



# BUILDING BRIDGES CREATING CHANGE: THE POWER OF YOUTH VOLUNTEERING

3-6 FEBRUARY 2025

PARIS, FRANCE



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*Volunteering is an expression of solidarity and a driver of positive change. To ensure that youth engagement continues to thrive, we need strong structures, recognition, and support. Investing in youth volunteering means investing in a better future for all.*

**GLENN MICALLEF**

*Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture*

# Foreword

**Y**outh volunteering has the power to transform lives, strengthen communities, and shape the future of Europe. The “Building Bridges, Creating Change: The Power of Youth Volunteering” conference, held in February 2025, brought together key stakeholders to advocate for a renewed vision for EU youth volunteering.

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*Hosting this conference was important to us to highlight the impact of the European Solidarity Corps program as a driver of solidarity across Europe and its neighbouring partner regions.*

**MATHIEU ROUMÉGOUS**

*Erasmus+ France Youth and Sport Agency*

Organised by the SALTO European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre and Agence Erasmus+ France Jeunesse & Sport, the conference highlighted the profound impact of the European Solidarity Corps as a value-driven programme with solidarity at its heart. Participants explored how EU volunteering fosters the sense of belonging to Europe, empowers young people for environmental action, and strengthens solidarity across diverse communities.

A key driver behind these efforts is the Strategic National Agency Co-

operation (SNAC) on Volunteering. With its endeavour to strengthen European youth volunteering, SNAC Volunteering works on key pillars such as the continuation of a solidarity-based programme, the development of an EU volunteer status, a quality charter, and capacity building. It aims to increase knowledge about the European Solidarity Corps and its impact, support knowledge exchange around European volunteering and solidarity, and advocate for [better conditions for volunteers in Europe and beyond](#).

This magazine captures the key outcomes and insights from the 2025 conference, reflecting our shared ambition to enhance the European Solidarity Corps and create better conditions for youth volunteering in Europe. The key messages presented throughout the conference were collected. They represent the voices of experts, practitioners, and young volunteers, shaping a collective vision for the future of youth volunteering in Europe. For a deeper insight into the conference discussions, take a look at the [conference report](#).

**Let us keep building on this momentum together.**

# Turning conversations into impact

**V**olunteers and a strong civil society are essential for well-functioning democracies and resilient communities. The “Building Bridges, Creating Change: The Power of Youth Volunteering” conference marked a significant milestone in our shared commitment to strengthening and advocating for youth volunteering across Europe.

At the heart of the discussions held during the conference was the European Solidarity Corps – a value-driven programme that embodies solidarity. The conference highlighted its profound impact and showcased the European Solidarity Corps’ potential to address societal challenges and foster a united, democratic and resilient future.

With a diverse group of participants spanning volunteering practitioners, policymakers, researchers, along with inspiring keynote speakers and thought-provoking panellists, we reflected on how volunteering can contribute positively to societal transformation.

Beyond this conference, we encourage each of you to continue advocating for youth volunteering within your networks and communities. The key messages brought forward by participants, keynote speakers, and panellists are compiled in this magazine to ensure that the momentum generated translates into tangible outcomes.

Let us ensure that our voices continue to be heard. Together, let us build bridges and create long-lasting positive change.

**Mathieu Roumégous  
& Gerhard Mosshammer**

*Director, Erasmus+ France Youth and Sport Agency & Head Of Youth and Sport Unit at OeAD-GmbH*



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*“Engage – Connect – Empower” is the motto of the European Youth Strategy – let’s turn these words into action!”*

**GERHARD MOSSHAMMER**

*Austrian National Agency Erasmus+ Youth, Sport & European Solidarity Corps*

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*It’s time to recognize the impact of EU youth volunteering to unlock its full potential in the future.*

**MATHIEU ROUMÉGOUS**

*Erasmus+ France Youth and Sport Agency*



# A Data-Driven Perspective on the Future of the European Solidarity Corps

## European Solidarity Corps: insights from the interim evaluation

The European Solidarity Corps has been the European Union's flagship funding scheme for youth volunteering and civic engagement. Initial findings from the European Solidarity Corps interim report were presented by Leonardo Dongiovanni.

The evaluation covering both programme periods, European Solidarity Corps 2018-2020 and European Solidarity Corps 2021-2023, using five key criteria:

### Relevance & Coherence

The European Solidarity Corps programme is performing very well, with **high satisfaction rates among organisations and participants**.

