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ANNEX

ANNEX

to the

Commission Implementing Decision

**on the financing of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme and
the adoption of the work programme for 2026-2027**

ANNEX

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values multiannual work programme for 2026-2027

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme (2021-2027)¹ is the largest European Union funding instrument to protect and promote the EU's values and fundamental rights enshrined in the Treaty on European Union (the 'Treaty') and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (the 'Charter'), through its support to civil society organisations (CSOs), public authorities and other stakeholders active at local, regional, national and transnational level. The programme fosters civic and democratic participation, supports and enables civic space, promotes equality and non-discrimination and counters gender-based violence and violence against children.

Organised around four thematic strands, the programme seeks to:

protect and promote Union values (Union values strand);

promote rights, non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality, and advance gender mainstreaming and the mainstreaming of non-discrimination (equality, rights and gender equality strand).

promote citizen and civil society engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union and exchanges between people of different Member States and raise awareness of their common European history (citizens' engagement and participation strand);

prevent and combat gender-based violence and violence against children (Daphne strand).

The CERV programme contributes to the implementation of key EU legislation that forms part of the EU's comprehensive response to both persistent and emerging challenges.

Building on the policy initiatives supported under the 2023-2025 work programme, the 2026-2027 work programme also supports the development and implementation of new EU policy strategies and legislative initiatives in the fields of: (i) equality, inclusion and the fight against discrimination; (ii) democracy, fundamental rights, rule of law and civic space and participation; and (iii) children's rights, youth and intergenerational fairness.

These priorities reflect the Union's continued commitment to protecting fundamental rights and values and are anchored in the mission letters² of the Commissioners responsible for Equality; for Democracy, Justice, Rule of Law and Consumer Protection; for Internal Affairs and Migration, and for Intergenerational Fairness Youth, Culture and Sport.

The 2026-2027 work programme builds on the experience and results of the programme's first years of implementation and of the previous programming period, while adapting to new policy developments and operational needs. It benefits directly from the result of the mid-term evaluation of the CERV and of the final evaluation of the predecessor programmes³.

The CERV programme supports a wide range of binding and non-binding EU instruments (see Annex A).

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/citizens-equality-rights-and-values-programme/citizens-equality-rights-and-values-programme-overview_en, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0692>.

² Mission letters: https://commission.europa.eu/about/commission-2024-2029/commissioners-designate-2024-2029_en

³ Rights, equality, citizenship and values programmes (REC, EfC and CERV) – evaluation report.

In addition, it integrates new policy priorities stemming from recent Commission strategies and initiatives, as outlined in the list below.

Indicative list of forthcoming and planned initiatives

New Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 (to be adopted)

New Anti-Racism Strategy 2026-2030 (to be adopted)

New Strategy on Victims' Rights (to be adopted)

Report on mid-term review of the 2020 Charter Strategy (to be adopted)

This work programme is consistent with previous CERV programmes, reinforcing the integration of fundamental rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and children's rights into all supported actions. All beneficiaries and activities must uphold Union values as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter. Respect for these values is a prerequisite for eligibility and implementation across all strands. Proposals funded under this EU programme are encouraged to build on relevant results and to explore opportunities for collaboration and coordination with other EU-funded initiatives, such as Horizon Europe.

2. BUDGET OVERVIEW FOR 2026-2027

Based on the objectives set out in Regulation (EU) 2021/692 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme, this work programme presents the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for 2026-2027 as indicated in the table below.

| Budget lines | 2026 (EUR) | 2027 (EUR) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values | 120 762 466 | 151 414 234 |
| Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights | 50 013 550 | 52 239 645 |
| Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union | 73 775 165 | 58 604 965 |
| Budget line 07 06 03: Daphne | 35 129 939 | 37 712 026 |
| TOTAL | 279 681 120 | 299 970 870 |

Funds committed in the work programme are deployed through direct management⁴ (grants, procurement and by awarding prizes) and indirect management for activities implemented

⁴ Mode of budget implementation in which tasks are performed directly by the Commission's departments or executive agencies

with the support of international organisations, in compliance with the rules set out in the Financial Regulation.

Procurement is the acquisition of a service by the Commission from a company (or economic operator⁵) selected following a ‘call for tenders’ procedure.

Grants are financial contributions by way of a Commission donation that finance: (i) an action intended to help achieve an EU policy objective (action grants); or (ii) the functioning of a body which has an objective forming part of, and supporting, an EU policy (operating grants)⁶. The award of a grant generally follows a call for proposals procedure.

Under the indirect management mode, the Commission delegates budget implementation tasks to third entities to achieve a set of EU objectives.

Prizes are financial contributions given by the Commission as a reward following a contest. They promote the achievement of the EU’s policy objectives⁷.

| Funding | 2026 (EUR) | 2027 (EUR) | % allocation 2026 | % allocation 2027 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Grants | 235 200 000 | 251 400 000 | 84.1% | 83.8% |
| Prizes | 350 000 | 350 000 | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Procurement | 35 761 120 | 43 745 870 | 12.8% | 14.6% |
| Indirect management | 4 200 000 | 0 | 1.5% | 0.0% |
| Other expenditure | 4 170 000 | 4 475 000 | 1.5% | 1.5% |
| TOTAL | 279 681 120 | 299 970 870 | 100% | 100% |

The Commission’s Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST) will directly manage the implementation of actions, unless specified otherwise.

A number of actions will be financed by the work programme by means of co-delegation⁸ type I (Secretariat-General) and co-delegations type II and type III with other Commission departments, including PMO (type III), DGT (type II), DIGIT (type II), ESTAT (type II), SCIC (type II), COMM (type II), GROW (type II), and EACEA (type II), as specified in Annex I⁹ of the internal rules applicable to the respective CERV budget lines.

⁵ Article 2(49) of the Financial Regulation.

⁶ Article 2(33) and 180(2) of the Financial Regulation.

⁷ Article 2(48) and 206(1) of the Financial Regulation.

⁸ The European Commission employs various co-delegation models to manage the implementation of its budget, as outlined in the EU Financial Regulation. These models define how responsibilities for budget execution are shared among different Commission services and external entities. While the Financial Regulation does not explicitly categorize co-delegations into types I, II, and III, these terms are commonly used within the Commission to describe different arrangements

⁹ C_2025_1190_F1_ANNEX_EN_V2_P1_3942208 (1).PDF

The Commission delegates power¹⁰ to implement actions in the citizens' engagement and participation strand and the Union values strand to the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)¹¹. In addition, EUR 1 000 000 from the Equality, rights and gender equality strand will be co-delegated to EACEA for the call for proposals to promote children's rights and enhance children's engagement and participation. EUR 6 800 000 will be co-delegated to EACEA from the same strand for the call for proposals to fight antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred/racism.

EU Member States and non-EU countries with which the EU has concluded an agreement¹² participate in the CERV programme. However, as indicated in the CERV Regulation, the European Parliament and the Council (the co-legislators) explicitly excluded the participation of non-EU countries in the Union values strand of the CERV programme. The non-EU countries that have concluded an agreement with the EU to participate in the programme are listed in each call for proposals¹³.

Activities implemented under this work programme must ensure consistency, complementarity and synergies with activities supported by other EU instruments.

3. GRANTS

The indicative global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this work programme is EUR 235 200 000 in 2026 and EUR 251 400 000 in 2027.

| SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE | 2026 (EUR) | 2027 (EUR) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Protect and promote Union values | 116 275 000 | 145 275 000 |
| Promote equality and rights | 28 500 000 | 27 700 000 |
| Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union | 59 425 000 | 49 425 000 |
| Daphne | 31 000 000 | 29 000 000 |
| TOTAL | 235 200 000 | 251 400 000 |

3.1. Call for proposals for civil society organisations active in protecting and promoting Union values: call to intermediaries (financial support to third parties)

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

¹⁰ Article 69 of the Financial Regulation.

¹¹ Implementation by EACEA is subject to the applicability of the establishment and delegation acts entrusting the agency with management of the programme and will only become effective subject to and from the moment of adoption of the programme's basic act.

¹² List of non-EU participating countries: [list-3rd-country-participation_cerv_en.pdf](#)

¹³ Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme on the 'Funding & tender opportunities' portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/cerv>

OBJECTIVES

Protect, promote and raise awareness of Union values and fundamental rights by providing financial support to civil society organisations that are active at local, regional, national and transnational level. These organisations play a key role in promoting and cultivating those values and rights, thereby strengthening the protection and promotion of Union values and contributing to building a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

The overall aim of this call for proposals is to protect, promote and raise awareness of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter and the Union values enshrined in the Treaty by supporting local, regional and/or national civil society organisations. The EU funding should help to support, empower and build the capacity of independent civil society organisations active in the promotion of these values and rights and help promote, safeguard and raise awareness of Charter rights and Union values at local, regional, national and transnational level. This call should provide support to small, local civil society organisations and human rights defenders that are increasingly exposed to threats, including digital ones, attacks, and the effects of shrinking civic space, which undermine their ability to protect and promote fundamental rights and Union values on the ground.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Civil society organisations (CSOs) active in promoting and protecting the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy.

A limited number of intermediaries in the Member States will be selected and supported under this call. The selected intermediaries should be capable of building the capacity of and providing support and assistance, including financial support, to a large number of CSOs active at local, regional and national level in the fields covered by the CERV programme.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

Civil society has a key role to play in upholding the common values on which the EU is founded: the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy. In particular, CSOs act as watchdogs to monitor the upholding of democratic values in the EU and contribute to checks and balances, together with independent courts and media.

Many CSOs face growing difficulties in securing the necessary funding to develop and carry out their activities independently and effectively¹⁴. These challenges are also recognised by the European Parliament, which voiced its concerns in the 2022 report on ‘Shrinking space for civil society in Europe’¹⁵, by several international organisations and by CSOs themselves. Some of the challenges faced by CSOs have been further exacerbated by national measures taken in this context. Recent developments have shown

¹⁴ See annual reports on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU of 2022 and 2024.

