



Management plan 2023

DG REFORM – Directorate-General for
Structural Reform Support

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INTRODUCTION

The Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) provides Member States with **technical support to prepare and implement growth-enhancing institutional and administrative reforms**. With more than 1500 reform projects managed so far through the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) and through the **Technical Support Instrument (TSI)**¹, DG REFORM helps **all 27 Member States** build more effective institutions, stronger governance frameworks and efficient public administrations. **DG REFORM:**

- **steers and coordinates the provision of technical support to Member States** across the Commission's departments, as part of the European Semester process and in relation to the **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)**²;
- **improves, steers and coordinates knowledge about public administration and good governance** in its role as lead department in this policy area and in the context of providing technical support to Member States;
- **coordinates the Commission's efforts to support the reunification of Cyprus**, a process facilitated by the United Nations. DG REFORM is responsible for implementing the EU's Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and monitoring the application of the Green Line Regulation.

The 2023 management plan sets out the actions and outputs planned for 2023 to meet DG REFORM's general and specific objectives³. These contribute to the political headline ambitions of the von der Leyen Commission, primarily to the **General Objective 3, 'An economy that works for people'**, as well as to the Commission's other priorities **to recover** from the pandemic crisis and the current weaker economic outlook for EU growth by developing EU's greener, digital and further growth potentials, and **to respond** to the recent hardships and global energy market crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

As a result, **the TSI will continue supporting EU Member States in building sustainable and competitive economies**. Support will be provided to advise public authorities on actions to accelerate the twin climate and digital transitions and contribute to economic growth and recovery. This will include reforms and investments that will strengthen further the **cohesion and competitiveness** of the EU economy.

In 2023, DG REFORM will **continue to implement the technical support projects started in the previous years; provide new tailor-made technical support to the Member States** requests made in 2023 (including general requests and requests presented in the context of 'dedicated calls') and **launch the reach out activities** for

¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 establishing a Technical Support Instrument, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p.1..

² Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p.17.

³ [DG REFORM Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#).

identifying new areas / projects of interventions in 2024. The 'Flagship technical support projects' on pre-defined topics falling under EU priorities, and the 'Multi-country projects', responding to common priorities in as same policy areas, will be continued to further enhance European collaboration with Member States and among national authorities, as fostered in the TSI Regulation.

Since 2015, the demand for reform support from Member States has far outstripped expectations. Today the TSI is a programme of major success, **increasingly demanded by all Member States**, who continuously acknowledge the high added value of the European interventions through a growing number of technical support requests.

DG REFORM will continue offering **support to Member States in the context of the implementation, revision or amendment of their national recovery and resilience plans (NRRPs)**. Such support contributes to the Member States' realisation of their reforms for socially inclusive, green and digital transitions and ultimate sustainable growth.

DG REFORM will also **continue to develop its role of lead service** at the Commission **for modernising public administration in the Member States**, promoting exchanges of good practices, as well as deploying technical support for improving the quality of public administration at central, regional and local levels as part of EU policies and the 'Next Generation EU' recovery package. In this context, it will launch the first structured exchanges between civil servants from national administrations through its Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative, financed under the TSI.

In line with the previous years, **DG REFORM's main challenges** for 2023 will be to provide **timely, relevant and effective technical support to Member States**. As human and budget resources remain fixed and the quality of request is increasing year after year, it has become more and more competitive for Member States to receive support. DG REFORM will be able to select and implement only a certain number of technical support projects among the best ones, while knowing that there are still many other valid projects which, unfortunately, will not be retained.

DG REFORM also stands ready, if needed, to run additional dedicated calls for technical support to address new emerging priorities, as done in 2022 on welcoming and integrating non-EU (Ukrainian) nationals in Member States or on the identification of the most suitable Member States' investments and reforms ([REPowerEU](#)) to phase out the dependencies on fossil fuels imports from Russia.

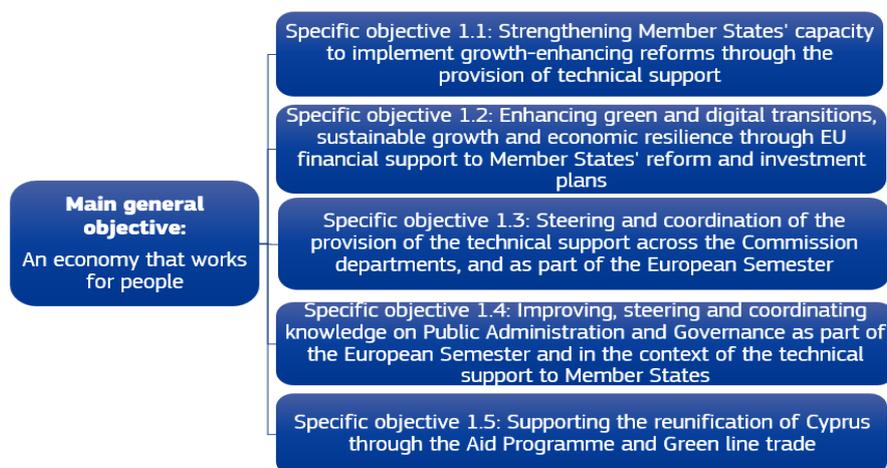
Finally, considering that the political situation in Cyprus has deteriorated due to the lack of a process to resume the settlement talks, DG REFORM will also **keep the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU** through the Aid Programme and thus **continue to foster the reunification of Cyprus**.

