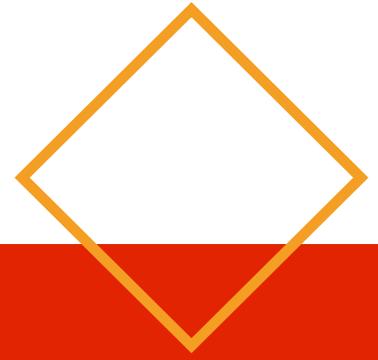


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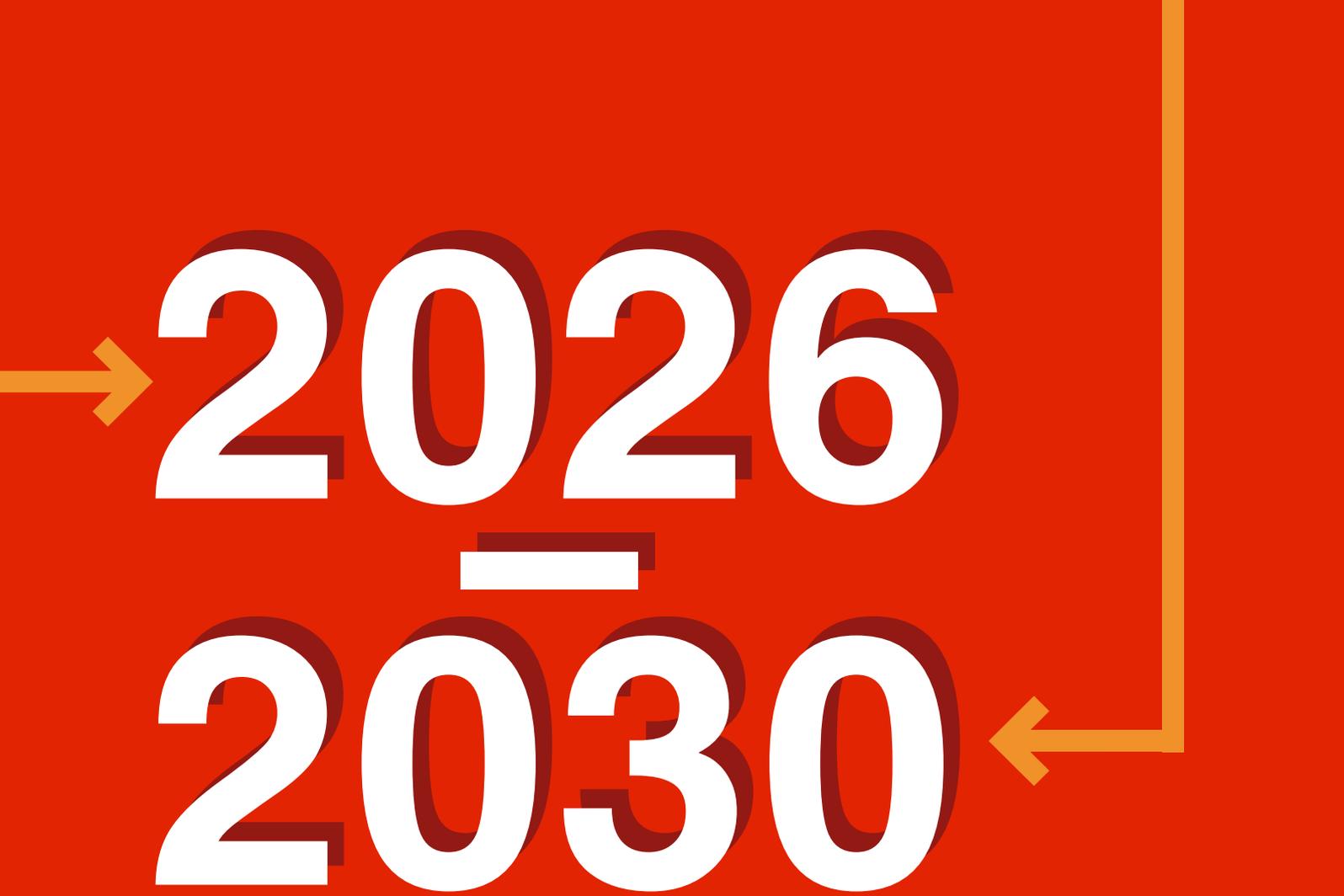


SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR JUST TRANSITIONS

SOLIDAR Organisations Strategy 2026–29

Executive Summary





2026 - 2030

During this strategy period, SOLIDAR will mobilise and advocate for a future rooted in social, economic, and environmental sustainability – for a systemic shift that transforms our societies. Our strategic purpose for the period is:

SOLIDAR, together with its members, partners, and allies, will strive to influence EU policies so that they advance democracy, social justice and sustainability, driven by solidarity and a socially just transition.