These outcomes are also confirmed with data outcomes of the [RAY Transnational analysis](#) on the effects and outcomes of the European Solidarity Corps 2021-23.

**Objectives and priorities are relevant** in promoting social cohe-

sion and individual development of young people.

There is a **high degree of complementarity** between the programme and other EU policy initiatives in the field of youth (and beyond).

### Effectiveness & Efficiency

The European Solidarity Corps' flexible programme management has helped mitigate the impact of external shocks (e.g. the war in Ukraine, COVID-19 pandemic). However, **funding remains insufficient**. While communities, organisations, and participants express overall satisfaction, the financial structure does not meet the high demand.

### EU Added Value

the data shows that the European Solidarity Corp **fosters a sense of European identity**, with participants and host communities displaying positive attitudes towards the EU. The programme promotes active citizenship, enhances personal development, and facilitates networking and collaboration opportunities.

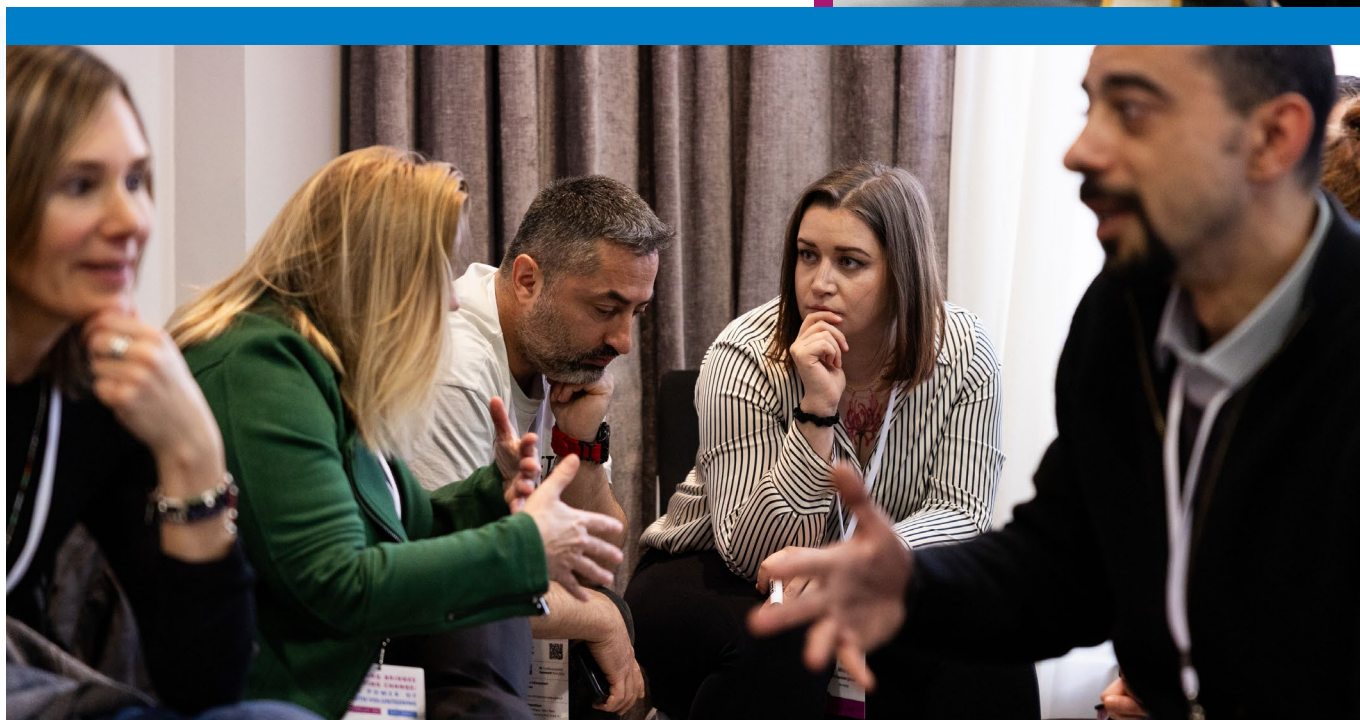
As the European Solidarity Corps continues to evolve, these findings play a crucial role in **ensuring that it remains a high-impact, inclusive programme for young people** across Europe.