In such a context, DG REFORM will optimise its existing resources by:

- ✓ continuously streamlining its business processes, where possible using digital solutions;
- ✓ promoting more knowledge sharing and reinforcing the EC capacity building to capitalise on the experience gained through the technical support provided so far and the lessons learned, as well as passing on successful projects to other Member States' in need;
- ✓ enhancing its cooperation with international organisations; and
- ✓ strengthening the collaboration with the network of national coordinating authorities established in 2022.

DG REFORM will contribute to its priorities and challenges by pursuing the following specific objectives and main outputs.

Part 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for 2023



Specific Objective 1.1: Strengthening Member States’ capacity to implement growth-enhancing reforms through the provision of technical support

DG REFORM contributes to the achievement of the **Commission’s General Objective 3, ‘An economy that works for people’**, by providing technical support to Member States to make reforms to build resilient economic and social structures and ultimately raising living standards of EU citizens.

The need for Member States’ support for reforms and a coordinated EU approach has become even more crucial, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and in the context of the [EU recovery plan](#). More recently, a stronger EU response was also needed to reduce the EU’s dependence on Russian fossil fuels and to protect and integrate Ukrainian migrants after Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine.

Furthermore, the Commission made it clear in the 2022 strategic foresight report,⁴ that “to strengthen the EU’s resilience and facilitate the **twin transitions**, targeted reforms and investments need to tackle vulnerabilities at national and EU levels. Relevant macro-economic and sectoral policies need to be closely coordinated”.

To help Member States address these reform challenges, DG REFORM implements since 2021 the Technical Support Instrument. In addition to the traditional technical support for designing and implementing institutional and administrative reforms, the TSI allows Member States to request technical support:

- ✓ to respond to **several EU emerging priorities** that are in the [2022 SOTEU](#) (e.g., energy market, green and digital transitions, taxation rules, fight against corruption,

⁴ COM(2022) 289 final.

respect of Rule of Law, professional education and upskilling, mental health, etc.), and

- ✓ to **prepare and implement the national recovery and resilience plans (NRRPs)** financed through the RRF. In 2023, DG REFORM will support Member States' efforts to implement reforms aimed at recovery and resilience of economies, including in particular those linked to the socially inclusive, green and digital transitions, as well as energy diversification (cf. objective 1.2).

Building on its experience and a consolidated overview of Member States' priorities and reform needs, in 2023 DG REFORM will continue to offer Member States the possibility of presenting **'flagship technical support projects' and 'multi-country' technical support requests**. Such initiatives are very effective since they streamline priorities, relevance and areas of reform across Member States while fostering practical collaboration between the EU and national authorities and among themselves.

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to provide technical support projects through **direct and indirect management**, and the latter in collaboration with **international organisations**, such as e.g., the Council of Europe, the OECD or the World Bank.

Member States will continue to exchange good practices, processes and methodologies through the **TAIEX instrument**. Longer-term exchanges will also be possible via the Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative (cf. Specific Objective 1.4).

Additionally, some technical support projects having a strong link to EU policies and priorities may also be implemented with **in-house technical expertise**.

DG REFORM will continue to look for **feedback**, as well as monitor and evaluate its technical support activities, both at project and programme level with a view to improving the support provided.

In 2023, building on the logical framework approach (LFA) initiative, DG REFORM will continue increasing its internal capacity and expertise to cover **evaluation practices** at all stages of the project cycle. This will ultimately help improve the quality of technical support delivered to Member States.

At programme level, DG REFORM will fulfil its legal obligation to report annually on the programme. Particularly, DG REFORM will in 2023 initiate an external study for the **mid-term evaluation of the TSI** in line with the Commission's provisions on better regulation.

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to expand its **external communication** activities to increase the visibility of its work. The [Reform Support website](#) will propose a country dimension, include more examples of projects, and feature the TSI final deliverables. DG REFORM will also strengthen its presence on social media exploring new platforms and continue the **'Project in the Spotlight'** series to illustrate the impact of selected projects on the life of EU citizens.