¹⁵ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/729269/EPRS_ATAG\(2022\)729269_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2022/729269/EPRS_ATAG(2022)729269_EN.pdf).

that respect for EU values, including rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, cannot be taken for granted.

The CERV programme contributes to the EU's efforts to uphold the rule of law, strengthen judicial independence and protect fundamental rights and democracy. The Commission monitors respect of the rule of law, including the framework for civil society, in its annual rule of law report. It has adopted a recommendation on promoting the engagement and effective participation of citizens and CSOs in public policymaking. The recommendation sets out the need to create an enabling environment for CSOs and human rights defenders to be able to exercise a key role in the democracies in the Union.

The Commission also uses the possibilities provided for by the Treaty to ensure the respect of EU law in the area of fundamental rights and the rule of law. It has taken action to improve the protection of journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from clearly unfounded or abusive court proceedings through a recommendation to Member States.

If persisting gaps and new challenges faced by CSOs are not tackled, the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy could be jeopardised.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased promotion and public awareness of Union values and the fundamental rights of the Charter at local, regional and national level;
- Strengthened capacity of CSOs to protect and promote Union values and fundamental rights, including at grassroots level and among vulnerable groups;
- Increased resilience and capacity of CSOs to conduct their work effectively and sustainably;
- Increased protection and targeted assistance for CSOs and human rights defenders at risk of facing online and offline threats and attacks;
- Improved advocacy and watchdog skills for CSOs;
- A more supportive and protective environment for CSOs;
- Increased involvement of CSOs in policymaking processes at all governance levels;
- Strengthened cross-border and regional cooperation within civil society.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.2. Call for proposals to support the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

OBJECTIVES

Protect, promote and raise awareness of fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter by providing financial support to civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level. These organisations play a key role in promoting and cultivating those rights, thereby strengthening the protection and promotion of Union values and respect for the rule of law and contributing to building a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

The main objective is to build the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and their awareness of the Charter and support them in carrying out activities to ensure that the Charter is upheld. The call will also support activities that contribute to promoting an enabling and safe civic space, including by monitoring the state of civic space and the situation of CSOs and human rights defenders at all levels, in particular those facing threats. As part of this priority, the call will also focus on building capacity of these actors on the enforcement and strategic litigation of fundamental rights. In addition, the call will contribute to promoting specific fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression and non-discrimination, including by countering hate speech and hate crime and promoting the protection of whistleblowers.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

CSOs active in promoting and protecting the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy, as well as national human rights institutions (NHRIs), equality bodies, ombuds institutions and public authorities at national, regional and local level (if in partnership with CSOs).

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Raising awareness of and building capacity for the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
2. Promoting and enabling civic space.

2027

3. Protecting Union values by combating hate speech and hate crime.
4. Supporting an enabling environment for the protection of whistleblowers.

EXPECTED RESULTS

2026

1. Raising awareness of and building capacity for the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

- Increased awareness of and capacity to apply the Charter and the fundamental rights it enshrines by CSOs, NHRIs, equality bodies, ombuds institutions, other human rights defenders, and Member State authorities at national, regional and local level;
- Increased prevention of fundamental rights breaches;
- Improved knowledge of available redress mechanisms under national and EU law and how to make the best use of them for the benefit of rights holders;
- Improved cooperation on fundamental rights issues among CSOs, NHRIs, equality

bodies, ombuds institutions, other human rights defenders and Member State authorities at national, regional and local level.

2. Promoting an enabling civic space

- Increased awareness of the situation of civic space in the Member States based on sound evidence and comparable indicators;
- Improved protection and resilience of CSOs, their members and human rights defenders to carry out their work and have greater capacity to respond to threats and attacks, including online;
- Increased reporting of attacks faced by CSOs and human rights defenders and prompt and targeted responses to such attacks;
- Strengthened cooperation and networks among those protecting the civic space at local, national and Union level, including national and EU authorities;
- Improved cooperation and joint capacity among CSOs and human rights defenders to assess and respond to regulatory and legislative obstacles;
- Increased dialogue on the situation of civic space, and the development of positive narratives on CSOs and human rights defenders protecting and promoting fundamental rights, rule of law and democracy;
- Improved capacity and ability of CSOs, NHRIs, equality bodies, legal professionals, practitioners, ombuds institutions, and other human rights defenders to develop and implement litigation strategies, and strategic litigation approaches;
- Increased awareness of the use of clearly unfounded or abusive court proceedings against journalists and human rights defenders (strategic lawsuits against public participation or SLAPP).

2027

3. Protecting Union values by combating hate speech and hate crime

- Increased awareness about the societal effects of hate speech and hate crime, including through improved outreach to individuals and groups at risk of hate victimisation, and education activities at all levels;
- Increased knowledge of EU and national hate crime and hate speech legislation and increased effectiveness of national measures to build the capacity of law enforcement in detecting bias indicators and effectively investigating and prosecuting offences;
- More effective mechanisms and methodologies to detect, report and record hate speech and hate crimes, including when taking place online;
- Improved assistance for victims to access specialist support, providing both victims and witnesses with adequate emotional support, practical help and legal information;
- Increased awareness about the underlying root causes and drivers of hatred in society and the impact of socio-economic factors;
- Increased opportunities for citizen engagement and participation at local, regional and national level to collectively identify policy responses to hatred in society;
- Increased awareness among the general population about hate speech online and its negative effects on democracy and pluralism.

4. Supporting an enabling environment for the protection of whistleblowers

- More effective implementation of the national laws transposing the Whistleblower Protection Directive, including increased public awareness (especially among potential whistleblowers) of available procedures and rights;
- Strengthened capacity of private organisations, public bodies and CSOs to correctly apply the Directive's rules;

- Improved effectiveness and consistency of the Directive's application;
- Improved cooperation between national authorities and CSOs and between national authorities in applying the Directive.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.3. Call for proposals to fight antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred/racism

LEGAL BASIS

Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVES

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to fight antisemitism and foster Jewish life and to combat anti-Muslim hatred/racism.

Promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue and activities that include an intersectional approach to counter antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred/racism and other forms of hatred.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Civil society organisations (CSOs), Member States and participating countries' public authorities at all levels and equality bodies.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2027

The call will support the following priorities:

1. Fighting against antisemitism and fostering Jewish life;
2. Fighting against anti-Muslim hatred/racism.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Fighting against antisemitism and fostering Jewish life

- Strengthened efforts to combat all forms and manifestations of antisemitism, in line with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism;
- Increased knowledge of EU and national legislation and strategies on combating antisemitism;
- More effective implementation and enforcement of legislation and implementation of strategies on combating antisemitism;

- Improved monitoring and reporting of antisemitic incidents;
- Greater capacity to counter antisemitic myth prejudices and conspiracy theories;
- Strengthened leadership capacity within Jewish communities to counter antisemitism;
- Increased protection for Jewish communities and individuals affected by manifestations of antisemitism;
- Broader engagement in identifying, challenging and preventing antisemitism, and raise awareness on Jewish life, particularly among the general public and key professional groups, including policymakers, law enforcement, the judiciary and media professionals;
- Increased knowledge on the recording and collection of data on antisemitic incidents in order to harmonise the recording methodology in line with the Vienna Declaration¹⁶ on enhancing cooperation on fighting antisemitism and encouraging reporting of antisemitic incidents;
- Improved skills of public authorities to effectively investigate, prosecute and adequately sentence antisemitic incidents, and improved cooperation among Jewish communities and CSOs working in the field;
- Strengthened efforts to identify, challenge and prevent antisemitism in and through education, including promoting Holocaust education and addressing antisemitic stereotypes and narratives in curricula and educational materials at all levels, and through raising awareness on Jewish life;
- Improved victim support, better public awareness and higher numbers of reported antisemitic incidents.

2. Fighting against anti-Muslim hatred/racism

- Increased knowledge of EU and national legislation and policy initiatives relevant to combating anti-Muslim hatred/racism;
- Increased trust among those involved, better awareness of rights and awareness of biases and stereotypes related to anti-Muslim hatred/racism;
- More effective implementation and enforcement of the legislation on non-discrimination, hate speech and hate crime against Muslims;
- Increased protection for groups, communities and individuals affected by anti-Muslim hatred/racism and discrimination;
- Improved knowledge, awareness and capacity to address anti-Muslim hatred/racism and its impact; better understanding of anti-Muslim hatred/racism, its various forms of intolerance and the legal framework among the population in general and key groups, in particular decision-makers, law enforcement, judiciary the media and young people;
- Increased capacity to accurately record and collect data on anti-Muslim/racist incidents, in order to harmonise the methodologies across the EU;
- Improved support for victims of anti-Muslim hatred/racism, better public awareness of rights and higher numbers of reported incidents;
- Improved skills among public authorities to effectively investigate incidents of anti-Muslim hatred/racism, prosecute the perpetrators and impose adequate sentences;
- Strengthened efforts to address and prevent anti-Muslim hatred/racism in and through education with a particular focus on youth and educators, including

¹⁶

[Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action | OHCHR](#)

countering stereotypes and misinformation in curricula and educational content, and supporting educators in addressing anti-Muslim bias in both formal and non-formal education;

- Improved cooperation to collect data on incidents and exchange information among public authorities (particularly municipal and regional administrations), as well as between public authorities and other stakeholders, such as CSOs and community representatives, to strengthen responses to anti-Muslim hatred/racism;
- Effective development and implementation of comprehensive frameworks, strategies, action plans and studies to prevent and combat anti-Muslim hatred/racism.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by the Commission's Secretariat-General (co-delegation type I) and EACEA (co-delegation type II)

3.4. Call for proposals to promote equality and to fight against racism, including antigypsyism, xenophobia, LGBTIQ-phobia and all other forms of discrimination

LEGAL BASIS

Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVES

Promote equality and prevent and combat inequalities and discrimination on grounds of sex, gender and gender identity, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, respecting the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds provided for in Article 21 of the Charter.

