

Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018 laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps and amending Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013, Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU

REGULATION (EU) 2018/1475 OF THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 2 October 2018

laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity
Corps and amending Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013,
Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Articles 165(4) and 166(4) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee⁽¹⁾,

After consulting the Committee of the Regions,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure⁽²⁾,

Whereas:

- (1) Solidarity among Union citizens and among Member States is one of the universal values on which the Union is built. This common value guides the Union's actions and provides it with the necessary unity for coping with current and future societal challenges, which young Europeans are willing to help address by expressing their solidarity in practice. Solidarity also stimulates young people's interest in the common European project. The principle of solidarity is enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and in the preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- (2) During the State of the Union address of 14 September 2016, it was emphasised that there is a need to invest in young people and it was announced that a European Solidarity Corps was to be established with a view to creating opportunities for young people across the Union to make a meaningful contribution to society, show solidarity and develop their skills, competences and knowledge, thus gaining an invaluable human experience, which is also key for the emergence of an active and engaged Union citizenship.
- (3) In its Communication of 7 December 2016 entitled 'A European Solidarity Corps', the Commission emphasised the need to strengthen the foundations for solidarity

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

work across Europe, to provide young people with more and better opportunities for high-quality solidarity activities covering a broad range of areas, and to support national, regional and local actors, in their efforts to cope with different challenges and crises. That Communication launched a first phase of the European Solidarity Corps whereby different Union programmes were mobilised to offer volunteering, traineeship or job opportunities to young people across the Union. These activities, whether implemented before or after the entry into force of this Regulation, should continue to apply the rules and conditions set by the respective Union programmes that have financed them under the first phase of the European Solidarity Corps.

- (4) Within the context of this Regulation, solidarity may be understood as a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone to commit oneself to the common good, which is expressed through concrete actions without consideration of return service.
- (5) Young people should be provided with easily accessible opportunities to engage in high-quality solidarity activities with a strong European dimension as a means to contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity, social inclusion and democracy in participating countries to the benefit of local communities, while improving their competences for their personal development, thus boosting their self-esteem, autonomy and motivation to learn, stimulating their educational, social, artistic, linguistic, cultural, civic and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market. Those solidarity activities would also support the mobility of participants.
- (6) This Regulation establishes a programme for Union action called the European Solidarity Corps as a basis for effecting positive societal change by providing support to communities of individuals and entities committed to enhancing solidarity across Europe. It thus provides for a spending instrument of Union action established with a view to applying from the date of entry into force of this Regulation on a continuous basis and also lays down the basis for the European Solidarity Corps as a community and as a source of inspiration for a stronger spirit of solidarity in Europe through the wider impact of activities carried out within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (7) The solidarity activities offered to young people should be of high quality, in the sense that they should contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps and help overcome societal challenges, while addressing the needs of local communities. Solidarity activities should offer young people the opportunity to acquire valuable competences for personal, social, civic and professional development, include a solid learning and training dimension, be accessible to all young people, be implemented in safe and healthy conditions and be properly validated. Solidarity activities should not have a negative impact on existing jobs or traineeships and should contribute to reinforcing the corporate social responsibility commitments of companies, while not replacing them.
- (8) Any entity willing to participate in the European Solidarity Corps, whether funded from the European Solidarity Corps budget, by another Union programme or by a different

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

funding source, should receive a quality label, provided that the specific requirements are fulfilled. The requirement to receive a quality label should not apply to natural persons seeking financial support on behalf of an informal group of participants for their solidarity projects. The quality label attributed to participating organisations should certify the ability of those organisations to ensure the quality of the solidarity activities offered by them. The process for attributing a quality label should be carried out by the implementing bodies of the European Solidarity Corps in an accessible and transparent manner. The attributed quality label should be reassessed periodically and it should be possible to revoke the quality label where, in the context of the reassessment, it is found that the conditions that led to its attribution are no longer fulfilled.

