58 | 9 499 984.42 ²⁸ | 138 873 000.00 |
| TOTAL | | 129 127 673.00 | 245 342.58 | 9 499 984.42 | 138 873 000.00 |

²⁷ The availability of additional appropriations estimated for the participation of countries other than EU Member States as provided for in the Regulation, is subject to the entering into force of the agreement on the participation of the respective country in the European Solidarity Corps or to the incorporation of the Regulation in the EEA Agreement. Moreover, the level of appropriations contained in this financing decision and annual work programme reflects the updated level of the budget for the European Solidarity Corps following the December 2020 political agreement.

²⁸ Including an estimated EUR 6 ,000 ,000 in available appropriations for 2021 and EUR 3 499 984.42 in funds carried forward from previous years.

3.2. DISTRIBUTION OF AVAILABLE 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) |
| EACEA | Actions implemented directly by the Executive Agency (direct management) |
| EAC-NA | Actions implemented indirectly by National Agencies (indirect management) |

Table 2 – Total budget

| WPI | Actions | 2021 draft budget allocation | Implementation mode | Implementing body |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.00 | Volunteering activities | 70 000 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 1.30 | Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas | 8 000 000 | CFP | EACEA |
| 3.00 | Solidarity projects | 11 500 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 4.10 | Transnational and national networking activities | 7 000 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 4.20 | Networking activities and events organised at European level | 416 000 | PP | EAC |
| 5.11 | Information and networking activities focused on the Quality Label | 70 000 | PP | EACEA |
| 5.13 | Quality Label (centralised) | 0 | APEL | EACEA |
| 5.14 | Quality Label (decentralised) | 0 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 5.15 | Information and networking activities focused on Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas | 60 000 | PP | EACEA |
| 5.20 | Insurance | 4 500 000 | PP | EACEA |
| 5.31 | Online linguistic assessment and support | 0 | PP | EACEA |
| 5.32 | General online training and specific training for participants in cross-border activities (centralised) | 8 450 000 | PP | EACEA |
| 5.40 | Specific training for participants and organisations in solidarity-related activities (decentralised) | 16 000 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 5.50 | Activities of the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres | 850 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| 5.60 | European Youth Card | 100 000 | MON | EAC |
| 5.65 | Support for IT development | 2 100 000 | PP | EAC |
| 5.70 | European Solidarity Corps Portal | 700 000 | PP | EAC |
| 5.81 | Support for evaluation of requests for the Quality Label | 60 000 | SE | EACEA |
| 5.82 | Support for evaluation of requests for funding regarding Volunteering Teams in High-Priority Areas | 60 000 | SE | EACEA |
| 6.00 | Management fees | 9 007 000 | IM | EAC-NA |
| | TOTAL | 138 873 000 | | |

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

3.3.1. CRITERIA

In applying the Regulation, the four criteria used to calculate funds to be managed by individual National Agencies are the following:

- country population (latest available data from Eurostat);
- cost of living (latest available data from Eurostat and EFTA);
- distance between capitals (latest available data from Ephemeride);
- performance (see below under point d).

The relative weight of the criteria is calculated as follows:

criteria a) to c) account for the allocation of 75% of funds. These three criteria are combined in the following way: the population criteria are a) corrected by the cost of living, b) weighted by 25% and by the distance between capitals, c) weighted by 25% as well;

criterion d) (i.e. performance) accounts for the remaining 25% of funds for Volunteering;

for the countries participating in the programme against payment of a financial contribution ('entry ticket' the allocation of funds under indirect management is calculated on the basis of the financial contribution paid by the countries..

The sections below provide greater details concerning each of the four criteria.

a) *Population*

Country (total) population is directly correlated to the size of the budget, i.e. a larger population results in a higher budget allocation.

Within the allocation based on population, a minimum fixed allocation corresponding to 20% is distributed to the countries in equal shares. The minimum allocation aims to avoid excessive disparities in the allocations between countries and also between years.

A reduction coefficient is also applied for the smallest countries²⁹, to adjust their allocation in order to avoid disproportionate funding.

A special adjustment is also foreseen for Belgium to compensate for the projects that will be submitted to the Belgian National Agencies by international/European-based organisations.

b) *Cost of living*

29 CY, LU, MT, IS.

The cost of living coefficient is meant to balance the available funding in favour of countries with a lower cost of living for participating in mobility or cooperation activities. The lower the cost of living, the higher the budget allocated to a country.

c) *Distance between capitals*

The distance between capitals is meant to compensate for the higher travel costs incurred in more remote countries. The further the country is from other countries, the higher the budget allocated to it.

d) *Performance*

For Volunteering, the performance is measured in terms of:

- number of outputs realised in 2016 and 2017 in mobility activities for youth, adjusted to take into account population, cost of living and distance between capitals;
- the ratio of payments realised in 2016 and 2017, compared to the EU budget allocated to National Agencies for mobility actions in 2016 and 2017.

The source data underlying the calculation of performance coefficients have been extracted from the E+ Link system.

3.3.2. CORRECTION MECHANISM

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. This mechanism results from applying the above-mentioned criteria to ensure: that no country receives an amount that, in percentage terms and as a proportion of the total available budget, is lower than in 2020;; and that the increase allocated to each country per action is limited to the overall increase of the action.