More insights on the performance of the European Solidarity Corps published by the EC can be found [here](#); key insights for the future of the European Solidarity Corps by the SNAC vol partnership can be found in the [Executive Summary](#) and the [Infosheet](#).

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*EU Added Value: compared to other programmes, the ESC stands out by contributing to cultivating a European identity and positive attitudes to the EU, promoting active citizenship and facilitating participants' personal development, offering enhanced opportunities for organisations.*

**LEONARDO DONGIOVANNI**  
European Commission



## The European Solidarity Corps in figures (*since 2021*)



**SOLIDARITY  
PROJECTS**



**VOLUNTEERING  
ACTIVITIES**



**HUMANITARIAN  
AID  
VOLUNTEERING**

*Nearly*

**550,000**

**young people** expressed interest in joining the programme

*Nearly*

**7,000**

**projects** have been funded

*Nearly*

**3,600**

**organisations** implemented projects

*Nearly*

**65,000**

**opportunities** were created for young people

## Impact of the programme

**96%**

of **local communities** agreed/strongly agreed that the ESC has a positive impact on the lives and values of engaged communities and societal groups

**98%**

of individual volunteers agreed/strongly agreed that it had a **positive impact on their life**

**97%**

of organisations indicated that the ESC had a **positive impact on their organisations**

**35%**

of ESC participants have been young people with **fewer opportunities**



# Strengthening Synergies Between National and European Volunteering Schemes

The [study](#) on the Differences, Complementarities, and Synergies between Service Civique (ESC) and ESC Volunteering Activities in France provides a comparative perspective on how the **European Solidarity Corps can complement national schemes.**

It explores how national and European volunteering schemes can reinforce each other, offering lessons for other countries looking to enhance youth engagement through solidarity-based initiatives.

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*European Solidarity Corps volunteering can be seen as an amplifier! It equips young volunteers with global solutions they can apply to local challenges upon return*

**BARBARA PETRI**

*Orisha Consulting*

Despite differences, Service Civique and the European Solidarity Corps face **common challenges** that impact their implementation and reach. Challenges include a lack of strategic alignment between programme frameworks, fragmented training, tools and outreach efforts as well as complex administrative



procedures. Addressing these will lead to higher effectiveness and sustainability.

To enhance impact of both programmes, the study **recommends simplifying processes, improving inclusion, recognising volunteer-acquired skills, and strengthening legal frameworks for equity and digital access.** Service Civique fosters local engagement and social cohesion, while European Solidarity Corps expands this to the European level, **addressing global challenges** and reinforcing a shared European identity.

A stronger interconnection could enable volunteers to seamlessly transition between national and European initiatives and further amplify their impact. France's integrated approach serves as a model, proving that national and European schemes can not only coexist but **foster cross-cultural solidarity and enhance mobility.**

The study outcomes also show that youth volunteering, particularly interconnected national and international schemes, **advances the EU's soft power and global influence** by fostering intercultural understanding and collaboration across borders. To ensure long-term success, **stronger synergies, recognition of skills, sustainable funding, and integrated governance models are essential.**

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*As President of the Agence du Service Civique, which manages both a national volunteering programme and the delegation of the European Solidarity Corps in France, I measure every day the extent to which these schemes transform the lives of young people and strengthen the cohesion of our societies. Investing in these programmes means investing in a more cohesive and sustainable future.*

**NADIA BALLAOU**

*Agence du Service Civique*



# Youth volunteering brings Europe closer to its citizens



## YOUTH GOAL #1

The European Solidarity Corps plays a vital role in achieving the Youth Goal #1: connecting EU with youth, by bridging the gap between young people and the European Union.

The European Solidarity Corps is a **powerful tool for strengthening European identity, fostering civic engagement**, and making the EU more tangible to its citizens. The 2025 conference explored how volunteering - especially within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps - contributes to building trust, increasing participation, and creating a stronger sense of belonging among young Europeans. [Data confirms](#) that **youth volunteering is a key driver** in reinforcing **democratic values** and encouraging **active citizenship**.



It was highlighted how volunteering fosters social cohesion and European values and how civic engagement enhances inclusivity and strengthens European identity. **Volunteering is** not just a learning experience - it is **a vital form of active participation** that strengthens democracy and social inclusion at local, national, and European level.

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*Youth volunteering plays an essential role in shaping the democratic fabric of society.*

**ÁLVARO GONZÁLEZ PÉREZ**

*European Youth Forum*

Youth volunteering is essential for a more connected, democratic, and inclusive Europe.

