

European Commission work programme for 2023

Overview for parliamentary committees

SUMMARY

This briefing is intended as a background overview for parliamentary committees (and their secretariats) planning their activities in relation to the European Commission's [2023 work programme](#) (CWP 2023), adopted on 18 October 2022. The CWP 2023 is shaped by the exceptional circumstances linked to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which triggered a vast humanitarian, human rights, displacement, food and energy crisis. As of 7 October 2022, the [UN Refugee Agency](#) reports that nearly a third of Ukrainians have been forced from their homes; Europe is hosting over 7.6 million refugees from Ukraine, and 6.2 million people remain displaced by the war within Ukraine.¹ Skyrocketing gas and electricity prices, coupled with energy supply concerns, have also impacted the cost of living of European households as well as the post-pandemic recovery. Last but not least, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has shattered Europe's peace and altered its security situation, requiring EU foreign, security and defence policy, and the tools thereof, to adapt appropriately.²

In an unprecedented move, the EU has activated the [European Peace Facility](#) to provide military assistance³ to Ukraine, mobilising (up to September of this year) €3.1 billion, as well as providing €19 billion to strengthen Ukraine's economic, social and financial resilience. On the humanitarian front, the EU has provided aid through the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#), with over 70 000 tonnes of aid delivered to Ukraine so far, and has [activated](#) the [Temporary Protection Directive](#), thus ensuring that Ukrainian refugees have access to jobs, housing, education and healthcare. Medical and specialised equipment for public health risks, such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, have been mobilised via the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority ([HERA](#)) and [rescEU](#) emergency stockpiles. Through the Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe ([CARE](#)), and the FAST-CARE (Flexible Assistance for Territories) [proposal](#), the Commission has made it easier for Member States and regions to mobilise cohesion funds to help people fleeing the war.

On energy, the EU has taken a number of steps both to align its policies with more ambitious climate goals and to boost energy independence,⁴ including the [REPowerEU](#) plan for saving energy, producing clean energy, and diversifying EU energy supplies.⁵ As regards the food crisis caused by increasing prices, and aggravated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Commission has facilitated Ukraine's access to the single market and global supply chains through alternative routes ('[solidarity lanes](#)'), and continues to work closely with the Member States, its international partners and Ukraine to ensure access to fertilisers, food production and open trade to prevent food supply distortions.

In line with its title, 'A Union standing firm and united', the CWP 2023 is set against the above background and framed, according to the Commission, by three complementary realities. The first is that challenges of such scale can only truly be tackled collectively. The second is that the aforementioned crises underline the need for Europe to continue to accelerate the radical (twin green and digital) transformation set out at the beginning of this Commission's mandate. The third reality is that these crises cannot be met with a business-as-usual approach.



Annexes I and II of the 2023 work programme set out 59 legislative and non-legislative initiatives to be presented by the Commission in 2023. The number of legislative initiatives, which are the focus of this briefing, is lower than those envisaged under the 2022 programme, with 39 legislative initiatives (36 legislative/3 legislative and non-legislative) versus 45 respectively, and significantly lower than the 82 legislative initiatives (80 legislative/2 legislative and non-legislative) envisaged under the 2021 programme. However, the reduced number of envisaged legislative initiatives is very likely linked to the approaching end of the Commission's mandate and the European Parliament election in 2024.

Introduction

This briefing provides an overview of the European Commission work programme for 2023 ([CWP 2023](#)), adopted on 18 October 2022, including i) an overview of the structure and key aspects of the CWP 2023, and ii) information on two types of EPRS publication that might be of interest to the relevant committees when considering the upcoming legislative proposals: initial appraisals of Commission impact assessments (provided by the EPRS Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit, IMPA) and implementation appraisals (provided by the EPRS Ex-Post Evaluation Unit, EVAL).

Finally, a detailed analysis of the 39 legislative initiatives included in Annexes I and II of the CWP 2023 is set out in an annex. It includes information on whether the proposal is a 'new' ([Annex I](#)), or a Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) initiative ([Annex II](#)), and whether an impact assessment is planned or not. In addition, it provides a tentative indication of the committee concerned (subject to change), the timing of the initiative, and the assumed type of initiative.

Overview of the 2023 Commission work programme

The European Commission presented its CWP 2023 in the form of a communication entitled 'A Union standing firm and united', accompanied by five annexes providing greater detail on the Commission's legislative and non-legislative intentions for 2023.

Delivering amid exceptional circumstances and putting citizens at the heart of European democracy

In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly shaped the Commission's work programme for this period. In 2022, the work programme focused on recovering from the crisis, as well as emerging stronger and more resilient, accelerating the twin green and digital transitions, and building a fairer, more resilient and more cohesive society. To achieve this goal, the CWP 2022 envisaged fostering additional investment and reforms, making full use of the [EU's long-term budget for 2021-2027](#) and the [Next Generation EU](#) instrument (including the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)), which mobilised €2 018 trillion to support the recovery.

The CWP 2023, across all six headline ambitions of the von der Leyen Commission, **is shaped by the exceptional circumstances brought about by the illegal and unjustified Russian invasion of Ukraine**, including the ensuing energy crisis, and 'builds on the work and progress we have already made to tackle the most pressing challenges while staying the course for the longer-term'.

In the CWP 2023, **the Commission emphasises the need for unity to tackle the challenges that Europe faces today**. In this regard, it recalls that more than 180 measures hitting Russia have been adopted so far by the EU in response to the invasion, while offering support to Ukraine and its people. At the same time, the CWP 2023 underlines that the challenges faced by Europe cannot be properly met with a business-as-usual approach, as continued fast reactions and effective implementation will be required to respond in a timely manner to the most urgent needs, which might also evolve over time.