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies and an intersectional approach to combat racism, xenophobia, antigypsyism, LGBTIQ-phobia and all forms of discrimination and intolerance.

Promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Member States and participating countries' public authorities at all levels, equality bodies and civil society organisations (CSOs), national Roma contact points.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2027

1. Fighting against racism, xenophobia, and intolerance, including antigypsyism and anti-Black and anti-Asian racism, and promoting equality of racialised people.
2. Promoting diversity management and inclusion in public and private sector workplaces.

3. Fighting discrimination against LGBTIQ people, promoting LGBTIQ equality and increasing the protection and safety of LGBTIQ people.
4. Supporting public authorities in promoting equality and combating racism, xenophobia, antigypsyism, LGBTIQ-phobia and all other forms of intolerance, including intersectional discrimination.
5. Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Fighting racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance, including antigypsyism and anti-Black and anti-Asian racism, and promoting equality for racialised people

- Increased enforcement of non-discrimination, legislation, policies and practices (including monitoring and reporting);
- Increased awareness of rights and awareness of biases and stereotypes, and the development of tools to identify and address bias in administrative decision-making;
- Improved understanding of racism and its different forms and intersections, including structural racism;
- Improved protection for and empowerment of racialised groups and individuals affected by racism and hatred, with a particular focus on antigypsyism and anti-black and anti-Asian racism;
- Increased knowledge on recording and collecting data on incidents in order to harmonise methodologies across the EU.

2. Promoting diversity management and inclusion in public and private sector workplaces

- Increased number of organisations affiliated to a diversity charter;
- Increased awareness and evidence of the benefits of diversity and inclusion at the workplace;
- Increased diversity and inclusion at the workplace, supported by stronger links between the academic community, CSOs and the business community;
- Improved guidance and tools across the EU to build inclusive workplaces and to measure diversity and inclusion at the workplace.

3. Fighting discrimination against LGBTIQ people, promoting LGBTIQ equality and increasing the protection and safety of LGBTIQ people

- Improved knowledge and awareness of the intersectional discrimination and inequality experienced by LGBTIQ people, in particular by transgender and intersex individuals, in employment, education, health and other areas of life, as well as solutions on how to tackle these problems;
- Increased skills and knowledge among relevant professionals, to counter stereotyping, stigmatisation, pathologisation, discrimination, harassment and bullying affecting LGBTIQ people;
- Increased support for better counselling services for LGBTIQ people and their families and improved knowledge and awareness of the challenges they face;
- Improved guidance for national authorities and education providers on preventing and addressing school violence and bullying targeting LGBTIQ students, including by, promoting positive representations of LGBTIQ diversity, challenging gender and sexuality stereotypes and meeting the needs of transgender, intersex and non-binary children;

- Increased protection and safety of LGBTIQ people, including LGBTIQ migrants and racialised LGBTIQ people;
- Improved data collection methods to better understand the needs and experiences of LGBTIQ people, including among migrants' communities, and to inform evidence-based policies and measures.

4. Supporting public authorities in promoting equality and combating racism, xenophobia, antigypsyism, LGBTIQ-phobia and all other forms of intolerance, and discrimination, including intersectional discrimination

- Better recognition and response to discrimination against racialised people, migrants, Roma, LGBTIQ people and other people belonging to groups at risk of discrimination through strengthened equality measures in public administration;
- Increased awareness and skills among public officials on unconscious bias, micro-aggressions and their impact on groups at risk of discrimination;
- Improved capacity of public authorities to apply equality assessments and integrate equality considerations in policymaking and decision-making;
- Strengthened cooperation and trust-building between public administrations and racialised, migrant, Roma and LGBTIQ communities;
- Improved guidance for national authorities and education providers to prevent bullying, promote positive representations of diversity, and respond to the needs of vulnerable groups including LGBTIQ, Roma, migrant and racialised children;
- Strengthened strategic and policy frameworks at national and local level to promote equality, reflected in dedicated strategies, action plans and monitoring mechanisms;
- Improved data collection, monitoring and evaluation systems within public administrations to inform evidence-based policies and strengthen accountability;
- Increased exchange of good practices and cooperation between authorities across Member States to enhance effective implementation of equality measures;
- Increased knowledge on access to health in all its forms for all individuals, especially for marginalized groups.

5. Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities

- Improved knowledge and awareness of the discrimination and barriers faced by persons with disabilities and better promotion of policies and practices to ensure their right to independent living;
- Increased skills among professionals to ensure that their practices promote the rights of persons with disabilities and their inclusion in the community;
- More effective implementation of policies ensuring independent living for persons with disabilities and their inclusion in the community.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.5. Call for proposals for National Roma Contact Points

LEGAL BASIS

Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVES

Promote equality and prevent and combat inequalities and discrimination on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and respect the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds provided for in Article 21 of the Charter.

To promote and facilitate dialogue, mutual learning, cooperation, and policy review among all national stakeholders through the national Roma platforms, while strengthening Roma participation – particularly of women and young people – including through the nomination of Roma representatives to ensure links between national and European Roma platforms.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

National Roma contact points.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Strengthening the national Roma consultation processes in Member States through national Roma platforms convened and managed by national Roma contact points (NRCs).

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Strengthening the national Roma consultation processes in Member States through national Roma platforms convened and managed by NRCs

- Increased number of national Roma platforms seen as an integral component of coordination and monitoring activities carried out by the national Roma contact points to foster stakeholder dialogue, cooperation and coordination;
- Increased capacity of national experts and stakeholders to tackle issues related to Roma equality, inclusion and participation, including legislative and administrative practices;
- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities in relation to Roma equality, inclusion and participation;
- More sustained Roma participation in policymaking processes.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.6. Call for proposals to promote gender equality

LEGAL BASIS

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVE

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to promote women's full enjoyment of rights, including work-life balance, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming, and combat gender violence.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

National, local and regional authorities and their associations, social partners (workers and business representatives), labour inspectorates, equality bodies and civil society organisations, in particular women's rights organisations.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Supporting work-life balance, equal share of care responsibilities, family-friendly policies among employers and the value of care sector jobs.
2. Promoting and supporting the implementation of the provisions of the Pay Transparency Directive and respect of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value.
3. Supporting equal participation and representation of women and men in economic and political decision-making.
4. Tackling gender stereotypes in media and advertising.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Supporting work-life balance, equal share of care responsibilities, family-friendly policies among employers and the value of care sector jobs

- Increased awareness of policy measures, particularly those set out in the Work-Life Balance Directive, and a higher number of good practice examples by companies and public authorities that contribute to gender equality in the workplace and balanced work-life integration;
- Better identification of barriers to gender equality, including obstacles to equal sharing of care and domestic work, and challenges in accessing family leave and family-friendly working time arrangements;
- Increased knowledge of working conditions in care work and the value of care work;
- Improved awareness of policy measures and good practice examples that lead to more sustainable working conditions in care work and that address gender segregation in the care sector;
- Improved work-life balance for all genders over the life course, reduced gender care gaps, and greater gender equality.

2. Promoting and supporting the implementation of the Pay Transparency Directive and respect of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value

- Increased awareness of the Pay Transparency Directive and its benefits for the EU economy and workers' rights;
- Improved national and organisational capacities to report on the gender pay gap;
- Increased capacity of social partners to negotiate and revise collective agreements in line with the requirements of the Pay Transparency Directive;
- Increased capacity and empowerment of workers, equality bodies and civil society organisations to negotiate fair working conditions and defend their rights;
- More transparent pay systems and better detection of indirect pay discrimination related to the undervaluation of jobs typically done by women and those in correctional facilities;
- Increased awareness of the purpose and benefits of gender-neutral job evaluations and classification systems.

3. Supporting equal participation and representation of women and men in political and economic decision-making

- Contribution to the achievement of equal representation of women and men in governments and national/regional/local parliaments and assemblies;
- Improved design, implementation and monitoring of policies at national, regional and local level to ensure balanced gender representation in decision-making roles across politics, public life and corporate leadership and management;
- Increased capacity of national, regional and local authorities and their associations, civil society organisations (in particular women's CSOs) and the media to overcome barriers to women's representation in politics, public debate and management positions in the corporate sector;
- Strengthened cooperation and increased networking and exchange of information between Member State governments, local and regional authorities and their associations, equality bodies, civil society organisations, in particular women's organisations, the media and academics;
- Increased awareness and better implementation of the Women on Boards Directive in Member States.

4. Tackling gender stereotypes in media and advertising

- Counter gender stereotypes and negative gender roles in media, including social media, and in advertising by raising awareness and training those who are in daily contact with the target groups, especially young people;
- Shifts in attitudes and behaviour towards gender roles among the general population and particular groups, e.g. relevant professionals, witnesses and bystanders, vulnerable groups;
- Empowerment of individuals – particularly children and young people – through positive gender portrayals that promote self-worth and freedom from restrictive expectations.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.7. Call for proposals to national data protection authorities on reaching out to stakeholders in data protection legislation

LEGAL BASIS

Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation)

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVE

Protect and promote the right to the protection of personal data.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

National data protection authorities in the Member States.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Facilitating compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), small mid-cap enterprises (SMCs) and organisations with a similar number of employees.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Facilitating compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), small mid-cap enterprises (SMCs) and organisations with a similar number of employees.

- Improved compliance with GDPR obligations among SMEs, SMCs and organisations with a similar number of employees;
- Increased awareness of data protection among SMEs, SMCs and organisations with a similar number of employees;
- Improved exchange and uptake of good practices among national data protection authorities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.8. Call for proposals on European remembrance

LEGAL BASIS

Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVE

Support projects aimed at commemorating defining events in modern European history, including Europe's negative history, such as the Holocaust, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, slavery and colonialism. The main objective is to raise awareness among Europeans of their common history, culture, cultural heritage and values, and to support the creation of a shared European history. This will expand general understanding of the Union, its origins, history the aspects, and the importance of mutual understanding and tolerance.