The coming period will be very challenging for progressive movements and for the change we are convinced is necessary to build a sustainable future. The current situation pushes us to be creative, persistent and enduring. It forces us to consider a new balance between what we aim for, and what is realistically possible to achieve. During this strategy period, SOLIDAR will mobilise and advocate for a future rooted in social, economic, and environmental sustainability – for a systemic shift that transforms our societies. Our strategic purpose for the period is: SOLIDAR, together with its members, partners, and allies, will strive to influence EU policies so that they advance democracy, social justice and sustainability, driven by solidarity and a socially just transition.



1. The defining challenges



The continued gains and electoral successes of the right and extreme right in Europe, the United States and in other parts of the world are the main testament to the challenges that face us. They win elections with disruptive, divisive and hateful rhetoric which spreads easily and wide in a new media landscape dominated by social media platforms.

This new political reality is the backdrop of this strategy. Our strategic approach for the period 2026-29 will aim to respond to this backlash by resisting the regressive wave that is sweeping Europe and beyond, identifying the challenges shared by working people and communities, and proposing solutions that advance social justice and sustainability. To make this goal a reality, we have identified eight strategic priorities for these coming five years.

1. The key role of civil society

In our current context, civil society and popular movements are increasingly important. We must take the lead in defending democratic values, solidarity, and social justice with progressive politics under pressure. It is never just about winning elections – it matters more how it is done, with what policies, and what we do in between. SOLIDAR will push to ensure that the principles on which our Union was founded continue to define the EU's actions both internally and externally.

2. New and broader alliances

Creativity, open-mindedness, and new alliances are crucial to challenge the current political rift and counter the lies and misinformation. There is no alternative to trying to find new ways to develop new majorities at local, regional, national, and European level, as well as with our friends and allies beyond Europe. SOLIDAR commits to supporting movements of resistance and to building bridges across divides to contribute to

political wins wherever we can, grow our influence and strengthen our network.

3. Adapting to build resilience

As we face interlinked crises – the triple planetary crises, increasing social and economic inequalities, challenges to our democracies, wars and geopolitical shifts – we must both develop policies for the future and invest in adaptation and resilience. Time, resources and political will must be channelled in a coherent way, always with people and planet in mind inseparably. SOLIDAR will hold European leaders to account to ensure that policy actions in one area do not exacerbate crisis in another.

4. Political proposals within nature's limits

The climate and environmental crises demand bold, immediate, and systemic change. We must act based on necessity, not just political feasibility. SOLIDAR will inform, debate and insist on every occasion that the starting point for any proposal can no longer be what is politically possible, but what must be done now.

5. Peace, disarmament and human security

Peacebuilding, disarmament, and respect for international law must guide EU and global engagement. Solidarity with oppressed communities and proactive diplomacy are essential in today's conflict-driven world. SOLIDAR will defend peace as a values system and security as a holistic concept of wellbeing and rights, and in doing so aims to reinforce our democracies and our solidarity with people impacted by conflicts and wars globally.

6. Towards a larger and reformed social Union

EU faces internal and external pressures; pro-European forces must unite for social and sustainable development. Enlargement and

treaty reform are vital for resilience, equity, and lasting peace in Europe. SOLIDAR will continue to advocate for an approach to enlargement which contributes to a prosperous, stable and peaceful Europe for all.