Moreover, in light of the direct impact of the different crises on European citizens' everyday lives, the Commission intends to support Europeans as a matter of priority in the year ahead. It aims to do so by reducing energy prices, securing necessary supplies for the competitiveness of European industry and for food security, strengthening the social market economy, and responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The CWP 2023 also highlights that **a lot of work is still ahead**, starting with implementing what has already been agreed and adopting what is still left to agree upon, including initiatives to cut greenhouse gas emissions and invest in green technologies, to reinforce the EU's competitiveness and strengthen the single market, and to further strengthen the EU's capacity to defend democracy and the rule of law. Acknowledging the limited flexibility and resources provided by the EU budget, the Commission intends to use the opportunity provided by the **mid-term review of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2021-2027** to assess whether the current EU budget is still fit to provide the means for common responses to common challenges. In this context, the Commission envisages presenting a **proposal for a second basket of new own resources**, building, inter alia, on the planned **proposal regarding a framework for income taxation for doing business in Europe** (BEFIT).

Following up and building on the positive outcome of the [Conference on the Future of Europe](#) (see the Conference's [website/report](#) on the final outcome),⁶ which saw citizens' panels putting forward proposals in several policy areas, the Commission intends to increase citizens' involvement in future policy-making, thereby 'putting citizens at the heart of European democracy'. Accordingly, citizens will – through **a new generation of citizens' panels – deliberate on some of the initiatives envisaged in the CWP 2023**, such as food waste, learning mobility and virtual worlds.

Six headline ambitions

Like the previous CWPs under the von der Leyen Commission, the communication on the CWP 2023 sets out a targeted agenda to implement the Commission's [six priorities](#) for 2019-2024 and the key initiatives supporting them. The six priorities are:

- a European Green Deal;
- a Europe fit for the digital age;
- an economy that works for people;
- promoting our European way of life;
- a stronger Europe in the world; and
- a new push for European democracy.

Under the '**European Green Deal**' priority, the Commission should propose **14 legislative and non-legislative initiatives**, spanning from waste reduction to sustainable food systems and transport. To address current and future electricity price shocks faced by the Union, the Commission should propose a comprehensive **reform of the EU electricity market**, including decoupling the effect of gas prices on electricity prices. According to the Commission, this initiative should help to better withstand future price volatility, ensure affordable electricity bills, and anticipate the industrial transformation required for a decarbonised and largely electrified continent by 2050. To accelerate the deployment of renewables, the Commission intends to **set up an EU hydrogen bank**. The proposed initiative, aimed at helping to scale up the EU green hydrogen economy and building the future market for hydrogen, would invest €3 billion into kick-starting a hydrogen market. Moreover, in 2023 the Commission intends to **take action to reduce waste** and its environmental impact, **focusing on food and textile waste**. To respond to recommendations by the Conference on the Future of Europe and to the European Citizens' Initiative '[End the Cage Age](#)', which attracted more than 1.4 million signatories from 18 different Member States, the Commission plans to **overhaul the EU's animal welfare laws** with a view to broadening their scope and ensuring a higher level of animal welfare. Finally, the Commission intends to propose a **targeted revision of the legislation regarding the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals** ([REACH](#)). The Commission aims to secure European competitive advantages and innovation by: promoting sustainable chemicals, simplifying and streamlining the regulatory process, improving chemicals data access, removing technical and administrative obstacles for data reuse, and protecting the environment and human health.

Under the '**Europe fit for the digital age**' priority, the Commission should propose **14 legislative and non-legislative initiatives**. Among these are an **EU critical raw materials act**, to ensure an adequate and diversified supply for Europe's digital economy and contribute to the green transition,

and a non-legislative initiative on tools for **developing open human-centric virtual worlds**, such as metaverses.⁷ According to the Commission, these tools would provide business opportunities for industry, the service sector and citizens alike, as well as possibilities to address broader social challenges, for instance on health.⁸ Following up on the European Parliament legislative-initiative [resolution](#) of 19 May 2021 regarding challenges of sports events organisers in the digital environment, the Commission should propose a **recommendation on piracy of live content** aimed at offering a toolbox to fight the illegal streaming of live (especially sports) events. Furthermore, a (non-legislative) initiative for a common European mobility data space and a proposal for an EU regulatory framework for [hyperloop](#) are intended to boost digitalisation of the mobility sector and encourage innovation, thereby contributing to multi-modal and sustainable mobility. The Commission also plans to work on a **patent licensing package**, including compulsory licensing of patents and standard essential patents, with a view to ensuring a stable regulatory environment for businesses. Moreover, a relief package for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should be proposed, including a revision of [Directive 2011/7/EU](#) on combating late payment in commercial transactions. To improve the health and safety of European citizens and workers, and to follow up on the European Parliament legislative [resolution](#) of 20 October 2021 on protecting workers from asbestos, the Commission also plans to put forward a legislative proposal on **asbestos screening, registering and monitoring**. Finally, under its [proposal](#) on a **European Year of Skills 2023**, adopted on 12 October 2022, the Commission hopes – particularly by reskilling and upskilling the European workforce, and attracting the right skills to Europe – to boost the number of workers having the skills required by the job market and to realise the full potential of the twin digital and green transition.

