

RCEU REACTION TO THE EP POSITION ON 2022 EU BUDGET**RCEU GENERAL VIEWS ON THE 2022 EU BUDGET**

The Red Cross EU Office (RCEU), which brings together the 27 National Red Cross Societies in the EU, the Norwegian Red Cross, the Icelandic Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), welcomes the [European Parliaments position on the 2022 EU Budget](#) adopted on the 21st October 2021. Through this reaction paper, the RCEU Office aims to highlight key priorities for 2022 for our members and the wider network of the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies.

As underlined by the European Parliament (hereinafter EP), EU Member States and partner countries are currently facing multiple and overlapping crises which are exacerbating vulnerability leading to an increase in needs in local communities. To respond to these needs, the EU should build and implement its budget through a principled approach with the ultimate goal of boosting resilience, ensuring social cohesion and reaching the most vulnerable and marginalised groups.

It is essential that the EU guarantees predictably and transparency of funding and ensures access to funding for civil society organisations. Furthermore, the EU should strengthen their engagement with local organisations in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU funding, to leave no one behind.

To ensure continuity of support to the most vulnerable and to meet their needs, the EU should guarantee that newly allocated funding should not come at the expense of existing programmes.

In their unique role of auxiliaries to their public authorities and representing the world's largest humanitarian network, EU National Red Cross Societies can play a key role in the EU budget implementation in line with the priorities Identified by the EP.

RCEU VIEWS ON SUB-HEADING 2A - *Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion*

We support the creation of a separate budget line under **ESF+** to support the implementation of the **Child Guarantee**, to eradicate child poverty, which has deteriorated further due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, we welcome the additional financing at national level to support implementation initiatives of the Guarantee. However, it is important to stress the need for Member States to use additional financing to reach out to the most vulnerable families and children, ensuring their access to health, social, educational and support services.

We welcome the contribution of **REACT-EU to the ESF+ and the FEAD** to support measures to foster greater social inclusion of vulnerable groups, in particular children. We recognise the importance of employment and job creation as an important factor of fostering social inclusion but highlight that this cannot be achieved without financing through the ESF+ and FEAD accompanying measure which support integrated measures to boost access to education, quality housing, health and social supports for the most vulnerable.

RCEU VIEWS ON SUB-HEADING 2B – *Resilience and Values*

We welcome the allocation of additional resources to improve health system response and resilience, through the **EU4Health Programme**. Specifically, emphasis through the allocation of the extra resources should be placed on community-based health initiatives which seek to ensure accessible and quality health provision to the most vulnerable, who were amongst the most impacted during the Pandemic. Focus of resources should also seek to support positive mental health amongst children and young people in local community settings.

We welcome the reiteration for additional resources within the **CERV programme** to strengthen European citizenship and democracy, equality and gender equality and the rule of law in the Union as well as support to victims of gender-based violence. We highlight the need to support initiatives which further protect women and children, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, older people and those with inherit risks of abuse or violence, such as migrants.

We welcome the increased allocation of funding for the **European Solidarity Corps** to boost opportunities for young people to participate in humanitarian aid volunteering activities.

We support the strengthening of actions in response to **emergency situations and crisis**, including by involving all key stakeholders such as the National Red Cross Societies, especially in responding to increasingly severe impacts of climate change. We agree that there is a need to invest in climate adaptation for particularly vulnerable regions and stress the importance of investing significantly more on prevention, including impact-based forecasts and early warning, disaster risk reduction (DRR), anticipatory action, and resilience building preventing potential disasters and protecting the most exposed communities through mitigation of risks and taking early action.

RCEU VIEWS ON HEADING 3 – *Natural resources and Environment*

We support the EP's call for more concrete and immediate actions and consequent funding to address **climate change and environmental degradation** as they are among the root causes of global health deterioration, conflict, food and water insecurity, and displacement. These factors are interconnected with poverty, lack of access to basic services, and protracting crises. We also highlight the need for increased consideration to, and finance for, **locally led adaptation and resilience** as to strike a balance with attention and finance committed to mitigation.

RCEU VIEWS ON HEADING 4 – *Migration and Border Management*

We agree on the need to increase funding allocation for the **Asylum, Migration and Integration (AMIF) fund** in light of the recent developments in Afghanistan. Specifically, allocations the budget lines supporting resettlement, family reunifications, humanitarian admissions and relocations should be adequately financed in order to allow the European Commission to support ambitious programmes providing protection to Afghans in need and other priority groups.