- (9) The European Solidarity Corps would provide a single entry point for solidarity activities throughout the Union. Consistency and complementarity of the European Solidarity Corps should be ensured with other relevant Union policies, programmes and instruments. The European Solidarity Corps should build on the strengths and synergies of existing and previous programmes, in particular the Erasmus+ and Youth in Action programmes. It should also complement the efforts made by Member States to support young people and ease their school-to-work transition under schemes such as the Youth Guarantee established in line with the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee⁽³⁾ by providing them with additional opportunities to take part in solidarity activities in the form of traineeships or jobs within their respective Member State or across borders. Complementarity should also be ensured with existing Union-level networks pertinent to the activities under the European Solidarity Corps, such as the European Network of Public Employment Services, EURES and the Eurodesk network. Furthermore, complementarity and loyal cooperation between the existing related schemes and the European Solidarity Corps should be fostered, in particular with solidarity, volunteering, civic service and mobility schemes for young people, operating at national, regional or local level, as well as with priorities related to solidarity and youth in the participating countries, as appropriate, to mutually enhance and enrich the impact and qualities of such schemes and build upon good practices. The European Solidarity Corps should not substitute similar national solidarity, volunteering, civic service and mobility schemes. Equal access for all young people to national solidarity activities should be ensured. Partnerships with European networks which are specialised in certain urgent social problems should be encouraged.
- (10) In order to maximise the impact of the European Solidarity Corps, other Union programmes should be able to contribute to the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps by supporting activities within its scope. This contribution should be financed in accordance with the respective legal acts of the programmes concerned with a view to securing greater involvement of young people, civil society and existing volunteering schemes in Member States. Once they have obtained a valid quality label, the participating organisations should be given access to the European Solidarity Corps portal and receive the quality and support measures provided according to the type of solidarity activity offered.
- (11) The European Solidarity Corps should open up new opportunities for young people to undertake volunteering, traineeships or jobs as well as to devise and develop,

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

on their own initiative, solidarity projects which present a clear European value. Those opportunities should help address unmet societal needs and contribute to strengthening communities and enhancing the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of young people. The European Solidarity Corps should also support networking activities for participants and participating organisations as well as measures to ensure the quality of the supported activities and to enhance the validation of their learning outcomes. It should also contribute to supporting and strengthening existing organisations that implement solidarity actions.

- (12) Volunteering constitutes a rich experience in a formal and non-formal learning context which enhances young people's personal, socio-educational and professional development, employability and active citizenship. Volunteering should not substitute traineeships or jobs and should be based on a written volunteering agreement. The Commission and the Member States will cooperate regarding volunteering policies in the youth field via the open method of coordination.
- (13) Traineeships and jobs should be clearly separate from volunteering, both from a financial and organisational point of view. Traineeships should never lead to job substitution. Paid traineeships and jobs, however, can represent an incentive for disadvantaged young people and young people with fewer opportunities to participate in solidarity-related activities that they might not otherwise be able to access. Traineeships can ease the transition of young people from education to employment and can help foster the employability of young people, which is key to achieving their sustainable integration into the labour market. Traineeships and jobs offered under the European Solidarity Corps should always be paid by the participating organisation hosting or employing the participant. Traineeships should be based on a written traineeship agreement in accordance with the applicable regulatory framework of the country where the traineeship takes place, as appropriate, and should follow the principles outlined in the Council Recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships⁽⁴⁾.
- Jobs should be based on an employment contract in accordance with the national regulatory framework or applicable collective agreements, or both, of the participating country where the job is being carried out. Financial support to participating organisations offering jobs should not exceed twelve months. Traineeships and jobs should be accompanied by adequate preparation, on-the-job training and post-placement support in relation to the participation of the participant. Traineeships and jobs could be facilitated by relevant labour market actors, in particular public and private employment services, social partners and Chambers of Commerce, as well as the member organisations of EURES, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/589 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽⁵⁾ in the case of cross-border activities.
- (14) Young people's spirit of initiative and their active citizenship is an important asset for society. The European Solidarity Corps should contribute to fostering this aspect by offering young people the opportunity to devise and implement their own projects that present a clear added value aimed at addressing key challenges to the benefit of local communities, particularly communities located in rural, isolated or marginalised areas. Those projects should be an opportunity for young people to develop innovative