Within the '**economy that works for people**' policy area, the Commission should propose **14 legislative and non-legislative initiatives**. Among these, the Commission plans to **revise the foreign direct investment Regulation (EU) 2019/452** (FDI) to improve its functioning and effectiveness. The Commission also envisages proposing a **package of measures to facilitate retail investment, revise Directive 2015/2366/EU on payment services** in the internal market and improve data access in financial services under a framework on open finance. With a view to strengthening the role of the euro, two legislative proposals, including on a **digital euro**,⁹ are envisaged. Moreover, a legislative initiative on the cross-border activities of associations should be put forward, following up on the European Parliament legislative-initiative [resolution](#) of 17 February 2022 regarding a **statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations**. To further strengthen the EU budget, also in light of the need to repay the grant component of the [Next Generation EU](#) recovery plan and to ensure financing of the new Social Climate Fund established in 2021, which aims to provide over €72 billion in EU funding over the 2025-2032 period, the Commission envisages presenting a **proposal for a second basket of new own resources**, building on the planned proposal for a single set of tax rules for doing business in Europe (BEFIT). In addition, the Commission will carry out a **mid-term review of the MFF 2021-2027**, possibly including a revision. Besides an update of the EU's quality framework for traineeships, the Commission should present an **initiative to digitalise social security systems and social safety nets**, with a view to supporting labour mobility, and in connection with the ongoing project to introduce a European social security pass by 2023.

Under the '**stronger Europe in the world**' priority, the Commission should propose **four legislative and non-legislative initiatives**. In view of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Commission aims to **update the EU's sanctions toolbox to include corruption**. Further to the formal approval of the [Strategic Compass \(Q&A\)](#),¹⁰ including an ambitious EU action plan for strengthening its security and defence policy by 2030, the Commission plans to propose two joint communications, on an **EU space strategy for security and defence** and on **the update of the EU maritime security strategy (EUMSS)**. In addition to continuing cooperation with candidate countries and actively contributing to the European Political Community, the Commission plans to push for full ratification of trade agreements with, inter alia, Chile, Mexico and New Zealand. It will also propose a joint communication on a **new Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean** (LAC). Finally, to improve the EU's response to crisis situations, the Commission plans to, inter alia, double

firefighting capacities ahead of the 2023 forest fire season by adding 10 light amphibious aircraft and three helicopters to the EU fleet.

Within the '**promoting our European way of life**' priority – among **nine legislative and non-legislative initiatives** planned for 2023 – the Commission should propose several initiatives on health: 1) a recommendation on **vaccine preventable cancers**; 2) a **revision of the 2009 Council recommendation on smoke-free environments**, extending its scope to emerging products and additional outdoor spaces (e.g. schools and playgrounds); and 3) a **comprehensive approach to mental health**, a societal issue causing a lot of concern in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as set out in a [scientific brief](#) released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 2 March 2022. As part of the EU's efforts to build a genuine security union, and delivering on the [EU strategy for a more effective fight against child sexual abuse](#), adopted in July 2020, the Commission will propose in 2023 a **revision of the Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography**. This initiative links with the [proposed regulation](#) for a long-term framework to prevent and combat child sexual abuse, as well as supporting and protecting child victims, in both the online and the offline space (aiming to replace the Interim [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1232](#)). On migration and asylum, a new initiative is envisaged to facilitate the **recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals**, with a view to attracting the right skills for the EU to remain competitive at global level. In addition, the Commission should present an initiative on a **cybersecurity skills academy** 'to promote one of the most strategically important skills'. Both initiatives follow the launch, on 11 June 2021, of the [talent partnerships](#), a key initiative announced in the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) to help address skills shortages in the EU and enhance legal pathways to the EU while engaging partner countries strategically on migration management.

Under the '**new push for European democracy**' priority, the Commission should propose **four legislative and non-legislative initiatives**. More specifically, the Commission envisages proposing a **defence of democracy package, including** an initiative on **protecting the EU demographic sphere from covert foreign influence**, and an **update of the EU legislative framework for fighting corruption**, deepening the action already envisaged under the [European democracy action plan](#) of December 2020, designed to empower citizens and build more resilient democracies across the EU by promoting free and fair elections, strengthening media freedom, and countering disinformation. Moreover, the Commission plans to strengthen the [Union of equality](#) by putting forward a proposal on a **European disability card**, thereby ensuring the mutual recognition of disability status across all Member States. To ensure that consumers' rights continue to be protected and enforced in online and offline markets, the Commission envisages proposing a **revision of the rules governing the cooperation between consumer protection authorities**, thereby detecting unfair business practices and supporting more effective investigations into breaches of consumer law. In this context, the Commission envisages amending the ADR [Directive 2013/11/EU](#) on alternative dispute resolution for consumer disputes, and repealing the ODR [Regulation \(EU\) No 524/2013](#) on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes. Finally, the Commission intends to look into tools to strengthen its transparency framework, particularly regarding access to documents.

Similar to the CWP 2022, the Commission reiterates in its CWP 2023 the **need for informed policy-making based on evidence and better regulation** principles. Further to the '**one in, one out**' **approach**¹¹ now being fully deployed and complementing the regulatory fitness and performance programme (REFIT), the Commission intends to come up with a reinforced SME test.¹² This should ensure that European companies benefit from the single market without paying a disproportionate price. The Commission also highlights that better regulation, by integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in impact assessments of legislation, is key in supporting sustainability. Furthermore, strategic foresight and future-proofing of legislation are expected to equip the Commission with the necessary tools to tackle future uncertainties.

As in the CWP 2022, the Commission stresses the importance of proper **implementation and enforcement of EU law**. On implementation, the Commission underlines that 'it is vital [that the proposed initiatives, once the Union has reached agreement] (they) are implemented fully and in good time in order to create the change on the ground that we have promised'. On enforcement,

the Commission reiterates, in line with its 2022 [communication on the application of EU law](#), its intention to '**act decisively on infringements**'.

Annexes to the 2023 Commission work programme

The CWP 2023 includes **five annexes**, as in the previous work programme. Table 1 below gives an **overview of the Commission initiatives**: these include legislative, non-legislative, and 'combined' (i.e. a mix of legislative and non-legislative, legislative and/or non-legislative, non-legislative and/or legislative) initiatives. Initiatives sharing the same policy objective are usually clustered in one '**dossier**'. For example, the greening freight package 'dossier' contains three legislative initiatives.