Table 3 – Country allocation (in EUR):

| | Volunteering | Solidarity Projects | Networking activities and Quality Label | Specific training | Total |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| BE | 2.075.751 | 360.517 | 203.662 | 476.049 | 3.115.979 |
| BG | 1.903.800 | 249.541 | 140.991 | 302.824 | 2.597.156 |
| CZ | 1.784.387 | 302.396 | 190.550 | 394.933 | 2.672.266 |
| DK | 1.115.173 | 195.049 | 119.931 | 257.752 | 1.687.905 |
| DE | 9.602.372 | 1.422.345 | 873.477 | 2.212.737 | 14.110.931 |
| EE | 853.667 | 150.287 | 94.700 | 147.557 | 1.246.211 |
| EL | 1.469.600 | 330.487 | 202.294 | 461.153 | 2.463.534 |
| ES | 6.714.580 | 1.018.127 | 625.244 | 1.512.376 | 9.870.327 |
| FR | 6.980.332 | 1.187.272 | 729.116 | 1.854.734 | 10.751.454 |
| HR | 1.191.157 | 181.608 | 114.437 | 220.303 | 1.707.505 |
| IE | 995.896 | 190.718 | 118.224 | 256.300 | 1.561.138 |
| IT | 6.292.454 | 1.137.930 | 698.816 | 1.795.048 | 9.924.248 |
| CY | 665.977 | 146.028 | 92.017 | 118.924 | 1.022.946 |
| LV | 855.535 | 157.813 | 99.443 | 170.046 | 1.282.837 |
| LT | 1.115.646 | 169.563 | 106.846 | 186.459 | 1.578.514 |
| LU | 474.813 | 106.889 | 67.354 | 102.893 | 751.949 |
| HU | 1.908.173 | 290.418 | 186.103 | 372.922 | 2.757.616 |
| MT | 524.827 | 106.109 | 66.863 | 98.022 | 795.821 |
| NL | 2.134.306 | 419.720 | 236.945 | 570.355 | 3.361.326 |
| AT | 1.424.787 | 255.209 | 143.708 | 339.544 | 2.163.248 |
| PL | 5.663.081 | 813.341 | 499.480 | 1.141.647 | 8.117.549 |
| PT | 2.160.988 | 343.023 | 208.053 | 442.321 | 3.154.385 |
| RO | 3.247.952 | 522.950 | 294.474 | 676.996 | 4.742.372 |
| SI | 1.028.649 | 157.110 | 99.001 | 159.119 | 1.443.879 |
| SK | 1.301.067 | 200.487 | 122.621 | 256.350 | 1.880.525 |
| FI | 1.424.628 | 202.393 | 122.862 | 252.433 | 2.002.316 |
| SE | 1.422.982 | 280.049 | 179.458 | 388.574 | 2.271.063 |
| LI | 177.714 | 29.196 | 17.781 | 40.638 | 265.329 |
| IS | 465.359 | 76.567 | 43.115 | 99.710 | 684.751 |
| Total | 66.975.653 | 11.003.142 | 6.697.566 | 15.308.719 | 99.985.080 |

| | Volunteering | Solidarity Projects | Networking activities and Quality Label | Specific training | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Republic of North Macedonia | 38.639 | 6.348 | 3.864 | 8.832 | 57.682 |
| Republic of Turkey | 2.985.708 | 490.510 | 298.570 | 682.449 | 4.457.238 |
| Total | 3.024.347 | 496.858 | 302.434 | 691.281 | 4.514.920 |

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

The breakdown by Member State carries forward the approach adopted since 2014 for Erasmus+ flat-rate contributions. These mainly correlate to the volume of indirect management funds for grant support initially allocated to each country, taking into account the differences in national situations³⁰.

The calculation method defines three different reference percentages, based on countries' allocations of funds under indirect management (large countries: 4%; medium-sized countries: 6%; small countries: 8%), and takes into account the cost of living. The Commission may also decide to set a minimum and a maximum percentage for increases in the management fees.

³⁰ Country size; special situation of Belgium; cost of living.

Table 4 – Management fees – breakdown by country (in EUR)

| | Management fee |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| BE | 267.318 |
| BG | 185.297 |
| CZ | 223.691 |
| DK | 143.535 |
| DE | 1.243.130 |
| EE | 87.663 |
| EL | 245.403 |
| ES | 853.560 |
| FR | 1.014.516 |
| HR | 129.816 |
| IE | 139.843 |
| IT | 969.952 |
| CY | 70.090 |
| LV | 97.751 |
| LT | 112.097 |
| LU | 58.054 |
| HU | 216.966 |
| MT | 57.156 |
| NL | 311.663 |
| AT | 189.506 |
| PL | 659.618 |
| PT | 254.711 |
| RO | 388.317 |
| SI | 97.289 |
| SK | 148.871 |
| FI | 149.482 |
| SE | 209.798 |
| LI | 35.901 |
| IS | 56.857 |
| Total | 8.617.851 |

| | Management fee |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Republic of North Macedonia | 4.972 |
| Republic of Turkey | 384.177 |
| Total | 389.149 |

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 | 560 000 |
| Total | 850 000 |