In addition, this call will contribute to the implementation of the forthcoming Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030, the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026–2030, and the Anti-Racism Strategy 2026–2030, once they are adopted.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Civil society organisations, memorial and heritage sites, museums and archive centres, cultural, youth and research organisations, education and training providers, survivors' associations, public authorities and public bodies.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Remembering democratic transitions, the (re-)building and rebuilding democratic institutions, and strengthening society based on the rule of law, democracy, and fundamental rights.
2. Strengthening the remembrance of the Holocaust, acts of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity to strengthen democracy in the EU.
3. Fostering remembrance of the legacy of colonialism, slavery, and migration and their impact on contemporary multicultural European societies.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Strengthened knowledge of a shared European history;
- Increased capacity to counter historical falsification, memory competition, Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation, inversion and conflation of the Shoah with external conflicts;
- Increased capacity to counter marginalisation of the Roma Holocaust (Porajmos/Samudaripen) in public memory and education;
- Increased awareness on the contribution of Roma and Sinti to European societies;
- Improved availability and accessibility of archival material, testimonies and authentic sites for education purposes, commemoration and research;
- Increased engagement with European citizens, especially young people and key multipliers (educators, journalists, policymakers, etc.) on the various aspects of European Remembrance with the aim to strengthen society based on rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights;
- Inclusion of a European dimension in national and international debates on

significant historical events and moments in recent European history;

- Increased number of transnational coalitions on European memory;
- Increased awareness of the contribution of ethnic, religious and other minorities, such as Roma, Afro-Descendants, indigenous people, Jews, Muslims, and LGBTIQ people to the cultural richness, diversity and common history of Europe;
- Increased knowledge of the history of antisemitism and Jewish life and culture in Europe;
- Increased knowledge of the history of antigypsyism and Roma and Sinti culture in Europe;
- Increased knowledge of the history and legacies of colonialism, enslavement and the slave trade, acts of genocide and the overall historical roots of racism; recognition of the histories of people of African descent in Europe;
- Improved recognition and remembrance of victims, including those of LGBTIQ-phobic violence and persecution throughout history;
- Strengthened societal resilience of Europeans in combating racism, antisemitism, antigypsyism, anti-Muslim hatred, LGBTIQ-phobia and all types of intolerance.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by the Commission's Secretariat-General (co-delegation type I) and EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.9. Call for proposals to foster citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic and civil life of the Union

LEGAL BASIS

Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVE

Promote citizens' and representative associations' participation in and contribution to the democratic and civic life of the Union by making known and publicly exchanging their views in all areas of Union action.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Civil society organisations, including private non-profit organisations, cultural and youth organisations, education providers, research institutions and public authorities.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

The call will support the following priorities:

1. Supporting free, fair and inclusive electoral processes (focusing on information about elections and electoral rights, especially for mobile EU citizens, in full respect of Member States' competences in organising elections).
2. Promoting citizens' active engagement and democratic participation in public policymaking, beyond elections, as well as broader civic engagement.
3. Countering the spread of disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) in the democratic debate and processes.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased citizens' awareness of rights and EU values and increased citizen engagement in society and with the EU;
- Improved knowledge and understanding among citizens of EU institutions and policies and the EU's achievements and benefits;
- Increased citizen empowerment, leading to more involvement in decision-making from local to EU level;
- Increased active participation of people from different backgrounds in the EU policymaking process, leading to a greater contribution to the EU democratic and civic life;
- Better opportunities for citizens to express and make their views known about what kind of Europe they want and what changes to EU law they wish to see;
- Strengthened democratic participation, with a special focus on: (i) including younger and older people, women in all their diversity, people belonging to marginalised groups or groups at risk of discrimination, mobile EU citizens and persons with disabilities; (ii) reaching those citizens not active in civic participation in their everyday life;
- Increased resilience and preparedness of citizens, particularly those from vulnerable and marginalised groups, to critically assess online information and counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI);
- Expanded development and dissemination of educational materials and training programmes that strengthen civic education, media/digital literacy, and critical thinking skills among citizens, educators, and journalists.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.10. Call for proposals on the rights of the child and children's participation in EU democratic life

LEGAL BASIS

Articles 4 and 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic

life of the Union

OBJECTIVE

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to protect and promote the rights of the child, including the right to participate in democratic life.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Civil society organisations, including international organisations, academia whose work is relevant to the area of the rights of the child, stakeholders in the field of education, and national and local authorities.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2027

The call will support the following priorities:

1. Promoting children's rights and supporting their well-being in digital and physical environments.
2. Protecting children's right to environmental sustainability through intergenerational collaboration.
3. Supporting children's engagement and participation in decision-making.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased awareness by children of their rights in the offline and online worlds, and of the associated opportunities and risks;
- Increased intergenerational cooperation to ensure protection of children's rights to a healthy environment;
- Increased awareness among children of their right to participate and have their voices heard, including in environmental practices and policies;
- Increased effectiveness of child participation mechanisms by making them inclusive and systemic;
- Improved capacity building, exchange of good practice and training on the rights and needs of children;
- Improved support to children in vulnerable situations or from disadvantaged backgrounds or belonging to groups at risk of discrimination.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.11. Call for proposals for Town-Twinning

LEGAL BASIS

Article 5 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVE

Promote exchanges between citizens of different countries, in particular through town-twinning, to give them practical experience of the wealth and diversity of the common heritage of the Union and to make them aware that these constitute the foundation for a common future

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Towns/municipalities or their twinning committees or networks; other levels of local/regional authorities; federations/associations of local authorities; non-profit organisations representing local authorities.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

1. Fostering active citizenship and democratic participation at local level.
2. Promoting inclusion, equality and respect for diversity.
3. Raising awareness of EU values, rights and democratic standards.
4. Strengthening social resilience and addressing local challenges.
5. Supporting community-based action to prevent and raise awareness of violence, including domestic violence and violence against children, and promoting inclusive approaches to local well-being.
6. Encouraging cultural participation and heritage.
7. Raising awareness of accessibility and participation for persons with disabilities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Strengthened mutual understanding and friendship among citizens at local level;
- Better opportunities for citizens to experience and appreciate the added value of the EU through a grassroots, community-based approach;
- An increased sense of belonging to the EU;
- Long-lasting bond between municipalities and between citizens;
- Increased cross-border cooperation on similar practical issues of democratic participation between municipalities and between citizens, going beyond cultural exchanges;
- Increased effectiveness of prevention policies at local level aimed at preventing against domestic violence and violence against children;
- Increased inclusion of marginalised communities, disadvantaged groups and groups at risk of discrimination;
- Improved accessibility for persons with disabilities and better inclusion in the community;
- Increased citizen participation in inclusive and meaningful cultural activities and organisations and increased citizens' contact with Europe's rich cultural heritage, particularly of people belonging to disadvantaged and marginalised communities or to groups at risk of discrimination and children.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.12. Call for proposals for Networks of Towns

LEGAL BASIS

Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVES

Promote exchanges between citizens of different countries, in particular through networks of towns, to give them practical experience of the wealth and diversity of the common heritage of the Union and to make them aware that these constitute the foundation for a common future.

Develop sustainable networks of towns, deepening and intensifying their cooperation, while outlining common activities to promote Union values and fundamental rights, and their long-term vision for the future of European integration.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Towns/municipalities or their twinning committees or networks; other local/regional authorities; federations/associations of local authorities; non-profit organisations representing local authorities.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026 and 2027

1. Encourage citizen engagement, participation and democratic involvement at local, national, and EU level, promoting EU citizenship, shared values and democratic standards.
2. Raise awareness of the benefits of diversity, tackle discrimination, racism and exclusion, and support the participation of under-represented groups, including racialised people, migrants and LGBTIQ individuals.
3. Support the active involvement of citizens, including children, in public life, and promote democratic participation, gender equality and representation in local decision-making.
4. Prevent and raise awareness of violence, hatred and polarisation (including violence against women, domestic violence, violence against children, violence against LGBTIQ people and racialised people, as well as bullying and cyberbullying, and promote promising practices for local Roma inclusion, desegregation and social cohesion.
5. Promote democratic participation through cultural activities, including projects

inspired by or aligned with the New European Bauhaus initiative.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased citizen engagement in society, including marginalised and under-represented groups and groups at risk of discrimination, and ultimately more active citizen involvement in the democratic life of the Union;
- Greater awareness of EU citizenship rights and improved implementation of those rights across Member States;
- Better access to information for mobile EU citizens and their family members on their rights as EU citizens;
- Increased participation of citizens and civil society organisations in local, national and European policymaking processes;
- Improved awareness of the benefits of diversity and the tackling of hatred, discrimination, racism and LGBTIQ-phobia;
- Greater mutual understanding and respect for European minorities, Roma, racialised people, LGBTIQ people, etc.;
- Increased participation of children in the EU project from an early age;
- Improved accessibility for persons with disabilities and better inclusion in the community;
- Stronger awareness of the contribution of migration, migrants and their descendants to the cultural richness, diversity and common history of Europe;
- Increased awareness of the importance of citizen participation, including through cultural activities;
- More effective policies tackling and preventing violence against women, domestic violence, violence against children and violence against LGBTIQ people, Roma and racialised people at local level.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

3.13. Call for proposals to prevent and combat gender-based violence and violence against children

LEGAL BASIS

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 03: Daphne

OBJECTIVES

To fight violence, including gender-based violence and violence against children, by: preventing and combating at all levels, all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity and domestic violence, including by promoting the standards laid down in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating

violence against women and domestic violence;

preventing and combating all forms of violence against children, young people and other groups at risk, such as LGBTIQ people and persons with disabilities;

supporting and protecting all direct and indirect victims of the forms of violence referred to above, such as the victims of domestic violence perpetrated within the family or within intimate relationships, including children orphaned as a result of domestic crimes;

supporting and ensuring the same level of protection throughout the Union for victims of gender-based violence.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Member States' public authorities, support services, civil society organisations.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026 and 2027

The call will support the following priorities:

1. Supporting intermediary organisations (providing financial support to civil society organisations) working in the fields of gender-based violence and violence against children.
2. Protecting and supporting victims and survivors of gender-based violence.
3. Preventing gender-based violence
4. Supporting the achievement of the objectives of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the Union and the implementation of the Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence.
5. Strengthening integrated child protection systems including through cross-sectoral collaboration, and ensuring child-centred, coordinated responses to violence against children, contributing to the implementation of the Commission Recommendation on integrated child protection systems.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Supporting intermediary organisations (providing financial support to civil society organisations) working in the fields of gender-based violence and violence against children

- Increased capacity of stakeholders and relevant professionals (including grassroots organisations) to address issues related to gender-based violence and/or violence against children;
- Strengthened multi-agency cooperation in prevention and response actions;
- Achievement of results aligned with those of other relevant priorities below (depending on the form of violence addressed).