We agree on the need for enhanced transparency in the allocation of funding under the AMIF with a more detailed wording to allow the budgetary authorities to fulfil their decision-making role effectively and for the EP, in particular, to fulfil its democratic oversight and scrutiny role across all headings of the fund.

We endorse the [EP's decision](#) to propose part of the FRONTEX budget to increase the numbers of **fundamental rights monitors**. The creation of an effective mechanism for reporting serious incidents on the EU's external borders should also be a condition for the implementation of FRONTEX budget, in accordance with the resolution of the EP LIBE Committee.

Regarding increasing budget allocations for EASO, the purpose of supporting capacity building or other activities of the agency in non-EU countries should be further clarified and contribute to respect for the fundamental rights of people on the move. Moreover, the agency should essentially remain an instrument facilitating and implementing asylum policies set out in other EU legislative and policy instruments, with the main objective of improving the functioning of asylum systems in Europe.

RCEU VIEWS ON HEADING 6 – *Neighbourhood and the World*

We support the EP's position towards a reinforced **EU external policy** and consequent budget, implemented in compliance with an unconditional and principled approach and in respect to the International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

With regards to development cooperation instruments, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-**Global Europe**) and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (**IPA III**), we advocate for a budget focusing on fighting against poverty, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and its long-term social, environmental and economic consequences, while supporting the work of local civil society organisations. Furthermore, we recall the importance – and the EU's commitment – to reflect the **EU's nexus and triple nexus approach** into concrete and transparent funding instruments.

We align with the EP in expressing concerns for the situation in **Afghanistan** and in neighbouring countries, with regards to the priority areas of facilitated access to protection, reinforced complementarity among existing safe legal pathways, accelerated family reunifications and do not return people to Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries. Preventing and avoiding the use of EU aid for migration management and border controls should be a prerogative for the EP, and supporting local action and supporting strong local organisations should be reinforced.

We welcome the EP's proposal to increase the **EU humanitarian budget** by 20% but we draw attention on the increasing frequency, intensity, unpredictability and severity of man-made and natural crisis and the rise of violence and conflict situations worldwide, leading to a constant increase of global humanitarian needs.

The European Commission's recent [Communication](#) on "the European Union's (EU) humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles" emphasises the need for more humanitarian funding from a higher number of EU Member States, for

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more flexible and efficient humanitarian action and funding mechanisms. From our view it is critical for the EU budget allocations for response to crises to be flexible to enable humanitarian partners to deliver a timely and adapted response. It is essential that funding can be mobilised quickly in response to unforeseen emergencies and more frequent sudden-onset disasters, such as those caused by climate change, and the anticipatory action is scaled up. We call on the EU to further modernise its funding mechanisms and develop innovative solutions that deliver more efficient, cost-effective, environmentally-friendly and climate-proofed aid. EU also plays a major role in stepping up EU support for localisation, to channel more resources directly to local responders.

The RCRC Network has been directly involved in the response to COVID-19 pandemics since its breakout in January 2020 with provision of vaccines and tests, supporting communities to reduce transmission and save lives, reaching the most isolated population and strongly advocating for equal access to **vaccination coverage** in the world (see the [*UN and International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Joint Call for global vaccine equity*](#)). Thus, we firmly support the EP's call to earmark dedicated funds under the Global Europe instrument in 2022, and in a long-term perspective, we recall for a reinforced access to health systems for the most vulnerable - including refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, marginalised groups, people who are stateless, and those living in areas controlled by armed groups and/or affected by armed conflict. There must be greater investment in local delivery mechanisms and capacity, not only to guarantee that vaccines are delivered quickly and fairly, but also to strengthen national health systems for more effective pandemic preparedness and response. In addition, activities that strengthen support for local actors and address misinformation are key to ensuring the successful delivery of vaccines to local communities, especially those most at-risk.

We welcome the EP's proposal to influence any successor of the **EU Facility for Refugees** in Turkey (FRT) outside the current MFF and Global Europe allocations, through fresh appropriations and by additional contributions from the Member States. We call for concrete rules framing precisely the actions that can be financed, and to include such fund in the MFF Regulation through the ceiling of Heading 6 in order to reflect the actual financial needs for the Union's external actions. Local actors, including humanitarian organisations and civil society organisations should be the primary recipient to ensure that the funds reach concretely refugees and host communities. We highlight again, the need for the EP to fulfil its democratic oversight and scrutiny role ensuring transparency and monitoring of the fund allocations.