Table 1 – CWP 2023 annexes

Annex	Dossiers	Dossier files
Annex I: New initiatives	43 dossiers	29 legislative initiatives 3 legislative or non-legislative initiatives ¹ 3 legislative and non-legislative initiatives ² 3 non-legislative and/or legislative initiatives ³ 13 non-legislative initiatives
Annex II: REFIT initiatives	8 dossiers	7 legislative initiatives amending existing legislation 1 non-legislative initiative
Annex III: Priority pending proposals	116 dossiers	116 priority files
Annex IV: Withdrawals	1 dossier	1 intended withdrawal
Annex V: List of envisaged repeals	1 dossier	1 intended repeal

¹ EU Hydrogen Bank; Greening corporate fleets initiative; Economic governance review.
² European critical raw materials act; Standard essential patents; Defence of democracy package, including an initiative on the protection of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence.
³ Review of the functioning of the multiannual financial framework, which may include a revision; Reinforced quality framework for traineeships; Recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals.

Source: Authors' calculation based on the CWP 2023.

- **Annex I** includes 43 dossiers linked to the von der Leyen Commission's six priorities. Each dossier includes at least one legislative or non-legislative initiative. The **29 legislative initiatives** (compared to 24 legislative initiatives included in Annex I of the CWP 2022) include: nine initiatives related to 'A European Green Deal' (10 in the CWP 2022); six related to 'A Europe fit for the digital age' (four in the CWP 2022); nine related to 'An economy that works for people' (three in the CWP 2022); one related to 'A stronger Europe in the world' (as in the CWP 2022); two related to 'Promoting our European way of life' (as in the CWP 2022); and two related to 'A new push for European democracy' (as in the CWP 2022). The **13 non-legislative initiatives** (slightly less than the 15 non-legislative initiatives included in Annex I of the CWP 2022) include: four initiatives linked to 'A Europe fit for the digital age' (one communication, one recommendation, and two initiatives the nature of which is not indicated); one linked to 'An economy that works for people' (one recommendation); three linked to 'A stronger Europe in the world' (three communications); and five linked to 'Promoting our European way of life' (three recommendations, and two initiatives whose nature is not indicated), with none linked to 'A new push for European democracy'.
- Annex I also includes: **three legislative or non-legislative initiatives** (two related to 'A European Green Deal', and one related to 'An economy that works for people'); **three legislative and non-legislative initiatives** (two related to 'A Europe fit for the digital age', and one related to 'A new push for European democracy'); and **three non-**

legislative and/or legislative initiatives (two related to 'An economy that works for people', and one related to 'Promoting our European way of life').

- **Annex II** includes eight dossiers linked to the von der Leyen Commission's six priorities, corresponding to eight initiatives for regulatory simplification. This corresponds to less than a third of the 26 dossiers envisaged under the CWP 2022. The **seven legislative initiatives amending existing legislation** are distributed across four priorities: three initiatives related to 'A European Green Deal'; two related to 'A Europe fit for the digital age'; one related to 'An economy that works for people'; and one under 'A new push for European democracy'. The non-legislative initiative is related to 'Promoting our European way of life'.
- **Annex III** includes 116 priority pending proposals (compared to 76 in Annex III of the CWP 2022), to be adopted by the co-legislators as a matter of priority to ensure swift implementation on the ground (and taken as a basis for agreeing on a joint declaration with the European Parliament and the Council by the end of 2022). The proposals are also divided according to the six von der Leyen Commission priorities: 35 related to 'A European Green Deal' (compared to 20 in the CWP 2022); 12 related to 'A Europe fit for the digital age'¹³ (compared to 16); 26 related to 'An economy that works for people'¹⁴ (compared to 14); one related to 'A stronger Europe in the world' (same as in the CWP 2022); 21 related to 'Promoting our European way of life' (compared to 18); and 21 related to 'A new push for European democracy' (compared to seven in the CWP 2022).
- In **Annex IV**, the Commission indicates one pending legislative proposal that it intends to withdraw within six months¹⁵ (i.e. by April 2023) because it is obsolete (compared to six in the CWP 2022).
- **Annex V** lists one legal act¹⁶ for which repeal is envisaged (the same number as in the CWP 2022).

Focus on Annexes I and II

CWP 2023 – Annex I

Annex I of the CWP 2023 ('New initiatives') includes **43 general dossiers**, containing one or several individual (legislative and non-legislative) initiatives each (see Table 1). Among the 51 individual initiatives in total, there are **29 legislative, nine 'combined' legislative and/or non-legislative, and 13 non-legislative initiatives**. Legislative initiatives under Annex I clearly prevail, and they represent the same percentage of the total number of initiatives in this annex (57%), compared to the same annex in the CWP 2022. However, in the CWP 2021 legislative initiatives took up approximately 70% of the total number of initiatives under Annex I.

It is worth noting that, according to the CWP 2023, **most of the 'purely' legislative initiatives in this annex would be accompanied by an impact assessment (IA)** (25 out of 29). The four legislative initiatives for which the Commission has not announced it will carry out an IA are: 'Second set of new own resources'; 'Scope and effects of legal tender of euro banknotes and coins'; 'Setting a sanctions framework targeting corruption'; and 'Update of the anti-corruption legislative framework'. Accordingly, the great majority (87%) of legislative initiatives included in this annex would be accompanied by an IA, although the corresponding figure for the CWP 2022 was equal to 92%, and equal to 99% for the CWP 2021 (57 out of 58). None of the 13 non-legislative initiatives included in Annex I will be accompanied by an IA. However, two out of the three 'combined' legislative and non-legislative initiatives will be accompanied by an IA ('European critical raw materials act' and 'Standard essential patents').