At a micro level, volunteering has tangible benefits. Volunteers serve as positive role models, inspiring local youth to engage in mobility opportunities, learn new languages, and develop a broader European perspective. Many who return from volunteering abroad bring back a strong sense of solidarity, often becoming **more engaged in local policy-making and community initiatives.**

Moreover, Solidarity Projects remain one of the **most accessible tools for young people** to actively contribute to their communities, fostering change at the grassroots level.

Politically, the **European Solidarity Corps is a highly effective and cost-efficient** basis for training, **equipping young people with both hard and soft skills** that enhance their **employability and long-term civic participation.**

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*For a thriving EU democracy, with a “Whole of Society” approach, we need structured and targeted support for volunteers and volunteering that enables solidarity to remain at the heart of the EU project in a way that facilitates resilience and preparedness as well as combatting polarisation.*

**GABRIELLA CIVICO**

*Centre for European Volunteering*





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*With over 20 years of involvement in the programme, I have seen how EU values have taken root in the neighboring partner regions. Many young people are now advocating for democratic values, legal system reforms, equal treatment, and human rights - many of whom were once involved in EU programmes like Erasmus+, EVS, and the European Solidarity Corps. This engagement has shaped the civic participation of new generations and has significantly contributed to societal change in countries like Serbia or Georgia. It is clear proof of the long-lasting impact EU youth programmes have on societies.*

## VOLUNTEERING CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT





## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG) #8

Beyond social impact, volunteering also contributes to economic empowerment. The European Solidarity Corps supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

**A**t a time when Europe faces social, economic, and political challenges, youth volunteering offers a **powerful tool for unity and resilience**.

Investing in a strong value-based European youth volunteering pro-

gramme, like the European Solidarity Corps, means **investing in the next generation** of engaged, informed, and empowered European citizens to make them key players in **shaping the future of a peaceful, democratic and united Europe**.

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*As a member of the European parliament, together with my political group, I will fight for the European Solidarity Corps funding to be improved, optimized, and increased, so that they can allow the greatest number of young citizens to go abroad or get involved. I believe European Solidarity Corps potential in building European citizenship and acquiring skills is vastly underestimated. Going abroad alone for several months, in service to the community that hosts them, is an experience that transforms young people for life.*

**LAURENCE FARRENG**

*European Parliament*





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*Apart from more funds, I believe there should be more focus on the European citizenship in the ESC activities implemented, making clear to ESC volunteers and other stakeholders that not just the European Union but the whole structure that provides ESC, Erasmus+ and these unique opportunities for EU citizens is at risk.*

**VOLUNTEERING CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT**



# Youth volunteering contributes to a greener Europe



## YOUTH GOAL #10

European Solidarity Corps also supports the achievement of Youth Goal #10 Sustainable Green Europe.

**R**esearch and hands-on experiences shows that **volunteering initiatives drive meaningful environmental impact** and help building a more **sustainable Europe**.

Structured volunteering, like the Service Civique Écologique, can effectively support ecological engagement.

Youth volunteering is a powerful force in making Europe greener and more sustainable.

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*Volunteers initiate the transition, they drive the transition in fields where institutions and other generations failed. Volunteers are the best allies and we must ensure that we as volunteers work side by side with all generations to bring about change.*

**ADÉLAÏDE CHARLIER**

*Youth for climate*

A recent [RAY study](#) states that 69% of the volunteers are better able to contribute to more environmental sustainability in their everyday life after completion of the project.

In smaller cities, the impact of these initiatives is especially visible, inspiring communities to take action. Volunteers engage in meaningful dialogues with local authorities and





residents, raising awareness about environmental challenges and fostering collaboration. Through workshops, school projects, and transnational discussions, **young people drive climate education and sustainable practices.**

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*We need to make more effort to highlight the results, to measure and communicate the impact effectively. Civil society organisations have been doing this work for years, long before the EU made it a priority - so let us recognise that, consult with them, and compile information about what has already been done.*

**VICKY LOVELOCK**

*Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service*

Local initiatives, such as community gardens, free bicycle programs, and green travel campaigns, not only promote eco-friendly lifestyles but

also strengthen intergenerational and community bonds. Volunteering connects people with nature while empowering them to take ownership of sustainability efforts. To amplify these efforts, strengthening coordination between youth organisations, environmental NGOs and local communities is key to fostering effective collaborations.