2. Protecting and supporting victims and survivors of gender-based violence

- Increased availability, accessibility and quality of victim support services, including those providing: (i) targeted and integrated support for victims with specific needs, such as victims of sexual violence, victims of violence in close relationships; and (ii) trauma support and counselling;

- Improved access to protection and support for victims in vulnerable situations, including refugees and migrants;
- Increased capacity of stakeholders and frontline professionals to respond effectively and with a gender-sensitive approach;
- Increased reporting of violence to the police and other services and an increased use of a gender-sensitive approach in the treatment of victims;
- Increased awareness of gender-based violence, including gender-based sexual violence, including in the context of migration and/or in the context of armed conflict;
- Prevention and response structures addressing violence against women, children (including as witnesses) and other targeted groups are extended or adapted to include refugees and other migrants;
- improved protection and support standards for victims of gender-based violence, including migrants and refugees;
- Improved coordination on gender-based violence in national and cross-border contexts;
- Strengthened victim protection, including in cross-border cases of violence, through the application of Directive 2011/99/EU on the European protection order.

3. Preventing gender-based violence

- Increased promotion and support of initiatives to prevent gender-based violence;
- Increased awareness of prejudices, gender stereotypes and norms that contribute to the tolerance of gender-based violence;
- Increased awareness and involvement of men and boys in tackling gender-based violence against women;
- Increased capacity of stakeholders and relevant professionals to address issues related to gender-based violence, including in relation to cyber violence and domestic violence;
- Increased empowerment of victims and potential victims of violence to claim their rights and to stand up against violence;
- Shift in attitude and behaviour to gender-based violence, including cyberviolence (including a lower tolerance for and less victim-blaming);
- Improved detection and reporting of early signs of violence, with increased intervention and support for victims;
- Increased use of treatment programmes for perpetrators of violence;
- Improved prevention of violence, including cyberviolence, and greater safety for those at risk, especially women and children.

4. Supporting the achievement of the objectives of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the Union and the implementation of the Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence

- Increased capacity of stakeholders, including Member States authorities and other bodies, to successfully implement provisions of the Convention and the Directive.

5. Strengthening integrated child protection systems, including through cross-sectoral collaboration, and ensuring child-centred, coordinated responses to violence against children, contributing to the implementation of the Commission Recommendation on integrated child protection systems

- Strengthened integrated child protection systems centred on children's rights and

needs;

- Strengthened multisectoral prevention, early identification, protection and multidisciplinary support to children suffering from all forms of violence and in need of specialised care and recovery;
- Reinforced capacity of people in contact with children and professionals to prevent, detect and respond to violence against children and strengthen child protection, including increased cooperation among relevant services, responsible actors at different levels and sectors;
- Closer involvement of public authorities in integrated child protection, in particular at local, regional and national level, in close cooperation with private and public stakeholders, particularly civil society organisations;
- Reinforced monitoring of violence against children and of the responsiveness and effectiveness of child protection systems.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.14. Operating grants to framework partners active in the area of Union values

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

OBJECTIVES

Protect, promote and raise awareness of rights by providing financial support to civil society organisations that are active at local, regional, national and transnational level. These organisations play a key role in promoting and cultivating Union values and fundamental rights, thereby strengthening the protection and promotion of these rights and values, including respect for the rule of law, and contributing to building a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

Support the annual work programmes of European networks, civil society organisations active at EU level and European think tanks that have signed framework partnership agreements.

Increase the capacities of framework partners to contribute actively to the development and implementation of EU policies in these areas.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Framework partners of the European Commission under the CERV programme.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026 and 2027

- Empowering civil society to act as defenders of fundamental rights and Union values.
- Improving the monitoring and advocacy functions of civil society organisations (CSOs).
- Building bridges between research, policy and practice in the fields of rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights.

Where provided for in the call, framework partner organisations that qualify as European networks may include financial support to third parties (i.e. re-granting mechanisms) to support the activities of their member organisations at national, regional or local level.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Framework partners receiving operating grants are expected to achieve at least one of the following results:

- Strengthened capacity of national, regional and local organisations working in areas covered by the grant;
- Improved ability of network partners to carry out consistent and coordinated actions aligned with relevant policy objectives;
- Expansion of the network's reach, including the integration of new partners;
- Measurable increase in the network's impact on the relevant policy fields;
- Improved linkages between research and policymaking at European level, supporting evidence-based solutions;
- Strengthened interaction between researchers, the public, civil society organisations and political decision-makers.

Network members receiving funding under the re-granting scheme are expected to strengthen their capacities and contribute to at least one of these results:

- protect and promote fundamental rights and Union values;
- foster a more supportive environment for CSOs and human rights defenders;
- improve CSO's advocacy and monitoring capacity;
- participate in policymaking and decision-making processes with local, regional and national governments;
- raise citizens' awareness of fundamental rights and Union values;
- engage in cross-border, national, regional and local cooperation among civil society organisations.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by the Commission's Secretariat-General (co-delegation type I) and EACEA (co-delegation type II)

3.15. Operating grants to support EU-level networks active in the 'Rights of persons with disabilities'

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

OBJECTIVES

Protect, promote and raise awareness of rights by providing financial support to civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level. These organisations play a key role in promoting and cultivating those rights, thereby strengthening the protection and promotion of Union values and respect for the rule of law and contributing to building a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

Promote, protect and monitor the rights of persons with disabilities by providing financial support to EU-level networks of civil society organisations active in this area at local, regional, national and transnational level.

Support the annual work programmes of framework partners.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Framework partners of the European Commission under the CERV programme.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026 and 2027

1. Promoting, protecting and monitoring the rights of persons with disabilities by providing financial support to EU-level networks of civil society organisations (CSOs) active in this area at local, regional, national and transnational level. It will, in particular, contribute to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
2. Supporting the Commission in putting the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 into practice.
3. Delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and related initiatives, such as the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is a shared responsibility of the EU institutions, national, regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society.

Where provided for in the call, framework partner organisations that qualify as European networks may include financial support to third parties (i.e. re-granting mechanisms) to support the activities of their member organisations at national, regional and local level.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Framework partners receiving operating grants are expected to achieve at least one of the following results:

- Strengthened capacity of national, regional and local organisations working in areas covered by the grant;
- Improved ability of network partners to carry out consistent and coordinated actions aligned with relevant policy objectives;
- Measurable increase in the network's impact on the relevant policy fields;
- Improved linkages between research and policymaking at European level,

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| <p>supporting evidence-based solutions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened interaction between researchers, the public and political decision-makers. <p>Under the re-granting option, network members that receive a grant from a framework partner are expected to help to contribute to at least one of the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened capacity to protect and promote EU rights and values; • Strengthened capacity for advocacy and monitoring for CSOs; • Increased involvement of CSOs in policymaking and decision-making processes with local, regional and national governments; • Increased citizen awareness of fundamental rights and EU values; • Strengthened national, regional and local cooperation within civil society. |
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IMPLEMENTATION

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| Direct management by DG JUST. |
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3.16. Award of an operating grant without a call for proposals to the European Network of the Equality Bodies (EQUINET)

LEGAL BASIS

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| Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692 |
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BUDGET LINE

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| Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights |
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OBJECTIVES

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| <p><i>Promote equality and prevent and combat inequalities and discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and respect the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds provided for in Article 21 of the Charter.</i></p> <p><i>Support activities implemented by the European Network of the Equality Bodies (EQUINET), specifically to share experiences and good practices and organise training, awareness-raising and studies.</i></p> |
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POLICY PRIORITIES

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| <p><u>2026 and 2027</u></p> <p>EQUINET will be invited to submit a proposal outlining its annual priorities, which are aligned with the priorities below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fostering cooperation and exchanging information between national equality bodies. 2. Increasing the institutional and operational capacity of national equality bodies to promote equal treatment and tackle issues related to non-discrimination. 3. Supporting the transposition and implementation of the 2024 directives on standards for equality bodies, including supporting members to advocate for structural and legal reforms at national level. |
|--|

4. Promoting awareness of and disseminating information on equal treatment, non-discrimination and the role of equality bodies among stakeholders.

Where provided for in the call, EQUINET may include financial support to third parties (i.e. re-granting mechanisms) to support the activities of their member organisations at national, regional or local level.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased capacity of experts from national equality bodies to address issues related to non-discrimination and the implementation of EU legislation in the field;
- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information between equality bodies;
- Improved understanding among national equality bodies of the 2024 directives on standards for equality bodies and increased capacity to implement them and advocate for the relevant structural and legal reforms at national level;
- Improved knowledge of the legislation and administrative practices related to non-discrimination.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

3.17. Award of grants without a call for proposals in the area of the social dimension of Europe: second wave of the EU-wide survey on gender-based violence

LEGAL BASIS

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

Article 198(f) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and Article 5(3) of Regulation (EC) 223/2009 on European statistics; the justification on award grants without a call for proposals

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 03: Daphne

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the EU-wide gender-based violence survey is to provide comprehensive and comparable EU statistics that form the foundation for developing effective strategies to combat this type of violence.