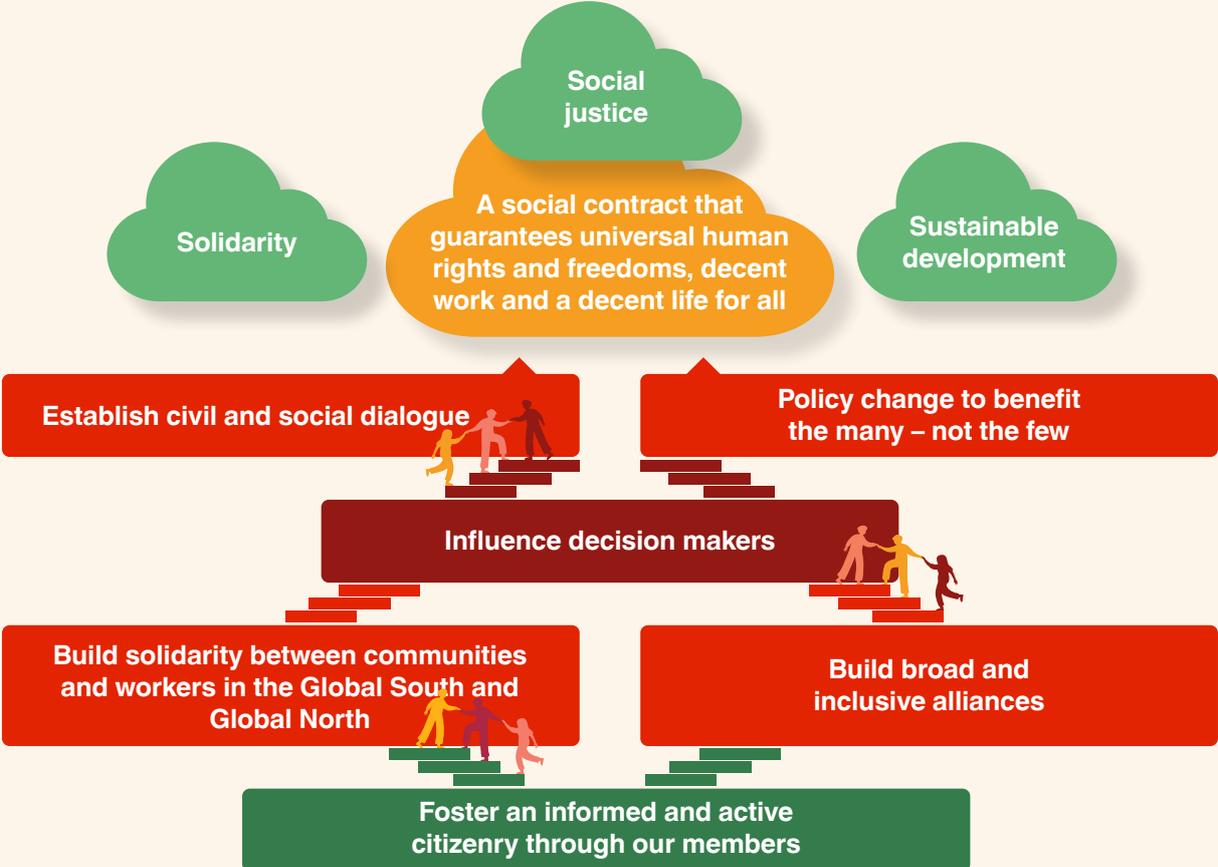
7. Reversal of neoliberal and austerity policies

Many of the challenges we face today are shaped by policy choices of the past, particularly neoliberal and austerity policies. To reverse the damage done by this approach, we must put forward credible alternatives and reestablish a social contract which prioritises the needs of people rather than private interests. SOLIDAR is committed to being propositional and putting forward these alternatives, even when it conflicts with the dominant political narrative. Perhaps particularly then.

8. Demonstrating available alternatives

There is an abundance of positive and hopeful examples for us to follow in these dark times. There is ample scientific evidence on the solutions available to us right now. There is an abundance of local and existing sustainable practices to build on and scale up. There is the promise of exponential technological and scientific advances and readymade analysis and research to guide investments and political rethinking. SOLIDAR is committed to always showing a constructive alternative, presenting the possibilities of a different future, to put forward practical solutions to existing challenges.

2. Impacting politics – changing societies



3. Our strategic direction

VISION: A world defined by solidarity, peace, social justice and sustainable development, organised in a social contract that guarantees universal human rights and freedoms, decent work and decent life for all.

MISSION: To support its members in their work to achieve the vision at the national, European and international level through the formulation of alliances, coordination of collective actions, advocacy work and policy influence, exchange of experiences and access to funding and opportunities.

STRATEGIC PURPOSE 2026-2030: SOLIDAR, together with its members, partners and allies, will strive to influence EU's internal and external policies so they advance social justice and sustainability, are driven by solidarity and a socially just transition.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Social rights in Europe.