CWP 2023 – Annex II

Annex II of the CWP 2023 ('REFIT initiatives') includes **eight general dossiers**. As in Annex I, in this case there is also at least one dossier that includes more than one initiative only, namely the 'Revision of the roadworthiness package'.¹⁷ All the initiatives mentioned in this annex are revisions (of existing legislation or non-legislative acts) that the Commission will undertake in 2023, with no

ex-post evaluations or fitness checks planned under this annex. Contrary to Annex I, **all the seven legislative initiatives amending existing legislation** included in this annex will, according to the CWP, be **accompanied by an impact assessment**, corresponding to 100%, while the corresponding figure for the CWP 2022 was 95%. The only non-legislative initiative under this annex will not be accompanied by an IA.

As in previous Commission work programmes, the description of the different initiatives is more detailed in Annex II than in Annex I, which provides a very concise explanation for only four initiatives ('New genomic techniques'; 'Public health'; 'Fight against piracy'; and for one of the two initiatives envisaged under the 'Social economy package'). However, contrary to the CWP 2022, where the majority of legislative initiatives included in Annex II provided a clear and specific reference to the legislation to be revised, in the CWP 2023 this is the case for only two of the seven legislative initiatives envisaged.

In this context, it should be noted that the distinction between 'new' legislative initiatives under Annex I and 'REFIT initiatives' revising existing legislation under Annex II is not always made in a consistent manner. Accordingly, Annex I includes several legislative initiatives that explicitly refer to the revision of existing legislation (such as the 'Revision of the combined transport Directive' or the 'Revision of the late payments Directive') and cannot thus be considered as new. The CWP does not provide any explanation in this regard, but it could be assumed that Annex I will have higher political weight and corresponding visibility and might thus have been chosen for the most 'prominent' legislative initiatives.

Number of initiatives and timing of legislative proposals

Possibility of more (or fewer) initiatives than planned

Similar to what was indicated in last year's CWP in relation to the initiatives set out in its annexes, Annex I of the CWP 2023 states that 'the information, which is provided in brackets next to each initiative [i.e. type of initiative, timing, existence or absence of an accompanying impact assessment and legal basis], is indicative only and subject to change during the preparatory process, notably in view of the outcome of an impact assessment process'.

Accordingly, the set of **initiatives contained in the annexes should be considered as neither exhaustive nor definitive**. As occurred in 2020, when the Commission adopted an adjusted CWP due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission might be forced to readjust its original planning due to unforeseen and urgent circumstances. Moreover, the Commission is likely to present legislative initiatives in addition to those announced, as some initiatives included in the CWP 2022 seem to have been postponed to 2023. It might also submit proposals outside the framework of its work programme in addition to those announced therein. In contrast, the Commission may decide not to submit a proposal included in the CWP further to the outcome of an impact assessment process indicating that the 'no change' option is the best of several options considered.

Timing

In relation to the **timing of the initiatives**, Annexes I and II provide precise information on the timing of all (legislative and non-legislative) initiatives that are planned, indicating the quarter in which the initiative is expected to be proposed.

As changes might happen during the year, the information contained in Annexes I and II should be read together with additional Commission documents, such as provisional agendas for forthcoming Commission meetings and calls for evidence (replacing roadmaps and inception impact assessments, in line with the 2021 Better Regulation communication).

Table 2 shows the distribution of the legislative proposals between Annexes I and II, according to the quarter in which they should be proposed. It is immediately apparent that the **highest number of legislative proposals** is due to be proposed **in the second quarter** (Q2), corresponding to 47% of all legislative initiatives included in the CWP 2023; this concerns, in particular, proposals under Annex I ('New initiatives'). Taken together, the majority of legislative proposals amending existing

legislation (four out of seven) under Annex II (REFIT initiatives) should be presented in the second and third quarters (Q2 and Q3). Similarly, the majority of proposals (27 out of 32) regarding new initiatives (Annex I) will be presented in the second and third quarters (Q2 and Q3).

Table 2 – Chronological schedule for CWP 2023 legislative proposals

	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	2023
Annex I: New initiatives	4*	16**	11***	1	32
Annex II: REFIT initiatives	0	2	2	3	7
Total	4	18	13	4	39
*	Under 'An economy that works for people', the Commission has envisaged delivering in Q1 <i>one initiative</i> that it considers as <i>legislative or non-legislative</i> ('Economic governance review'). This initiative has not been counted as either legislative or non-legislative, and has therefore not been included in the table.				
**	Under 'An economy that works for people', the Commission has envisaged delivering in Q2 <i>two initiatives</i> that it considers as <i>non-legislative and/or legislative</i> ('Review of the functioning of the Multiannual Financial Framework', which may include a revision; 'Reinforced quality framework for traineeships'). These initiatives have not been counted as either legislative or non-legislative, and have therefore not been included in the table.				
***	Under 'A European Green Deal', the Commission has envisaged delivering in Q3 <i>two initiatives</i> that it considers as <i>legislative or non-legislative</i> ('EU hydrogen bank'; 'Greening corporate fleets'), and <i>one initiative</i> that it considers as <i>non-legislative and/or legislative</i> ('Recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals'). These initiatives have not been counted as either legislative or non-legislative, and have therefore not been included in the table.				

Source: Authors' calculation based on the CWP 2023.

Distribution of legislative initiatives between parliamentary committees

The annex to this briefing presents an overview of the legislative initiatives included in Annexes I and II of the CWP 2023, provisionally divided by **parliamentary committee**. Needless to say, it is not always possible to determine with certainty which committee(s) will be responsible for which file. Thus, the '**committee**' column should be taken as a **very tentative indication**. Once the proposals are adopted by the Commission and are referred to the Parliament, the final decision will be subject to the official referral procedure, the results of which might well differ from our tentative prediction. The difficulty is amplified by the fact that information on the scope of the future proposals is insufficient to allow for a more certain allocation of files per committee, and by the fact that some proposals might fall under the remit of several committees.