Since October 2023, the EU has become a Party to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)¹⁷. The Istanbul Convention introduces data collection obligations on its Parties in Article 11 Data collection and research. Paragraph 2 of this Article specifically requests Parties ‘to conduct population-based surveys at regular intervals to assess the prevalence of

¹⁷

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/eu-accession-to-the-istanbul-convention.html>.

and trends in all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention’.

Furthermore, Article 44 of the EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence¹⁸ adopted in May 2024 provides that Member States should endeavour to conduct population-based surveys at regular intervals to assess the prevalence of, and trends in, all forms of violence covered by the Directive and to transmit these data to Eurostat as soon as they become available. The EU-wide survey will therefore also contribute to meeting the EU’s legal commitments in relation to both the Istanbul Convention and the Directive.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Bodies that are identified in the list referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 as the national statistical institutes or the other national authorities responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026-2027

Collection and analysis of specific data about women’s experiences of violence and domestic violence, including the consequences of violence and contacts with different services that provide assistance to victims, as survivors of violence, in the following four areas:

1. sexual harassment and sexual harassment at work;
2. physical and sexual violence by non-partners;
3. psychological, physical and sexual violence by intimate partners;
4. other violent experiences, such as stalking, violence experienced in the childhood, cyberviolence.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased capacity to compare data across EU Member States;
- Increased societal awareness by shedding light on the prevalence and impact of violence against women, promoting a deeper understanding of its root causes and consequences;
- Further understanding of issues of reporting by victims and underreporting, thereby producing vital data complementary to administrative data;
- Better understanding of new forms of gender-based violence for which no comprehensive data has been collected at EU level before, such as non-consensual sharing of intimate images, sexually explicit deepfakes, cyber harassment, cyber stalking and gender-based hate speech;
- Greater accountability from governments and policymakers;
- Contribution to creating informed and targeted interventions, ultimately fostering safer environments for women and holding governments responsible for their

¹⁸ Directive (EU) 2024/1385 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on combating violence against women and domestic violence: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401385.

commitments to end gender-based violence.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG ESTAT (co-delegation type II).

3.18. Award of a grant without a call for proposals to programme contact points

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

Article 195 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVES

Provide impartial guidance, practical information and assistance to applicants, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the programme with respect to all its aspects, including the application procedure, the dissemination of user-friendly information and programme results, inquiries for partners and trainings.

TYPE OF APPLICANTS TARGETED

Bodies designated as programme contact points: organisations officially designated by the participating countries and formally accepted by the European Commission.

POLICY PRIORITIES

2026

Each country participating in the programme can receive funding to support the activities of a decentralised structure designated as the programme contact point. These contact points play a key role in promoting the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme and supporting its implementation at national and regional level.

The aim of these contact points is to promote European initiatives in areas covered by the programme and to facilitate the participation of programme stakeholders. In addition to their information and dissemination role, these contact points also play an important role in other areas, such as providing advice to applicants, supporting partner searches and providing information about national or regional initiatives in the areas covered by the programme at European level.

Main priorities include:

1. Promoting European initiatives and values in the areas covered by the CERV programme.

2. Facilitating stakeholder participation in the programme by providing targeted information and support.
3. Providing guidance to potential applicants, including on eligibility, application procedures and partner searches.
4. Disseminating programme results and good practices at national and regional level.
5. Raising awareness of national and regional initiatives that contribute to the CERV programme's objectives.
6. Fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange with other programme contact points.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Broader public awareness of the CERV programme and its achievements;
- Increased engagement of new organisations and increased involvement of new regions;
- Facilitating participation of the largest possible number of potential applicants in the programme;
- More effective dissemination of programme results, including the promotion of transnational cooperation at national and regional level;
- Increased capacity of contact points to address issues related to the programme;
- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information on the programme between contact points;
- Increased quality and relevance of project applications submitted under the programme.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by EACEA (co-delegation type II).

4. Prizes

The global budgetary envelope reserved for contests under this work programme is EUR 350 000 in 2026 and EUR 350 000 in 2027.

| SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE | 2026 (EUR) | 2027 (EUR) |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Equality, rights and gender equality | 350 000 | 350 000 |
| <i>Supporting, advancing and implementing comprehensive policies to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities</i> | 350 000 | 350 000 |
| TOTAL | 350 000 | 350 000 |

4.1. Prizes for winners of the Access City Award

LEGAL BASIS

Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVE

Supporting, advancing and implementing comprehensive policies to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities

TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS TARGETED BY THE CONTEST

EU cities

POLICY PRIORITIES

The Access City Award, launched in 2010, recognises and celebrates cities' willingness, capabilities and efforts to ensure accessibility, promoting and contributing to a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities.

The award celebrates cities that take exemplary steps to improve accessibility in the urban environment for the benefit of all, in particular persons with disabilities and older people. Since its 10th edition, the Access City Award includes financial prizes for the winners.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST.

5. PROCUREMENT

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts is EUR 35 761 120 in 2026 and EUR 43 745 870 in 2027.

| SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE | 2026 (EUR) | 2027 (EUR) |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Union values | 1 987 466 | 4 539 234 |
| Equality, rights and gender equality | 19 213 550 | 24 189 645 |
| Citizens' engagement and participation | 10 800 165 | 6 679 965 |
| Daphne | 3 759 939 | 8 337 026 |
| TOTAL | 35 761 120 | 43 745 870 |

5.1 Procurement activities in Union Values

LEGAL BASIS

Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

OBJECTIVES

Finance goods or services through EU public procurement procedures to protect, promote and raise awareness of fundamental rights and support civil society organisations, which are active at local, regional, national and transnational level. Promoting and cultivating those rights also strengthens the protection and promotion of Union values and respect for the rule of law and contributes to building a more democratic Union, democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACTS

Actions will be financed through contracts following public procurement procedures (open calls for tender and framework contracts). Along with existing contracts, new framework contracts may be envisaged, especially to support the organisation of workshops and policy meetings, evaluations, impact assessments and related policy support services. Examples of the types of activities funded include: (i) awareness-raising, information and dissemination and analytical activities; (ii) organisation of conferences, expert meetings and seminars; (iii) communication activities; (iv) the development and maintenance of IT platforms and systems; (v) preparation of surveys and studies (including Eurobarometer surveys); (vi) contributions to Commission corporate IT systems; and (vii) evaluations and impact assessments.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Increased awareness of existing EU action and other Commission initiatives on equality (including gender equality), children's rights, data protection, rights of persons with disabilities and EU citizenship rights.

Improved responses to discrimination, racism, antisemitism, and hatred.

Increased awareness of the rule of law, fundamental rights and democratic dialogue, transparency and good governance.

Increased public trust in the EU and mutual trust among Member States. Increased awareness about the CERV programme and its underlying policies.

Increased effectiveness of the CERV programme.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST and EACEA (co-delegation type II).

The Commission may determine that certain policy actions planned under procurement would be more effectively implemented through indirect management. In these cases, the Commission may conclude a contribution agreement with an eligible entity working in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values based on a proposal and funding request submitted by the entity. This agreement would be concluded in line with Title VI 'Indirect management' of the Financial Regulation.¹⁹

5.2 Procurement activities in equality and rights

LEGAL BASIS

Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 01: Promote equality and rights

OBJECTIVES

Finance goods or services through EU public procurement rules to promote equality and prevent and combat hatred, inequalities and discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief disability, age or sexual orientation and respect the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds provided for in Article 21 of the Charter.

¹⁹ The concerned entities have been subject to an *ex ante* assessment under Article 154 of the Financial Regulation, including those that are signatories of a framework partnership agreement concluded with the Commission under Regulation (EU) 2016/369 or those that are covered by the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded with the United Nations. These organisations will have to demonstrate specific technical competence and experience appropriate for the action in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values, and must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the actions. This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' requirements, based on the competence and experience of the organisation and their project team, including operational resources (human, technical, etc.). The proposal for the action and funding request will be assessed based on the relevance of the action to the objectives of the programme, the quality of the action and its impact.

Examples of organisations that can be selected as implementing entities include but are not limited to the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and agencies of the United Nations.

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to promote women's full enjoyment of rights, gender equality, including work-life balance, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming.

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to combat racism, xenophobia, antigypsyism, LGBTIQ-phobia and all forms of intolerance, both online and offline. Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to protect and promote the rights of the child.

Support, advance and implement comprehensive policies to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

Improve the collection of equality data and its use.

Protect and promote EU citizenship rights and the right to the protection of personal data.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACTS

Same as 5.1

EXPECTED RESULTS

Increased awareness of existing EU action and other Commission initiatives on equality (including gender equality), children's rights, data protection, rights of persons with disabilities and EU citizenship rights. Improved responses to discrimination, racism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred/racism, LGBTIQ-phobia, hate speech and hate crime, both online and offline.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST, Secretariat-General (co-delegation type I) and PMO.

The Commission may determine that certain policy actions planned under procurement would be more effectively implemented through indirect management. In these cases, the Commission may conclude a contribution agreement with an eligible entity working in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values based on a proposal and funding request submitted by the entity. This agreement would be concluded in line with Title VI 'Indirect management' of the Financial Regulation.²⁰

²⁰ The concerned entities have been subject to an *ex ante* assessment under Article 154 of the Financial Regulation, including those that are signatories of a framework partnership agreement concluded with the Commission under Regulation (EU) 2016/369 or those that are covered by the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded with the United Nations. These organisations will have to demonstrate specific technical competence and experience appropriate for the action in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values, and must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the actions. This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' requirements, based on the competence and experience of the organisation and their project team, including operational resources (human, technical, etc.). The proposal for the action and funding request will be assessed based on the relevance of the action to the objectives of the programme, the quality of the action and its impact.