SOLIDAR has supported its member organisations and influenced the positions of partners and allies in Europe to strengthen the European social model ensuring that digital, green, and demographic transitions are more just.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Inclusive education and lifelong learning.

SOLIDAR has supported its member organisations and influenced the positions of partners and allies in Europe to strengthen informal and non-formal education's position as a prerequisite for building inclusive learning societies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: International cooperation and solidarity.

SOLIDAR has worked with member organisations, partners and allies to ensure that Social Justice, Just Transition, and respect for human rights are the defining features of the EU's economic, political and development cooperation relations with Global South.

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

JUST TRANSITIONS

DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC SPACE

WELCOMING SOCIETIES

SOLIDARITY AND INCLUSION

STRATEGIC ENABLERS

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORK

ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

3.1 Social rights in Europe:

Through our work on social rights, we will advance the role of civil society and advocate for the vision of a social and sustainable Europe through our strategic alliances. We will centre social justice and rights as indispensable cornerstones of any political proposals aiming to advance a just transition. To make our vision a reality, we will:

- Advocate for an ambitious implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) that contributes to the just green and digital transitions.
- Continue to propose measures to eradicate poverty and social exclusion by addressing

its root causes and ensuring that vulnerable populations, including migrants, have both formal and effective access to social protection and real opportunities to thrive in society.

- Position the Social and Solidarity Economy as a foundation of the EU's new re-industrialisation policies as it fosters inclusive growth as well as sustainable development, social inclusion, and quality job creation.
- Push for an economic system that prioritises the wellbeing of people and the planet including socially and environmentally oriented economic governance and taxation policies with the aim to redistribute wealth and fund eco-social policies.

3.2 Inclusive education and lifelong learning:

Inclusive education and lifelong learning are vital tools for protecting and advancing a peaceful, just and democratic society and culture and for promoting social cohesion and democratic participation. They support the unlearning of prejudice, embracing diversity, availability of equal opportunities, bridging of societal divides, and exposure of systemic injustices. These tools also empower learners and foster activism. From this holistic understanding of learning as central to democratic societies and to just transitions, we will:

- Challenge the existing skills framework to make inclusive education policies to be more present and prioritised, aiming for increased public funding and investment to support them.
- Continue to promote global citizenship education as a framework at European level for a more value-driven citizenship education apt to our times and in line with UNESCO's definition.
- Find new allies to make sure that digital education forms part of any digitalisation or competitiveness policies and can bridge the digital divide and ensure that the digital transition is inclusive.
- Seize opportunities in this mandate to advance the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (NFIL), support a learner-centred and whole-community approach and flexible learning pathways.

3.3 International cooperation and solidarity:

In response to geopolitical shifts, Europe is changing its role and relationships with former allies, its neighbourhood and globally. As a result, there is a risk that certain aspects of European external relations, including international cooperation, will be deprioritised, defunded or turned into mere tools for the realisation of European economic interests and security. This follows a worrying global trend of self-interested policies and cuts to national budgets for international cooperation. Amid such turmoil, we will both explore new venues for action, new partners, as well as join forces to hold the line and advance policy as much as we can. We will:

- Protect the existing idea and rationale of

international cooperation at both the EU level and within Member States.

- Continuously argue for just transition as a fundamental element in the EU's trade and investments policies.
- Defend and advance freedom of association and civic space in the EU's external action by promoting mechanisms to ensure meaningful participation of CSOs and democratic, representative and independent workers organisations in the development, implementation and monitoring of EU policies.

4. Our underpinning principles



Our work on the above policy areas is informed by four underpinning principles: just transitions, democracy and shrinking civic space, forging welcoming societies and solidarity and inclusion. These principles relate directly to the challenges facing our movement in the coming period.

Just transitions

The EU has made significant progress in advancing the green transition, notably through the European Green Deal. However, further progress is needed, especially if we are to achieve a just transition which encompasses environmental, social and digital elements. This is complicated by the fact that the EU's mandate for 2024-2029 has instead shifted away from a just transition and towards an agenda focused on competitiveness, deregulation and reindustrialisation, sidelining environmental and social concerns. This shift in priorities also has implications for the landmark digital regulations introduced in the previous mandate, such as GDPR and the AI Act. These pieces of legislation risk being watered down as ethical and social safeguards are subjugated to private interests. In response to the ongoing political shift at EU level, SOLIDAR will continue to promote a just transition as a core principle of EU policymaking and of eco-social policies leading to sustainable welfare.