Based on the aforementioned tentative distribution of the planned legislative initiatives included in Annexes I and II, the analysis shows that they do not cover all parliamentary committees. It seems that 11 parliamentary committees are likely to address the legislative initiatives of the CWP 2023 (compared to 11 under the CWP 2022).

Overview of suggested further reading

Several types of publication, which are available on the Parliament's [Think Tank website](#), might be of interest to parliamentary committees (and their respective secretariats) when considering the expected legislative proposals. These include [initial appraisals](#) of Commission impact assessments, [implementation appraisals](#) in cases where existing legislation is being revised, [EU legislation in progress](#) briefings, and topical publications (for example, on the [state of play regarding the six policy](#)

[priorities of the von der Leyen Commission](#)). The [legislative Train Schedule](#) might also be usefully consulted.

The next section provides more information on initial and implementation appraisals, two types of briefings prepared by the EPRS Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value.

Initial appraisals of Commission impact assessments – ex-ante perspective

Initial appraisals of Commission IAs are proactive briefings prepared by the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit (IMPA), which provide a concise (usually up to eight pages in length) critical **overview and analysis of the quality of the impact assessments** drawn up by the Commission to accompany its legislative proposals. Initial appraisals check that certain quality criteria have been met and identify the basic methodological strengths and weaknesses of the Commission's text, in the light of its own better regulation guidelines and relevant European Parliament resolutions.

Initial appraisals are transmitted to the committee(s) responsible and the committee(s) for opinion, whenever possible at the initial stages of the committees' consideration of the corresponding legislative proposal. In accordance with the [Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making](#) of 13 April 2016 (IIA-BLM), the Parliament has committed to taking full account of Commission IAs when considering the Commission's legislative proposals. In this context, the initial appraisals of the Commission's IAs seek to support the informed and effective consideration of the Commission's legislative proposals at committee stage by providing focused and timely input, geared to promoting evidence-based policy-making. All initial appraisals are published and can be accessed on the Parliament's Think Tank website (see [examples](#)). A review of the quality of 132 Commission IAs adopted between July 2015 and December 2018 was carried out by IMPA in 2019 (see [study](#)).

Implementation appraisals – ex-post perspective

Implementation appraisals are proactive briefings prepared by the Ex-Post Evaluation Unit (EVAL), providing an **overview and analysis of the operation of existing EU legislation**. Implementation appraisals thus cover only those initiatives within the CWP that revise existing legislation (excluding legislative proposals that do not amend existing EU legislation but constitute entirely new EU legislation). Implementation appraisals are primarily intended to support parliamentary committees in their detailed consideration of legislative proposals amending existing EU legislation. Specifically, their aim is to provide an overview and analysis of publicly available sources on the implementation, application and effectiveness of a piece of EU legislation throughout the various stages of the policy cycle. Sources used include – but are not limited to – published reports, communications and studies coming from the EU institutions, EU agencies and advisory bodies, as well as accessible documents from various external stakeholders, including national parliaments or EU citizens.

Thus, implementation appraisals cover, as a rule, those legislative proposals that are included in the CWP as part of the Commission's REFIT programme (essentially, revisions of existing legislation) under Annex II. Given that, as mentioned, some of the 'new' initiatives from Annex I also include some revisions of existing legislation, implementation appraisals can also cover legislation from Annex I. The overall aim is to provide implementation appraisals for most CWP initiatives that revise/amend existing legislation, and certainly for those legislative initiatives that constitute legislative priorities in a given year.

Implementation appraisals are intended to be published before the legislative proposal reaches Parliament or, at the latest, before the parliamentary committee responsible starts its consideration of a legislative proposal. All implementation appraisals are publicly accessible on the [Parliament's Think Tank website](#) (see an [example](#)).

Conclusion

The main objective of the CWP 2022 was to contribute to the Union's recovery, but also to enable it to emerge stronger and more resilient from the COVID-19 pandemic. With the Union now facing the consequences of Russia's illegal and unjustified invasion of Ukraine, which triggered, inter alia, a vast

humanitarian and energy crisis, the **main objective of the CWP 2023 is to continue delivering on the ambitions set at the start of the Commission's mandate, 'doubling down on the radical transformation on which it had already embarked'**. At the same time, the Commission stresses that 'challenges of such scale can only truly be tackled collectively, as one Union', and that they 'cannot be met with a business-as-usual approach'.

In this context, the Commission intends to focus on 'supporting Europeans through these testing times' as a first priority in the year ahead. Further to the Conference on the Future of Europe, the Commission also commits to a stronger involvement of citizens in future policy-making, thereby 'putting citizens at the heart of the European democracy'.

Based on Annexes I and II of CWP 2023, the **Commission intends to present 39 legislative initiatives**, as indicated in Table 1. Even if this number corresponds to a reduction of about 11 % compared to the legislative initiatives planned under the CWP 2022 (44), the slightly reduced number of envisaged legislative initiatives is very likely linked to the end of the Commission's mandate and the European Parliament election in 2024. Regarding timing, the **highest number of legislative proposals should be proposed in the second quarter** (corresponding to 47 % of all legislative initiatives included in the CWP 2023). This concerns, in particular, proposals under Annex I ('New initiatives'), while the majority of legislative proposals under Annex II (REFIT initiatives) are almost equally spread over the second, third and fourth quarters of 2023.

The vast **majority** (33 out of 39, i.e. **84 %**) **of legislative initiatives under Annexes I and II will be accompanied by impact assessments**. Although this percentage is lower than the 93 % envisaged in the CWP 2022 (41 out of 44), the Commission appears to remain committed to better regulation, as testified by the adoption in 2021 of the [Better Regulation communication](#)¹⁸ and the new [Better Regulation Guidelines](#).¹⁹ As with Annex II of the CWP 2022, all initiatives mentioned in Annex II are actually revisions (of existing legislation, plus a non-legislative act), with no ex-post evaluations or fitness checks planned under this annex.