**Initiatives like the Service Civique Écologique** or the introduction of an initiative like the **Climate Corps: European Erasmus Green Cities**, as part of the European Union's youth funding schemes, aim to offer young people real-life experiential learning by engaging them in local projects with tangible community impact. Through hands-on participation, young volunteers gain practical green skills that empower them to contribute to a more sustainable future.



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*We have to create even more EU added value with existing programmes. Youth mobility and volunteering programmes managed by DG EAC could be better linked to the green cities programmes run by DG CLIMA, ENER, ENVI. In the future those cities should naturally host European Solidarity Corps volunteers through placements.*

**GIANLUCA SPINACI**

*European Committee of Regions*



# EU volunteering empowers young people to drive solidarity & inclusion



## YOUTH GOAL #3

The Solidarity Corps enables and ensures the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. EU Youth Goal #3 Inclusive Societies.

**S**olidarity and inclusion are both **fundamental principles** of the European Solidarity Corps, yet they address different dimensions of youth engagement. While **solidarity** focuses on fostering a shared sense of responsibility and **collective action for the common good**, inclusion ensures that these **opportunities are accessible to all**, particularly young people with fewer opportunities. Both aspects are deeply interconnected, shaping the role of Solidarity Corps in strengthening European communities, promoting social cohesion, and empowering young people.

## Solidarity: a collective commitment to community and European values

Solidarity is a defining value of the European Union, and the Solidarity Corps embodies this principle by encouraging young people to actively **support communities** while gaining personal and professional skills. Volunteering with the Solidarity Corps Programme is not just an individual journey but a shared effort that brings people together across cultures, generations, and social backgrounds. It strengthens civic



engagement, fosters intercultural understanding, and reinforces European values at the grassroots level.

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*Solidarity is not an objective as such but a tool that brings people together to reach societal goals. Solidarity is the tool to overcome challenges.*

**JOSEPHINE STARON**

SYNOPIA

Solidarity also means taking action to address societal challenges, from social inclusion to sustainability, by mobilising young volunteers in meaningful ways. Through their engagement, participants contribute to strengthening local structures, supporting marginalised communities, and driving social innovation. Volunteers often serve as **change-makers**, inspiring others to engage in civic action and amplifying the

programme's impact beyond their immediate projects.

Long-term volunteering has proven to have a particularly **strong impact on local communities**. Meanwhile, shorter-term opportunities, such as volunteering teams, enable quick responses to urgent needs and engage a broader range of participants. Regardless of the format, the Solidarity Corps ensures that solidarity is not merely an abstract concept but a lived experience that **fosters community resilience and social cohesion**.

**Inclusion: ensuring equal access and meaningful participation**

While solidarity emphasises collective action, inclusion focuses on



who gets to participate in that action. The Solidarity Corps has made significant strides in ensuring that volunteering is accessible to all young people, particularly those facing social, economic, or geographical obstacles. Since 2021, **35% of ESC participants have been young people with fewer opportunities**, including individuals with disabilities, which demonstrates the programme's strong commitment to offering inclusive opportunities.

To make volunteering truly accessible, the Solidarity Corps incorporates **several support mechanisms, such as short-term volunteering, volunteering teams, mentoring, and financial inclusion support**. These elements help lower barriers for young people who might otherwise be excluded from such experiences. However, there is still **a need to strengthen and better promote these inclusion measures**

to ensure that financial constraints, administrative burdens, and structural inequalities do not limit participation.

Inclusion is not only about enabling access but also about ensuring that young people with fewer opportunities can thrive in solidarity activities. **Volunteering creates safe civic spaces** where participants can develop a sense of belonging, gain confidence, and actively contribute to society. At the same time, inclusion is a two-way process: host communities also benefit from engaging with diverse volunteers, breaking stereotypes, and fostering a culture of mutual learning.

### The interplay between solidarity and inclusion

While solidarity and inclusion address different aspects of the pro-



gramme, they are deeply interconnected. Without inclusive practices, solidarity risks being an exclusive privilege rather than a shared responsibility. Conversely, inclusion alone does not necessarily create a sense of shared purpose unless it is embedded in a broader framework of solidarity.