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

solutions and try out ideas in a sustainable way and to experience being the drivers of solidarity actions. They could also serve as a springboard for further engagement in solidarity activities and could be a first step towards encouraging participants to engage in social entrepreneurship or as volunteers in associations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), youth organisations or other bodies active in the solidarity, non-profit and youth sectors and the setting up of their own associations. Post-placement support will aim to support young people in remaining engaged and active in the solidarity sector, including through involvement with associations, cooperatives, social enterprises, youth organisations and community centres.

- (15) Volunteering and solidarity projects should cover the participants' expenditure arising from participation in such solidarity activities but should not provide them with salaries or an economic benefit.
- (16) Participants and participating organisations should feel that they belong to a community of individuals and entities committed to enhancing solidarity across Europe and beyond. At the same time, participating organisations need support to strengthen their ability to offer high-quality solidarity activities to an increasing number of participants and to attract newcomers. The European Solidarity Corps should support networking activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of young people and participating organisations to engage in this community, at fostering a European Solidarity Corps spirit, as well as at encouraging the exchange of useful solidarity practices and experience drawing also from experience with civil protection, where appropriate. Networking activities should also contribute to raising awareness about the European Solidarity Corps among public and private entities as well as to collecting feedback from participants and participating organisations on the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (17) Particular attention should be paid to ensuring the quality of the solidarity activities and other opportunities offered under the European Solidarity Corps, in particular by offering participants online and offline training and language support in a way that respects the principle of multilingualism, insurance, administrative support and support before the solidarity activity, after the solidarity activity, or both, as well as a validation of the competences acquired during their European Solidarity Corps experience. Those support measures should be developed and provided in collaboration with youth organisations and other non-profit and civil society organisations in order to tap into their expertise on the field. Those support measures should take into account the environment and the nature of activities carried out by participants, with special attention to any potential risks.
- (18) To ensure the impact of European Solidarity Corps activities on the personal, educational, artistic, social, civic and professional development of the participants, the competences that are the learning outcomes of the solidarity activities should be properly identified and documented, in accordance with national circumstances and specificities, as recommended in the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning⁽⁶⁾. To that end, the use of effective instruments at Union and national level for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, such as Youthpass and Europass should be encouraged, as appropriate.

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

- (19) Any public or private entity, including international organisations, civil society organisations, youth organisations and social enterprises should be able to apply for a quality label. Separate quality labels should be put in place for volunteering and for traineeships and jobs to ensure the effective and continuous compliance of participating organisations with the principles and requirements of the European Solidarity Corps as regards their rights and responsibilities during all stages of the solidarity experience. Obtaining a quality label should be a precondition for participation but should not automatically lead to funding under the European Solidarity Corps.
- (20) Participating organisations may perform several functions within the European Solidarity Corps. In a host function, they will carry out activities related to receiving the participants, including the organisation of activities and the provision of guidance and support to participants during the solidarity activity, as appropriate. In a supporting function, they will carry out activities in relation to the sending and preparation of participants before departure, and during and after the solidarity activity, including training participants and guiding them to local organisations after the solidarity activity.
- (21) European Solidarity Corps Resource Centres should assist the implementing bodies, the participating organisations and the participants in order to raise the quality of the solidarity activities and of their implementation as well as to enhance the identification and validation of competences acquired through solidarity activities, including through issuing Youthpasses.
- (22) The European Solidarity Corps Portal should continuously be developed in order to ensure easy access to the European Solidarity Corps and to provide a one-stop shop for both interested individuals and organisations as regards, inter alia, registration, identification and matching of profiles and opportunities, networking and virtual exchanges, online training, language support as well as all other support before the solidarity activity, after the solidarity activity, or both, and other useful functions, which might arise in the future.
- (23) The implementation structures will take the necessary measures with a view to ensuring that registered candidates are offered volunteering, traineeships and jobs opportunities within a reasonable and relatively predictable amount of time. Moreover, regular information and communication and networking activities will be put in place to stimulate the engagement of registered candidates.
- (24) This Regulation lays down a financial envelope for the period 2018-2020 which is to constitute the overall budget, within the meaning of Point 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management⁽⁷⁾, for the European Parliament and for the Council during the annual budgetary procedure.
- (25) In order to ensure continuity in the activities supported by the programmes contributing to the European Solidarity Corps, the financial support to solidarity activities should indicatively be 90 % for volunteering and solidarity projects, on the one hand, and 10 %