These legislative initiatives are likely to be delivered by at least 11 parliamentary committees (compared to 11 under the CWP 2022, and 14 under the CWP 2021), as presented in the first column of the annex to this briefing. However, as it is not always possible to determine with certainty which committee(s) will be responsible for which file, **the 'committee' column of the chart** should be taken as a **very tentative indication**.

EPRS will proactively provide parliamentary committees (as far as possible, given time and resource constraints) with two types of publication of possible interest in their consideration of CWP legislative proposals envisaged for 2023: **initial appraisals of Commission impact assessments**, prepared by the IMPA unit, and **implementation appraisals**, prepared by the EVAL unit.

Finally, the CWP 2023 contains only a general indication of the substance of the forthcoming proposals included in Annex I ('New initiatives'), while Annex II ('REFIT initiatives') is more detailed. To obtain the full picture of any of these initiatives, additional information must be gleaned from other European Commission documents. Furthermore, the list of initiatives contained in the annexes is **neither exhaustive nor definitive** and may be adjusted later to fit changing circumstances, as was the case in 2020, due to the coronavirus crisis.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ A. Caprile, [Russia's war on Ukraine: New EU sanctions under the eighth package](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.
- ² J. Przetacznik, [The EU's foreign, security and defence policy after Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.
- ³ B. Bilquin, [Russia's war on Ukraine: the EU's financing of military assistance to Ukraine](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.
- ⁴ A. Widuto, [Energy saving and demand reduction](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.
- ⁵ A. Widuto, [Preparing for 'RepowerEU': action for more secure, more affordable and cleaner energy](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.
- ⁶ See S. Kotanidis, [Conference on the Future of Europe](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2021.
- ⁷ See T. Madiaga, P. Car and M. Niestadt, [Metaverse: opportunities, risks and policy implications](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022; L-H. Lee, T. Braud, P. Zhou, et al., [All one needs to know about metaverse: a complete survey on](#)

- [technological singularity, virtual ecosystem, and research agenda](#), Journal of Latex class files, Vol. 14(8), 2021; J. Anderson and L. Rainie, [The Metaverse in 2040](#), Pew Research Center, 2022; B. Marr, [The amazing possibilities of healthcare in the Metaverse](#), Forbes, 2022 (accessed on 20 October 2022).
- ⁸ Metaverse involves the convergence of three major technological trends, which all have the potential to impact healthcare individually. Together, they could create entirely new channels for delivering care that have the potential to lower costs and vastly improve patient outcomes. These are telepresence (allowing people to be together virtually, even while being apart physically), digital twinning, and blockchain (and its ability to let us create a distributed internet). See B. Marr, [The amazing possibilities of healthcare in the Metaverse](#), Forbes, 2022 (accessed on 20 October 2022); World Economic Forum (2022), [5 ways the metaverse could be revolutionary for people with disabilities](#) (accessed on 20 October 2022).
- ⁹ See ECB (2022), [The case for a digital euro: key objectives and design considerations](#); ECB (2022), [Progress on the investigation phase of a digital euro](#); Kantar Public (2022), [Study on new digital payment methods](#), research commissioned by the ECB in order to gain a deeper understanding of user preferences as part of the digital euro project launched on 14 July 2021 (see ECB's [press release](#)). See also: F. Panetta, [Building on our strengths: the role of the public and private sectors in the digital euro ecosystem](#), Introductory statement by Fabio Panetta (member of the Executive Board of the ECB) at the ECON Committee, Brussels, 29 September 2022.
- ¹⁰ See E. Lazarou and T. Latici, [Where will the EU's Strategic Compass point?](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2021, and E. Lazarou, [Strategic Compass: towards adoption](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2021. See also A. Paul, J. Shea, M. Chihaia, et al., [Will the Strategic Compass be a game-changer for EU security and defence?](#), European Policy Centre, 2022.
- ¹¹ The one in, one out approach seeks to offset new burdens on citizens and businesses (i.e. costs resulting from administrative requirements contained in legal acts, including delegated and implementing acts) resulting from legislative proposals by reducing an equivalent existing burden. The revised [Better Regulation Guidelines](#), adopted on 3 November 2021 (SWD(2021) 305), provide some information as to how the new mechanism would be implemented, the methodological details being provided in the revised [Better Regulation Toolbox 2021](#) (Tool #59, Cost estimates and the 'one in, one out approach', pp. 530-537).
- ¹² Based on a [review](#) of the quality of 132 Commission impact assessments adopted between July 2015 and December 2018 carried out by IMPA in 2019, in 41 % of the relevant cases under this review the potential impacts of the initiative on SMEs were deemed to have only been partially assessed (versus 48 % of relevant cases where they were fully assessed), the analysis often limiting itself to brief and general statements. Furthermore, a proper SME test was carried out in only 28 % of those IAs that had assessed impacts on SMEs.
- ¹³ Under the 'Europe fit for the digital age' priority, one priority pending proposal is made up of three separate proposals. As in Annex III, these proposals are mentioned as one individual priority pending proposal, and are thus counted as such (i.e. as one priority pending proposal).
- ¹⁴ Under the 'Economy that works for people' priority, one priority pending proposal is made up of three separate proposals. As in Annex III, these proposals are mentioned as one individual priority pending proposal, and are thus counted as such (i.e. as one priority pending proposal).
- ¹⁵ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 715/2007 on type approval of motor vehicles with respect to emissions from light passenger and commercial vehicles (Euro 5 and Euro 6) and on access to vehicle repair and maintenance information.
- ¹⁶ Council Directive 89/629/EEC on the limitation of noise emission from civil subsonic jet aeroplanes.
- ¹⁷ According to the Communication, 'the revision of the package, announced in the sustainable and smart mobility strategy to ensure the lifetime compliance of vehicles with emission and safety standards (Action 7), involves the revision of three directives: [Directive 2014/45/EC](#) on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers; [Directive 2014/47/EC](#) on the technical roadside inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles circulating in the Union; and [Directive 1999/37/EC](#), as amended by [Directive 2014/46/EC](#), on the registration documents for vehicles'.
- ¹⁸ See S. Vettorazzi and I. Anglmayer, [New European Commission communication on Better Regulation: Joining forces to make better laws](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2021.
- ¹⁹ On the revised Better Regulation Guidelines, see S. Vettorazzi and I. Anglmayer, [What is new in the Commission's 2021 Better Regulation Guidelines?](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2022.