A clear example of this interplay is seen in how **cross-border volunteers inspire local youth** to engage in volunteering. Similarly, **intergenerational and intercultural projects** reinforce solidarity by bridg-

ing divides and fostering dialogue between different social groups. Volunteers with obstacles or disabilities often experience particularly empowering results, demonstrating how inclusion strengthens both individuals and communities.

By investing in youth volunteering, the European Union is not only empowering young people but also building **a stronger, more united, and inclusive Europe** where solidarity is not just a value but a reality lived by all.

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*We need to talk about values and we need to spell them out. They are not a generic platitude, but real concepts having real consequences on people - empathy, solidarity, and inclusion. But are these European values? Labelling them as such may send a wrong message. Yes, they are values which are built in the foundations of the European project, yes, we can be proud at the concrete ways in which we have succeeded in advancing them in Europe, but they are not only our values, they are universal.*

**MATJAZ GRUDEN**

*Council of Europe*





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*Investing in youth volunteering means strengthening social cohesion, fostering inclusion, and empowering the next generation. Recognizing and integrating these commitments into public policies is essential for a more resilient and united society.*

**MARIE BARSACQ**

*French Minister of Sports, Youth and Associations*



# Key recommendations for strengthening youth volunteering in Europe

The European Solidarity Corps has been a success, but strengthening its structure and support mechanisms will enhance its role as a driver of social and environmental change.

For youth volunteering to reach its full potential in fostering a sense of belonging to the EU, sustainability, and inclusion, key improvements are needed.

## 1. Strengthening the sense of belonging to the EU through volunteering

Volunteering fosters European identity and civic engagement, yet its recognition remains limited. A widely discussed proposal was the creation of an **EU Volunteer Status**, which would formally recognise volunteers, reinforce their role in society, and increase visibility. Such a status could also help ease visa processes, particularly for cross-border and full-time volunteering, making participation more accessible.

**Strengthening alumni networks** such as EuroPeers - where former volunteers act as ambassadors to inspire others, mentor new participants, and advocate for solidarity - should **become a standard programme element** to enhance outreach and long-term engagement.

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*The Europeers are a great support by enlarging the network. Many former ESC volunteers remain close to the youth volunteering community as Europeer alumni in those countries where the project exists. They support the promotion and visibility and act as programme ambassadors. An integral alumni programme is crucial for the community feeling.*

**VOLUNTEERING  
CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT**

**Increasing visibility** would further position the European Solidarity Corps as a key tool for European civic engagement, strengthening youth participation in democracy.



## 2. Making youth volunteering a strong driver of a greener Europe

A “green priority” in European youth funding schemes was welcomed in the volunteering environment. Yet, green volunteering initiatives remain fragmented, with varying national policies and definitions influencing their implementation. To increase impact, a **common understanding of “green volunteering”** must be established, ensuring alignment across programmes and communities.

Volunteers already play a key role in biodiversity protection, climate action, and sustainable practices, but **stronger connections** between volunteering programmes and **EU sustainability policies** as well as regional initiatives would increase their effectiveness

## 3. Enhancing Solidarity and Inclusion

Volunteering is a proven tool for social cohesion, but ensuring true inclusivity requires structured support before, during, and after the volunteering experience. **Strong mentorship programmes** are essential to help volunteers navigate challenges, integrate into their host communities, and remain engaged even after their service ends. **Cross-generational mentoring** could further bridge knowledge gaps and strengthen democratic values.

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*Volunteer service organisations are crucial for a successful implementation: matching volunteers with the right opportunities, to make connection to those who do not feel addressed. Mentors who support the growth of volunteers in terms of learning competencies and values play a mature role in the ESC. It is important to maximise the local impact of ESC through structural support and sustainable and flexible funding tailor-made to the volunteering sector.*

**WALTER REEKERS**

*Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisation*

The programme must **continue expanding accessibility**, refining its strategic framework, and ensuring its long-term sustainability in engaging young people with fewer opportunities.

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*Inclusion is a key to strong societies: huge groups of people are excluded in various ways and not all of them voice their needs and concerns loud, it is important to not only hear to the loudest voices but also reach the people where they are and invest more in youth information!*

**MICHAŁ BRAUN**

*National Freedom Institute*

**A capacity-building scheme** for volunteering organisations was strongly emphasised during the conference as a necessary step to enhance inclusion and sustainability in volunteering projects.