5.3 Procurement activities in citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

LEGAL BASIS

Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens' engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

OBJECTIVES

Finance goods and services to support projects aimed at: (i) marking defining moments in modern European history, such as the coming to power of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, including the causes and consequences thereof; and (ii) raising awareness among European citizens of their common history, culture, cultural heritage and values, thereby improving their understanding of the Union, its origins, purpose, diversity and achievements and of the importance of mutual understanding and tolerance.

Promote citizens' and representative associations' (including children's rights associations) participation and contribution to the democratic and civic life of the Union by enabling them to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action.

Promote European remembrance, including of the Shoah, and support the implementation of the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.

Promote and improve the inclusive and systemic participation of children at local, national and EU level, ensuring they children are more involved in decision-making.

Promote exchanges between citizens of different countries, in particular through town-twinning and networks of towns, to give them practical experiences of the richness and diversity of the common heritage of the Union and to make them aware that such richness and diversity constitute a solid foundation for a common future.

Protect and empower civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level, including fostering their effective and meaningful participation in public policymaking processes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACTS

Same as 5.1

EXPECTED RESULTS

Examples of organisations that can be selected as implementing entities include but are not limited to the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and agencies of the United Nations.

Increased public trust in the EU and mutual trust among Member States. More engagement and participation of the public and civil society organisations (including children, notably through the EU Children’s Participation Platform) in the EU’s democratic life to support a rights-based, open, pluralist and inclusive society.

A safer, more resilient and well-supported civic space across the EU both online and offline, underpinned by stronger cooperation at all levels, and greater public and institutional awareness of the role of civil society and human rights defenders in upholding democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST, EACEA (co-delegation type II) and Secretariat-General (co-delegation type I).

The Commission may determine that certain policy actions planned under procurement would be more effectively implemented through indirect management. In these cases, the Commission may conclude a contribution agreement with an eligible entity working in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values based on a proposal and funding request submitted by the entity. This agreement would be concluded in line with Title VI ‘Indirect management’ of the Financial Regulation.²¹

5.4 Procurement activities in Daphne

LEGAL BASIS

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 03: Daphne

OBJECTIVES

Finance goods and services through EU public procurement rules to prevent and combat all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls and domestic violence at all levels, including by promoting the standards laid down in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and upheld in Directive (EU)2024/1385.

²¹ The concerned entities have been subject to an *ex ante* assessment under Article 154 of the Financial Regulation, including those that are signatories of a framework partnership agreement concluded with the Commission under Regulation (EU) 2016/369 or those that are covered by the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded with the United Nations. These organisations will have to demonstrate specific technical competence and experience appropriate for the action in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values, and must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the actions. This capacity will be assessed together with the ‘Quality’ requirements, based on the competence and experience of the organisation and their project team, including operational resources (human, technical, etc.). The proposal for the action and funding request will be assessed based on the relevance of the action to the objectives of the programme, the quality of the action and its impact.

Examples of organisations that can be selected as implementing entities include but are not limited to the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and agencies of the United Nations.

Prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and other groups at risk, such as LGBTIQ people and persons with disabilities.

Support and protect all direct and indirect victims of the forms of violence referred to above, such as victims of domestic violence perpetrated within the family or within intimate relationships, including children orphaned as a result of domestic crimes, and support and ensure the same level of protection throughout the Union for victims of gender-based violence.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACTS

Same as 5.1

EXPECTED RESULTS

Increased awareness of existing EU action and other Commission initiatives on gender equality and children's rights. Improved responses to gender-based violence, including the involvement of grassroots organisations who are closer to the victims, including children and other groups at risk.

IMPLEMENTATION

Direct management by DG JUST, DG ESTAT, PMO.

The Commission may determine that certain policy actions planned under procurement would be more effectively implemented through indirect management. In these cases, the Commission may conclude a contribution agreement with an eligible entity working in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values based on a proposal and funding request submitted by the entity. This agreement would be concluded in line with Title VI 'Indirect management' of the Financial Regulation.²²

²²

The concerned entities have been subject to an *ex ante* assessment under Article 154 of the Financial Regulation, including those that are signatories of a framework partnership agreement concluded with the Commission under Regulation (EU) 2016/369 or those that are covered by the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded with the United Nations. These organisations will have to demonstrate specific technical competence and experience appropriate for the action in the area of citizens, equality, rights and values, and must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the actions. This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' requirements, based on the competence and experience of the organisation and their project team, including operational resources (human, technical, etc.). The proposal for the action and funding request will be assessed based on the relevance of the action to the objectives of the programme, the quality of the action and its impact.

Examples of organisations that can be selected as implementing entities include but are not limited to the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and agencies of the United Nations.

6. ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED IN INDIRECT MANAGEMENT

The budget reserved for indirect management actions is EUR 4 200 000 in 2026 and EUR 0 in 2027.

6.1. Support to the World Health Organization: project on gender and health

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

World Health Organization (WHO)

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

The objective of this action is to help achieve one of the key principles of the Roadmap for Women Rights (Principle 2) recently adopted by the European Commission, which focuses on ensuring the highest standards of physical and mental health for women. As health risk and diseases affect women and men differently, it is essential to include a “gender lens” into all health policies and actions ²³.

The project will explore ways through which public health policies can achieve the policy goals set out in the Roadmap’s principle on women’s health taking into account intersectional approach, including migrant women and women with disabilities:

- better promote women’s and girls’ physical and mental health,
- support women’s access to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- ensure respectful and high quality obstetric and gynaecological care, free from discrimination and combating harmful practices;
- improve women’s access to affordable menstrual hygiene products and contraception;
- promote gender-sensitive medical research, clinical trials, diagnostics and treatments;
- collaborate with EU-funded research projects under Horizon Europe to stay informed about the latest research, best practices and innovative solutions and contribute to addressing the knowledge gaps and inequalities in women's health, particularly in under-researched areas.

6.2. Support to Council of Europe for activities against hatred (especially online), discrimination and intolerance

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

Council of Europe

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

²³ Franklin, P., Mambra, C. and Albani, V. (2021). Gender equality and health in the EU. Available online: DS0320880ENN-en.pdf.

The overall objective of this action is to strengthen the promotion of Union values and fundamental rights enshrined in the Treaty and in the Charter by supporting civil society, public authorities, media professionals and other relevant stakeholders. It aims, to address the persistence of hatred, especially online, discrimination, racism and intolerance in society, through awareness-raising, training and capacity-building activities.

Building on past CERV-funded initiatives and the experience of the Council of Europe, this unified action aims to:

- equip civil society, public authorities, and journalists with practical, rights-based tools to tackle hatred), discrimination, racism, and intolerance;
- address the specific risks posed by digital tools and technologies;
- promote consistent and evidence-based responses aligned with the Union's values and fundamental rights.

The action will include activities to:

1. boost public authorities and civil society organisations' prevention measures to tackle hatred and intolerance, including by fostering coalitions of civil society organisations working to counter LGBTIQ-phobia, racism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred and antigypsyism;
2. carry out training programmes for journalists and media professionals, focused on balanced storytelling and reporting on Roma, people of African descent, Muslims, LGBTIQ communities and other communities at risk of media stigmatisation;
3. monitor the impact of digital technologies, including AI systems, on hatred and intolerance, including biases and discrimination based on racial and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics and religion.

6.3. Support to the OSCE/ODIHR for sharing knowledge and setting standards on hate crime, including hate crime victims support

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

This action aims to improve support to victims of hate speech and hate crime in the EU by sharing knowledge and good practices, supporting stakeholders on the ground, and developing standards and capacities to counter hate crime and provide support to victims of hate crime.

The OSCE/ODIHR will further intensify and develop its efforts to set standards and provide guidance on effective hate crime responses and to support hate crime victims in the EU. The project will be based on previous activities combating hate crime under past CERV work programmes and the previous Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support (EStAR) grant, which developed i.a. practical tools to improve specialist support to hate crime victims.

6.4. Support to OECD for data collection, analysis and network building on engagement and protection on civic space in the EU

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

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|------|
| OECD |
|------|

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

This action aims to pursue a strong and evidence-based promotion of civic space as a prerequisite for resilient democracies and an enabler of effective and meaningful participation of civil society organisations (CSOs) in public decision-making across the EU.

This action will build on the OECD's established expertise in the area of data collection and analysis and its existing networks to improve the understanding of civic space across EU Member States, focusing on national frameworks and conditions that influence CSOs and their participation. The OECD will support efforts to gather and analyse relevant information, contributing to a more comprehensive and systematic overview of the enabling environment for civil society. This work aims to inform and strengthen the capacity of policymakers and stakeholders to foster an open, inclusive and participatory civic space throughout the EU and foster stronger cooperation among stakeholders at all levels.

By leveraging the OECD's expertise in data collection and analysis, the action will improve the evidence base on national frameworks affecting civic space and CSOs and develop a range of actions and deliverables to support effective and meaningful participation of CSOs at national level.

The action also aims to strengthen Member States' capacity to engage with CSOs throughout public policymaking processes.

6.5. Support to the Council of Europe in strengthening civil society organisations' knowledge of and capacity for Roma Holocaust remembrance and education

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

| |
|-------------------|
| Council of Europe |
|-------------------|

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

This action aims to strengthen the ability of civil society organisations (CSOs) and other partners to promote remembrance and education about the Roma Holocaust. It focuses on fighting antigypsyism, promoting inclusion and preserving Roma history.

The goal is to raise awareness and improve understanding of the Roma Holocaust across Europe, helping to build more tolerant and democratic societies. Now in its second round, the initiative includes commemoration activities related to the Roma Holocaust and genocide, as well as education and awareness-raising efforts – particularly among young people – focused on Roma history and the roots of marginalisation. The action will also support partnerships with national and Roma-led NGOs to carry out these activities.