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

- for either traineeships, or jobs, or both, on the other hand, with a maximum of 20 % for in-country activities.
- (26) In order to maximise the impact of the European Solidarity Corps, provision should be made to allow participating countries to make additional national, regional or local funding available in accordance with the rules of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (27) In order to simplify requirements for beneficiaries, lump sums, unit costs or flat-rate financing should be used to the maximum possible extent.
- (28) Member States should be able to participate in volunteering, traineeships, jobs, solidarity projects and networking activities. In addition, as in the European Voluntary Service, volunteering, solidarity projects and networking activities should also be open to the participation of other countries, paying particular attention to countries neighbouring the Union. That participation should be based, where relevant, on additional appropriations to be made available in accordance with the procedures to be agreed with the countries concerned.
- (29) Participation in the European Solidarity Corps should be open to young people aged between 18 and 30 years. Participation in solidarity activities should require prior registration in the European Solidarity Corps Portal, which is available for individuals aged between 17 and 30 years.
- (30) Special attention should be paid to ensuring that the activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps are accessible to all young people, in particular young people with fewer opportunities as further detailed in the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy developed and applied within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme in the youth field. Special measures, such as appropriate formats of solidarity activities and personalised guidance, should therefore be put in place to promote social inclusion, the participation of disadvantaged young people, as well as to take into account the constraints imposed by the remoteness of the outermost regions of the Union and the Overseas Countries and Territories in accordance with Council Decision 2013/755/EU⁽⁸⁾. Similarly, the participating countries should endeavour to adopt all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the European Solidarity Corps. That includes resolving, where possible, and without prejudice to the Schengen acquis and Union law on the entry and residence of third-country nationals, any administrative issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas and residence permits.
- (31) An entity willing to apply for funding to offer solidarity activities under the European Solidarity Corps should have first received a quality label as a precondition in an accessible and transparent manner. This requirement should not apply to natural persons seeking financial support on behalf of an informal group of participants for their solidarity projects. The competent implementing bodies should carry out quality controls to ascertain compliance, by those natural persons, with the requirements of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (32) The needs and expectations of local communities should be an important criterion for the evaluation of the quality of projects. Accordingly, appropriate indicators should be put in place.

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

- (33) Effective performance management, including monitoring and evaluation, requires the development of a specific, measurable and realistic set of qualitative and quantitative indicators which can be measured over time and which reflect the logic of the intervention.
- (34) Appropriate outreach, publicity and dissemination of the opportunities and results of the activities supported by the European Solidarity Corps should be ensured at European, national, regional and local level. Special attention should be paid to social enterprises, encouraging them to support the European Solidarity Corps activities. The outreach, publicity and dissemination activities should rely, without increasing the administrative burden, on all the implementing bodies of the European Solidarity Corps, including, where relevant, with the support of other key stakeholders.
- (35) In order to better achieve the objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, the Commission, Member States and national agencies should preferably work closely together in partnership with NGOs, youth organisations and local stakeholders that have expertise in solidarity actions.
- (36) In order to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of this Regulation, the European Solidarity Corps should make maximum use of existing management arrangements already in place in the Erasmus + programme. The implementation of the European Solidarity Corps should therefore be entrusted to existing structures, such as the Commission, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and the national agencies designated for the management of the actions referred to in Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽⁹⁾. Clear and detailed procedures for participants and participating organisations will be established for all phases of the solidarity activity in the appropriate programme documents, such as the Annual Work Programme and the Programme Guide. The Commission should regularly consult key stakeholders, including participating organisations, on the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (37) In order to ensure financially sound implementation and close monitoring of the European Solidarity Corps at national level, it is important to use the existing national authorities designated for the management of the actions referred to in Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013.
- (38) The national authorities designated for the management of actions referred to in Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 should also act as national authorities for the purposes of this Regulation. This should not, however, prevent the designation of more than one national authority in accordance with national law and practice as provided for in Article 27(1) of that Regulation. Where a participating country wishes to replace its national authority during the course of the lifetime of the European Solidarity Corps, the procedure provided for in Article 27(2) of that Regulation should apply.
- (39) In order to ensure sound financial management and legal certainty in each participating country, each national authority should designate an independent audit body. Where feasible, and in order to maximise efficiency, the independent audit body could be the