## 4. The value of partner regions for the future of the European Solidarity Corps

The inclusion of partner regions in the European Solidarity Corps is essential for making sure the programme remains open, values-driven, and **globally relevant**. Rather than being defined by geography, it should continue embracing an approach rooted in solidarity, cooperation, and shared values. In times of political change, crises, and growing challenges such as conflicts and the rise of extremist ideologies, maintaining **engagement with partner regions** reinforces the programme's **commitment to inclusion and solidarity**, even when these principles come under pressure.

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*From the previous conference in Podgorica, Montenegro, to Paris, France, we want to send a strong message about the importance of strengthening cooperation with neighbouring partner regions!*

**GERHARD MOSSHAMMER**

*Austrian National Agency Erasmus+ Youth, Sport & European Solidarity Corps*

To uphold the programme's integrity, maintaining the participation of partner regions is essential. The programme must embody the values it promotes.

## 5. Strengthening the structural foundations of the European Solidarity Corps

The European Solidarity Corps remains the only EU programme fully dedicated to empowering young people to take action in their communities, but its budgetary limitations hinder wider participation. **A significant increase in funding** would allow for greater outreach and long-term impact, ensuring that more young people, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds, can take part.

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*Volunteering is an act of solidarity, it is reaching out to other people, respecting other people, opening out to other people. BUT to make all that work, a collective commitment is needed. This requires political support, legal frames and sufficient financial support and training. We should also not forget those who are not yet convinced. Help them to find motivation and provide opportunities.*

**MATJAZ GRUDEN**

*Council of Europe*

**Restoring and reinforcing the sending role of organisations** is essential to ensuring proper volunteer preparation and post-volunteering engagement.

  
“

*There are many more organisations that could implement volunteering projects related to green practices and sustainability, but they often lack awareness of the EU programmes, and resources are very limited.*

**VOLUNTEERING  
CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT**

By bridging youth volunteering with EU sustainability and social policies, ensuring better recognition of volunteer efforts, and reinforcing inclusive and well-funded structures, the European Solidarity Corps can continue to be a powerful tool for fostering solidarity, sustainability, and European identity.

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*Volunteering projects support solidarity, inclusion, sustainability, and a greener Europe, while also addressing the needs of the community. The programme provides a great opportunity for disadvantaged groups and marginalised participants to make their voices heard, promote collaboration and empathy, and strengthen society by breaking down stereotypes.*

**VOLUNTEERING  
CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT**

# Conclusion

The discussions and inputs from stakeholders from policy-making, research, and practice, demonstrated that the European Solidarity Corps is already an **effective tool for safeguarding democracy**. Its contribution to a greener Europe, its role in empowering young people to foster solidarity and inclusion, and its impact in bringing Europe closer to its citizens were clearly showcased through individual and organisational stories, underpinned by data.

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*The European Solidarity Corps not only offers opportunities for commitment, it also helps to strengthen European citizenship and the feeling of belonging to a Europe that shows solidarity and unity. It is a powerful lever for social change and cohesion in Europe: each mission accomplished, each project carried out, strengthens a little more the links between people and consolidates this Europe of values to which we aspire.*

**THIBAUT DE SAINT POL**

*Interministerial Delegate for Youth at the French Ministry of Sports, Youth, and Organisations*



thus making it a programme accessible to only a few. The conference strongly demonstrated the **need for more youth volunteering and engagement schemes** to build resilient communities.

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*We do not have to raise awareness among young people, we have to raise awareness at political level. The programme stands for European values, we need the programme to defend European democracy. This is a strong political argument to maintain the programme.*

**MANFRED VON HEBEL**

*German National Agency – JUGEND für Europa*

A stronger European Solidarity Corps would significantly **contribute to the European Union's priorities, including a free and democratic Europe, a strong and peaceful Europe, and a prosperous and competitive Europe.** By creating opportunities for young people to develop skills and actively support local communities and civil society, the Solidarity Corps plays a vital role in shaping Europe's future.

It is now in the hands of European political leaders to present a strong proposal and make a clear statement recognising the value of youth engagement, volunteering, and solidarity for Europe's future.



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*As young people will shoulder the challenges of tomorrow, the European Commission will make sure that decisions made today do not harm future generations.*

**KAREN VANDERWEGHE**

*European Commission*



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*If there would not be the  
European Solidarity Corps  
we would have to invent it.*

**HANNES HEIDE**

*European Parliament*

## Editorial info

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