In addition, the project will develop and implement tailored training programmes for journalists, media professionals and public authorities, while also involving young people. This approach ensures depth and detail that would be difficult to achieve under a more general framework.

6.6. Support to OECD on supporting Member State authorities in developing national and local strategies and action plans against racism (phase 2)

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

OECD

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

This action aims to help step up the fight against racism and discrimination by supporting Member States in effectively implementing their national measures against racism and increasing their impact. This action is the second phase of activities that began under the 2023-2024 CERV work programme.

The objectives of the action are:

- increased capacity of EU Member States national authorities to develop and implement a national monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the extent to which the objectives outlined under each critical policy area in the national policies have been met;
- better knowledge of gaps and needs in key policy areas of the national measures;
- increased availability of data and knowledge for national authorities, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

6.7. Support to UNESCO – Routes of enslaved peoples (phase 2)

IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

UNESCO

OBJECTIVES PURSUED

The overall objective is to help ‘break’ the silence surrounding the history of enslavement and colonialism and place it in the universal memory. The results of the action will reach the general public, educators, media and stakeholders. This action is the second phase of activities that began under the 2023-2024 CERV work programme.

The objectives of the action are to:

- promote the contribution of people of African descent to humanity’s general progress;
- question the social, cultural and economic inequalities that are a legacy of slavery.

7. OTHER EXPENDITURE

7.1. Experts

BUDGET LINE

Budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens’ engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union

Budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values

AMOUNT

The budget reserved for other expenditure is:

- EUR 1 300 000 for 2026 and EUR 1 600 000 for 2027 under budget line 07 06 04: Protect and promote Union values;
- EUR 2 500 000 for 2026 and EUR 2 500 000 for 2027 under budget line 07 06 02: Promote citizens’ engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union.

DESCRIPTION

The Commission and/or EACEA may select external experts to assist in evaluating applications or monitoring actions. The external experts with the relevant expertise, having the appropriate profile, as registered in the Funding & Tenders Portal Expert Database²⁴, may assist the evaluation committees. Their tasks include, for instance, the evaluation of proposals following award criteria or the operational capacity of the applicant and drafting individual evaluation reports or consensus reports.

7.2. EU financial contribution to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

LEGAL BASIS

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2021/692

BUDGET LINE

²⁴ Funding & tender opportunities – [work as an expert](#).

07 06 03: Daphne

AMOUNT

EUR 370 000 for 2026 and EUR 375 000 for 2027

DESCRIPTION

On 1 October 2023, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence entered into force in the EU. The EU ratified the Convention through Council Decisions (EU) 2023/1075 and 2023/1076. The Convention has a monitoring mechanism composed of the Group of Experts on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) and the Committee of the Parties (CoP), which monitor the compliance of the contracting states with the standards set by the Convention. The monitoring mechanism is funded through the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe since the Convention does not contain a clause on financial contributions.

The EU is not a member of the Council of Europe and therefore does not contribute to the ordinary budget. As a result, the Council of Europe requested the EU to contribute to the costs of the Convention by paying a share of the Convention's annual budget. Given that combating violence against women and domestic violence is a priority for the EU, an annual payment at a rate corresponding to that of a large contributor to the Council of Europe (Germany, France, Italy, the UK) seems appropriate. This contribution will be paid on a voluntary basis and has no bearing on the EU's financial contribution to other Council of Europe conventions.

Annex A – LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENT REFERENCES

Binding EU legislation

Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin²⁵

Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation²⁶

Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services²⁷

Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation²⁸

Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law²⁹

Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)³⁰

Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers³¹

Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law³²

Directive (EU) 2022/2381 of 23 November 2022 on improving the gender balance among directors of listed companies³³

Directive (EU) 2023/970 of 10 May 2023 on strengthening the application of the principle of equal pay through pay transparency³⁴

Directive (EU) 2024/1385 of 14 May 2024 on combating violence against women and domestic violence³⁵

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, ‘the Istanbul Convention’, to which the EU has been a party since October 2023³⁶

²⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/43/oj/eng>.

²⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/78/oj/eng>.

²⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004L0113>.

²⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006L0054>.

²⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008F0913>.

³⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679>.

³¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L1158>.

³² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1937/oj/eng>

³³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022L2381>.

³⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32023L0970>.

³⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202401385.

³⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=legisum:4301302>.

Council Directive (EU) 2024/1499 of 7 May 2024 on standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation between persons irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, equal treatment between women and men in matters of social security and in the access to and supply of goods and services, and amending Directives 2000/43/EC and 2004/113/EC³⁷

Directive (EU) 2024/1500 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on standards for equality bodies in the field of equal treatment and equal opportunities between women and men in matters of employment and occupation, and amending Directives 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU³⁸

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union³⁹

Non-binding instruments (recommendations, communications, strategies)

Equality, inclusion and non-discrimination

LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2026-2030⁴⁰

Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 152 final)⁴¹

EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 565 final)⁴²

EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation 2020-2030 (COM(2020) 620 final)⁴³

EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life 2021-2030 (COM(2021) 615 final)⁴⁴

European Care Strategy (COM(2022) 440 final)⁴⁵

LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (COM(2025) 725 final)⁴⁶

Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2020-2027⁴⁷

Communication: ‘No Place for Hate: A Europe United Against Hatred’ (JOIN(2023) 27 final)⁴⁸

2024 Recommendations of the European Citizens’ Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society⁴⁹

³⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1499/oj/eng>.

³⁸ Directive - 2024/1500 - EN - EUR-Lex

³⁹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj/eng

⁴⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0725>

⁴¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152>.

⁴² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0565>.

⁴³ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:9a007e7e-08ad-11eb-a511-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF.

⁴⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0615>

⁴⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0440>.

⁴⁶ LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 - European Commission

⁴⁷ EUR-Lex - 52020DC0758 - EN - EUR-Lex

⁴⁸ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16681-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

⁴⁹ https://citizens.ec.europa.eu/document/download/f924a377-713c-46a4-a92c-a63973b4618e_en?filename=Tackling_Hatred_in_Society_Final_recommendations_EN.pdf.

Commission Communication: Roadmap for Women's Rights⁵⁰

Democracy, citizenship, rule of law, fundamental rights

European Democracy Shield: Empowering Strong and Resilient Democracies⁵¹
(JOIN(2025) 791 final)

EU Strategy for Civil Society⁵² (COM(2025) 790 final)

2021 'Reinforcing democracy and integrity of elections' package (Communication on protecting election integrity and promoting democratic participation (COM(2021) 730 final)⁵³ Regulation (EU) 2024/900 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising, Recast of Council Directive on the electoral rights of mobile EU citizens in municipal elections, Recast of Council Directive on the electoral rights of mobile EU citizens in European Parliament elections)⁵⁴

2023 'Defence of Democracy Package': Recommendation on inclusive and resilient electoral processes⁵⁵, Recommendation on promoting the engagement and effective participation of citizens and civil society organisations in public policymaking processes⁵⁶

2023 EU Citizenship Package: Guide to EU citizenship⁵⁷, Guidance on the right of free movement of EU citizens and their families⁵⁸, Guide of good electoral practices in Member States addressing the participation of citizens with disabilities in the electoral process⁵⁹, Compendium of e-voting and other ICT practices⁶⁰

Strategy to Strengthen the Application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU (COM(2020) 711 final)⁶¹

Commission Communication: Strengthening Whistleblower Protection at EU Level (COM(2018) 214 final)⁶²

Commission Recommendation on Protecting Journalists and Human Rights Defenders (SLAPPs) (COM(2022) 242 final)⁶³

Commission Communication: Second Report on the application of the General Data Protection Regulation (COM(2024) 357 final)⁶⁴

⁵⁰ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/0c3fe55d-9e4f-4377-9d14-93d03398b434_en?filename=Gender%20Equality%20Report%20Chapeau%20Communication.pdf

⁵¹ eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025JC0791

⁵² eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0790

⁵³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0730>.

⁵⁴ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/reinforcing-democracy-and-integrity-elections-package>.

⁵⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202302829.

⁵⁶ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C\(2023\)8627](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=PI_COM:C(2023)8627).

⁵⁷ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/guide-eu-citizenship_en.

⁵⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/guidance-right-free-movement-eu-citizens-and-their-families_en.

⁵⁹ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/guide-good-electoral-practices-member-states-addressing-participation-citizens-disabilities_en.

⁶⁰ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/compendium-e-voting-and-other-ict-practices_en.

⁶¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0711>.

⁶² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0214>.

⁶³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022.0758>.

Annual Rule of Law Reports (2020-2024).

Rights of the child and victim protection

EU Strategy on Victims' Rights 2020-2025 (COM(2020) 258 final)⁶⁵

EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (COM(2021) 142 final)⁶⁶

Commission Recommendation (EU) 2024/1238 on developing and strengthening integrated child protection systems in the best interests of the child⁶⁷

Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention): A comprehensive legal framework to protect women against all forms of violence. [EU accession effective as of 1 October 2023]⁶⁸

Disability, education, trafficking

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services⁶⁹

Directive (EU) 2024/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 establishing the **European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities**⁷⁰

Directive (EU) 2024/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 extending Directive (EU) 2024/2841 to third-country nationals legally residing in a Member State⁷¹

Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030 (COM(2021) 101 final)⁷²

Digital education action plan 2021-2027 (COM(2020) 624 final)⁷³

EU Strategy on combating trafficking in human beings 2021-2025 (COM(2021) 171 final)⁷⁴

⁶⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0357>

⁶⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0258>.

⁶⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/eu-strategy-on-the-rights-of-the-child-and-the-european-child-guarantee.html>.

⁶⁷ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202401238

⁶⁸ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/home>

⁶⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L0882>

⁷⁰ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202402841

⁷¹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202402842

⁷² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0101>.

⁷³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0624>.

⁷⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0171>.