Democracy and civic space

Across Europe and beyond, our democracy and civic space are under enormous pressure. This specifically impacts our movement as progressive civil society, popular education organisations, and trade unions are among the prime targets for the extreme and populist right movements before and after coming into positions of power. SOLIDAR will continue to push back against these developments at the EU level as there are new majorities forming to attack funding schemes, access to decision making, and existing platforms for dialogue. Within SOLIDAR, we will ensure that our members can collectively strategise, build their capacity and strengthen their responses to national and local level restrictions.

Welcoming societies

Migration has become one of the main political battlegrounds in Europe and dominated by the narratives of the far right. Governments in Europe are reducing rights for people on the move at an alarming rate. While rights in general are shrinking in Europe, migrants' rights are too often treated as a separate issue, with separate policy frameworks and with stakeholders that do not speak to each other. Confronted with the weaponisation of migration, it is the responsibility of EU leaders to foster an open, inclusive and welcoming society rather than policies of securitisation. This must go beyond rhetoric; it should translate into policies which uphold and advance the fundamental rights of migrants in Europe. SOLIDAR will have a key bridging role in ensuring the social justice conversation hears migrants' voices and advances their rights, and that migration networks promote social rights and engages and involves the trade union movement whenever relevant.

Solidarity and inclusion

As progressive policies which seek to rebalance power have advanced in recent years, political forces have emerged which seek to undo this progress, threatening to entrench social inequalities and injustices. The discussion and mobilisation around issues and policy that would advance an intersectional approach of more equality is more and more weaponised globally and on the

European stage. The right and the extreme right are mobilising their political base against what they call 'woke', elitist and even discriminatory policies. SOLIDAR's members stand together to defend a more complex understanding of power, the multiple dimensions of discrimination and the need to address them simultaneously.

5. Organisational development



In our previous strategy period, SOLIDAR made significant progress as an organisation. We developed and consolidated our network and our Secretariat, both in terms of our joint work with members and partners and our reputation and standing. In this strategy period, we will build on this progress by continuing to grow out network, professionalise our outputs, and finetune our internal processes.

In terms of our communications and advocacy, the aim will be to enhance member engagement in our communications, develop coherent and impactful messages and explore innovative forms of communications and relationship building. With this we hope to be able to confront a situation in which the space for progressive messages to be received is shrinking, communicate in an assertive and responsive way, and reinforce our existing alliances as well as forging new ones.

We will strengthen our network, aiming to engage members more projects and programmes, increase satisfaction, retention and expand our network. We will strive to improve our communication with members, develop our membership offer, encourage greater agency and foster greater cooperation between members and Secretariat.

Finally, we will work on our organisational sustainability by continuing to improve our financial and administrative processes, systematising our fundraising efforts, and maintain a high functioning human resources and staff management.



About the strategy

This strategy outlines the general direction for SOLIDAR in the period 2026-2030. It will guide our work, our collaborations, our projects and programmes, the development of Secretariat and our membership, our communication and advocacy work. Bi-annual plans that include defined and concrete targets and indicators of change will further clarify our line of action and achievements. We will only be able to do this if we work closely together with our progressive network of member organisations and partners across Europe and the world.

This is a revision of SOLIDAR's preceding strategy, that has been updated based on our results and learnings from 2021-2025, our joint foresight exercises, and the expressed needs and ambitions of our membership. It follows from our work on advocacy, policy and communication, and considers the new political context in Europe and beyond. The revision has been characterised by participation and inclusion of our network. We have involved members in individual consultations and workshops, the Board throughout the process and with the SOLIDAR Secretariat leading the process between the General Assembly 2024 and 2025.

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SOLIDAR organises its work for lifelong and lifewide learning for democratic participation through the SOLIDAR Foundation. The purpose of the Foundation is to advance our common policy and advocacy work while addressing internal learning needs in what we consider a learning hub for the network.

Through our member and partner organisations, SOLIDAR Foundation engages communities in EU decision making processes, empowers people through lifelong learning, and voices their concerns to the EU institutions by carrying out active lobbying, projects of collective action, policy monitoring, research and awareness-raising.



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