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

same as the one designated for the actions referred to in Chapter III of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013.

- (40) The financial interests of the Union should be protected through proportionate measures throughout the expenditure cycle, including the prevention, detection and investigation of irregularities, the recovery of funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used and, where appropriate, penalties.
- (41) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹⁰⁾.
- (42) In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹¹⁾, the Commission should adopt work programmes and inform the European Parliament and the Council thereof. Work programmes should set out the measures needed for their implementation in line with the general and specific objectives of the European Solidarity Corps, the selection and award criteria for grants, as well as all other elements required. Work programmes and any amendments thereto should be adopted by implementing acts in accordance with the examination procedure.
- (43) Since the objective of this Regulation, namely to establish a European Solidarity Corps, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States but can rather, by reason of its scale and effects, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 TEU. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve that objective.
- (44) For reasons of efficiency and effectiveness, the committee established under Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 should also assist the Commission in the implementation of this Regulation. With respect to the European Solidarity Corps, that committee should convene in a specific configuration and its mandate should be aligned in order to fulfil this new role. The participating countries should appoint the relevant representatives for those meetings, taking into account the subject matter, aim, objectives and actions of the European Solidarity Corps.
- (45) Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 should be amended in order to take into account the changes to the European Voluntary Service resulting from volunteering under this Regulation.
- (46) The financial envelope of the European Solidarity Corps under Heading 1a of the Multiannual Financial Framework also builds on funds redeployed from the Erasmus + programme. Those funds should exclusively come from appropriations aimed at financing European Voluntary Service activities that would fall under the scope of volunteering under this Regulation.
- (47) The financial envelope of the European Solidarity Corps under Heading 1a of the Multiannual Financial Framework should additionally be supplemented by financial contributions from other programmes and headings, which require the amendment of

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹²⁾ as well as of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹³⁾.

- (48) This Regulation should apply from the date of its entry into force. In order to allow for the prompt application of the measures provided for in this Regulation, this Regulation should enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Status: Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Introductory Text. (See end of Document for details)

- (1) [OJ C 81, 2.3.2018, p. 160.](#)
- (2) Position of the European Parliament of 11 September 2018 (not yet published in the Official Journal) and Decision of the Council of 27 September 2018.
- (3) [OJ C 120, 26.4.2013, p. 1.](#)
- (4) [OJ C 88, 27.3.2014, p. 1.](#)
- (5) Regulation (EU) 2016/589 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 April 2016 on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further interpretation of labour market and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013 ([OJ L 107, 22.4.2016, p. 1.](#))
- (6) [OJ C 398, 22.12.2012, p. 1.](#)
- (7) [OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.](#)
- (8) Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union ('Overseas Association Decision') ([OJ L 344, 19.12.2013, p. 1.](#))
- (9) Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+' the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC ([OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 50.](#))
- (10) Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers ([OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13.](#))
- (11) Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ([OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.](#))
- (12) Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the establishment of a Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 614/2007 ([OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 185.](#))
- (13) Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism ([OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 924.](#))

Status:

Point in time view as at 31/01/2020.

Changes to legislation:

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