

STATEMENT

Global Europe: A dangerous gamble for Humanitarian Action, flexible but unpredictable

Post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework

VOICE and its members welcome the European Commission's proposal to raise the external action budget to €200.3 billion under the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028-2034), a positive step that acknowledges the scale and complexity of today's global crises. At a time when humanitarian needs continue to grow, the EU's commitment to principled humanitarian action is more critical than ever.

Yet, the [proposal's](#) underlying narrative focuses largely on EU interests such as competitiveness and sovereignty, rather than on the needs of crisis-affected populations. The proposed Global Europe Instrument (GEI) risks positioning humanitarian action within broader foreign and economic policy objectives, instead of upholding it as a strictly needs-based and principled response.

While dedicated humanitarian lines are foreseen within each pillar, the absence of a single, ring-fenced humanitarian budget line undermines predictability, independence, and the need-based allocation of resources. In a context of escalating needs and declining contributions from major donors, this architecture risks eroding the EU's principled humanitarian leadership — a cornerstone of its global credibility.

This statement sets out recommendations for the European Commission, Member States, and the European Parliament to ensure that EU humanitarian action remains principled, predictable, and independent.

WHAT VOICE CALLS FOR:

1. Maintaining the €200.3 billion envelope for Global Europe throughout the negotiations, to ensure the EU upholds its global solidarity commitments.
2. Including the €25 billion for humanitarian action in the Global Europe Regulation, making this amount non-divertible. This amount should be minimum allocated to humanitarian action.
3. Maintaining a principled EU humanitarian action, with funding mechanisms that reflect the humanitarian principles, through a share of 30% for non-programmable and 70% for programmable within the different pillars.
4. Strengthening the governance and transparency mechanisms so that the allocation, reallocation and use of funds within Global Europe remains predictable, traceable, and needs based.
5. Guaranteeing humanitarian action has priority access to a reserve for sudden-onset crises, preserving the EU's rapid response capacity by improving the language contained in article 7 of the GEI "Emerging challenges and priorities cushion".
6. Ensuring the EU meets its commitment to fund Least Developed Countries and that prioritisation of fragile and conflict affected settings in the Global Europe instrument is effectively implemented across geographic programmes.

1. Maintaining the €200.3 billion envelope for Global Europe throughout the negotiations, to ensure the EU upholds its global solidarity commitments.

A robust external action budget is essential for the EU to uphold its global responsibilities — supporting principled humanitarian action, sustainable development, peacebuilding, and crisis response. Any reduction in the overall envelope would immediately constrain the Global Europe Instrument and weaken the EU's capacity to respond to growing global needs. Maintaining the €200.3 billion (current prices) ceiling is crucial to ensure predictable support for crisis-affected people and to safeguard the already limited increase for humanitarian action.

2. Including the €25 billion for humanitarian action in the Global Europe Regulation, making this amount non-divertible. This amount should be considered the minimum allocation to humanitarian action.

The proposed [€25 billion current prices \(€22.4 billion in 2025 prices\)](#) for humanitarian action is not anchored in any regular act. As long as it remains outside the Regulation, it remains an indicative political commitment rather than a safeguard. Moreover, the amount is presented as a ceiling rather than a guaranteed minimum, meaning it could be reduced during the MFF negotiations or fall below this level in annual budget decisions. While VOICE does not call for a fixed annual minimum — recognising the importance of maintaining DG ECHO's flexibility to respond based on needs — weakening the overall allocation would inevitably constrain yearly budgets and limit ECHO's capacity to plan and deliver principled, needs-based humanitarian assistance over the seven-year period.

3. Maintaining a principled EU humanitarian action, with funding mechanisms that reflect the humanitarian principles, through a share of 30% for non-programmable and 70% for programmable within the different pillars.

VOICE calls for a balanced funding structure within the Global Europe Instrument, with 70% allocated to programmable actions and 30% dedicated to non-programmable funding. As set out in our [first recommendation](#) on a dedicated humanitarian budget line, ensuring a safeguarded space for humanitarian action is critical. Since the proposal does not provide such a line, a clear 70/30 distribution becomes essential to protect the integrity and needs-based nature of EU humanitarian assistance within the new architecture. This approach ensures that the majority of resources support long-term, predictable, partnership-based development cooperation, while a robust non-programmable share provides the flexibility required for humanitarian action, crisis response, peacebuilding, resilience building, and conflict prevention.

4. Strengthening the governance and transparency mechanisms so that the allocation, reallocation, and use of funds within Global Europe remains predictable, traceable, and needs-based.

The proposed Global Europe structure offers increased flexibility for reallocation within and across pillars. While this may enhance responsiveness, it also concentrates decision-making and risks blurring distinctions between humanitarian action, development cooperation, and stability support. Such flexibility must be accompanied by robust safeguards to prevent the diversion of needs-based humanitarian funding.

Improved transparency is required on how reallocation decisions are made, by whom, and on what criteria. Without clearer governance arrangements, the nexus could unintentionally become a pretext for budgetary shifts that undermine principled humanitarian action.

To achieve this, VOICE calls for clear allocation criteria, strengthened parliamentary oversight, and regular public reporting on reallocation decisions and their impacts on humanitarian budgets, supported by more inclusive processes when shaping and reviewing such decisions.

5. Guaranteeing humanitarian action has priority access to a reserve for sudden-onset crises, preserving the EU's rapid response capacity by improving the language contained in article 7 of the GEI "Emerging challenges and priorities cushion".

The Emerging Challenges and Priorities Cushion becomes the main tool to reinforce humanitarian action. Its broad scope creates uncertainty around whether humanitarian needs will be prioritised during sudden-onset crises. Explicit recognition of humanitarian action within the Cushion's mandate is essential to maintain the EU's rapid response capacity.

6. Ensuring the EU meets its commitment to fund Least Developed Countries and that prioritisation of fragile and conflict affected settings in the Global Europe instrument is effectively implemented across geographic programmes.

Fragile and conflict-affected contexts must remain central to the EU's external action. The Global Europe Instrument should reflect the EU's commitments to poverty eradication, peace, conflict prevention, disaster preparedness, and crisis response. This includes maintaining adequate resources for resilience building, anticipatory action, and disaster-risk reduction.