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Annex – Tentative distribution of legislative files in the CWP 2023 between parliamentary committees

- For assigned committee (tentative), refer to the section on 'Distribution of legislative initiatives between parliamentary committees' in this briefing.
- 'Presentation' refers to the timing indicated in the CWP 2023 for the submission of the legislative proposal.
- Whenever several committees are mentioned in the table, this is to be understood either as a likely joint procedure between the committees mentioned, under Rule 58 of the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure, or as an indication that, based on the information included in the CWP 2023 and its annexes, at the time of drafting of this briefing it was difficult to determine which of the committees mentioned would take the lead. Moreover, several committees are mentioned in those cases where a specific legislative initiative is expected to contain several proposals for legislative acts.
- In order not to create any confusion, and to adhere to the CWP communication (which is not always coherent, as in some cases revisions of existing legislation are also mentioned in Annex I on 'New initiatives'), all initiatives included in Annex I are, under the second column below, marked as 'new initiatives' ('N'), while all initiatives included in Annex II are marked as 'REFIT initiatives' ('R'). In contrast, the fourth column shows the assumed actual type of initiative (new initiative or revision of existing legislation).

Committee (tentative)	Expected legislative initiative, as included under Annex I (New initiatives/'N') and II (REFIT initiatives/'R') of CWP 2023	Presentation (Quarter)	Assumed type of initiative (new initiative, revision of existing legislation)	IA expected
AGRI	Animal welfare – revision of EU legislation (N)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y
AGRI/ENVI	Legislative framework for sustainable food systems (N)	Q3	New initiative	Y
BUDG	Second set of new own resources (N)	Q3	New initiative	N
ECON	Improving the retail investment framework (N)	Q1	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ECON	Business in Europe: framework for income taxation (BEFIT) (N)	Q3	New initiative	Y
ECON	Digital euro (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
ECON	Scope and effects of legal tender of euro banknotes and coins (N)	Q2	New initiative	N
ECON	Revision of EU rules on payment services (N)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ECON	Open finance framework (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
EMPL	Screening and registration of asbestos in buildings (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
EMPL	European disability card (N)	Q4	New initiative	Y
ENVI	Legislation for plants produced by certain new genomic techniques (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y

Committee (tentative)	Expected legislative initiative, as included under Annex I (New initiatives/'N') and II (REFIT initiatives/'R') of CWP 2023	Presentation (Quarter)	Assumed type of initiative (new initiative, revision of existing legislation)	IA expected
ENVI	Revision of food waste and textiles aspects of the EU waste framework Directive (N)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ENVI	Initiative on protecting, sustainably managing and restoring EU soils (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
ENVI	REACH revision: targeted amendments of the Regulation EC/1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (R)	Q4	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ENVI	Revision of the EU rules – improving access to and availability, sharing and re-use of chemical data for the purpose of chemical safety assessments (R)	Q4	Revision of existing legislation	N
IMCO	Revision of alternative dispute resolution and online dispute resolution framework to improve enforcement of consumer law (R)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
IMCO	Revision of the late payments Directive (N)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y
IMCO/ENVI	Revision of textile labelling Regulation (R)	Q4	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ITRE	Revision of EU's internal electricity market rules (N)	Q1	Revision of existing legislation	Y
ITRE	New radio spectrum policy programme (RSPP 2.0) (N)	Q3	New initiative	Y
ITRE/ENVI/INTA	European critical raw materials act (N)	Q1	New initiative*	Y
JURI	Directive to further expand and upgrade the use of digital tools and processes in company law (N)	Q1	Revision of existing legislation	Y
JURI	Compulsory licensing of patents (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
JURI	Standard essential patents (N)	Q2	New initiative*	Y
JURI	Legislative initiative on cross-border activities of associations (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
LIBE	Defence of democracy package, including an initiative on the protection of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence (N)	Q2	New initiative*	N
LIBE	Setting a sanctions framework targeting corruption (N)	Q2	New initiative	N
LIBE	Revision of the combating child sexual abuse Directive (N)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y

Committee (tentative)	Expected legislative initiative, as included under Annex I (New initiatives/'N') and II (REFIT initiatives/'R') of CWP 2023	Presentation (Quarter)	Assumed type of initiative (new initiative, revision of existing legislation)	IA expected
LIBE	Digitalisation of travel documents and facilitation of travel (N)	Q3	New initiative	Y
LIBE	Update of the anti-corruption legislative framework (N)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	N
TRAN	Revision of the passenger rights regulatory framework (R)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
TRAN	International freight and passenger transport – increasing the share of rail traffic (N)	Q2	New initiative	Y
TRAN	Revision of the weights and dimensions Directive (N)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
TRAN	Revision of the combined transport Directive (N)	Q2	Revision of existing legislation	Y
TRAN	EU regulatory framework for Hyperloop (N)	Q3	New initiative	Y
TRAN	Revision of EU rules on harmonised river information services (R)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y
TRAN	Revision of the airport slot Regulation (N)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y
TRAN	Revision of the roadworthiness package (R)	Q3	Revision of existing legislation	Y

* Legislative AND non-legislative