Established in 2022, the network of **Member States TSI coordinating authorities** ensures dynamic communication, including through a dedicated IT platform, and collaboration with the coordinating authorities and among the authorities themselves. In 2023, DG REFORM is planning to organise workshops, for instance, to take stock of the annual requests and share lessons learned in view of the projects' implementation, and to ease the preparation of any future multi-country requests capturing the EU priorities and common reform needs.

Finally, in 2023, DG REFORM will keep:

- participating in and hosting events to strengthen the visibility of the TSI programme and selected projects (e.g. annual conference to launch the TSI annual round of technical support requests followed by roll-out events and exchanges with each Member State; the conference to support the improvement of digital skills and investments in education and upskilling as part of the "European Year of Skills");
- an active communication with the network of coordinating authorities to facilitate the preparation of projects' requests in the context of the TSI' annual call for projects;
- increasing its visibility in the press, particularly with the help of the Commission Representations in the Member States;
- building stronger relations with its implementing partners to promote the benefits of reforms in the EU and for its people.

| General objective: An economy that works for people | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Specific objective 1.1: Strengthening Member States' capacity to implement growth-enhancing reforms through the provision of technical support | | |
| <i>Related to spending programme: Yes</i> | | |
| Main outputs in 2023: | | |
| Evaluations and fitness checks | | |
| Output | Indicator | Target |
| Procurement of an external study to support the TSI mid-term evaluation | Signed contract | Q4/2023 |
| Increased stakeholders' involvement in improving the Programme performance | Closed projects (%) for which stakeholders are asked to provide feedback within 3 months | 100% |
| | Closed projects (%) for which beneficiary authorities are consulted on the level of outcomes achievement | 100% |
| Improved in-house capacity to design projects | Number of LFA training courses for newcomers | Min 2 |

| External communication actions | | |
|--|---|--|
| Output | Indicator | Target |
| Increased dissemination of SRSP/TSI projects on the Reform Support website | Average number of visits per month | 5000 |
| Communication focus on selected projects to advocate for the programme | Number of projects showcased during the year as 'Project in the Spotlight' | 8 |
| | Average number of social media impressions per project in the spotlight | 5000 |
| | Number of in-house videos produced | 2 |
| | Average number of views per video produced | 500 |
| TSI annual conference | Number of attendees: physical and online | 800 |
| Event dedicated to the TSI contribution to the Year of Skills | Number of attendees: physical and online | 300 |
| Other important outputs | | |
| Output | Indicator | Target |
| Efficiency of technical support projects related to reforms | Percentage of technical support projects that are as minimum 'on the ground' and 'closed' at maximum | 100% of projects selected for funding under the TSI 2022 and 50% under the TSI 2023. |
| Effectiveness of technical support projects related to reforms | Percentage of technical support projects that produced the expected outcomes out of the total number of projects assessed | Stable or increased percentage |

Specific Objective 1.2: Enhancing green and digital transitions, sustainable growth and economic resilience through EU financial support to Member States' reform and investment plans

DG REFORM provides technical support to Member States that support the green transition and the implementation of the European Green Deal. In 2023, this will include in particular technical support on two flagships: accelerating permitting for renewable energy, and support to climate adaptation.

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to play a significant role in supporting the preparation or the implementation of the Recovery and Resilient Plan related projects. It is estimated that approximately 77.8% of the projects selected under TSI 2023 will contribute to this aim. DG REFORM will continue to work closely with other Commission departments (SG, RECOVER

and DG ECFIN) to offer this technical support. This close cooperation will help to identify areas for effective support, particularly where risks related to implementation of the RRP are identified. Targeted RRP-related support in 2023 will concern the implementation of reforms and investments in the new REPowerEU Chapters, as well as the communication of the impact of the plans.

In addition to the annual TSI cycles, Member States have the possibility to ask for additional technical support.

Article 7(2) of the RRF Regulation allows Member States to include in their RRP, as estimated costs, the payments for additional technical support to be implemented under the TSI. Member States can also either transfer national funds to DG REFORM to receive additional technical support under Article 7 of the TSI Regulation, or, alternatively, transfer funds from shared management to DG REFORM for additional technical support under Article 6(3) of the TSI Regulation.

Finally, in 2023, DG REFORM will continue an active communication through its website and engagement with other medias to inform about the technical support offered to Member States to implement their RRP.

General objective: An economy that works for people
Specific objective 1.2: Enhancing green and digital transitions, sustainable growth and economic resilience through EU financial support to Member States' reform and investment plans
Related to spending programmes: Yes

Main outputs in 2023:

External communication actions

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|---|--------|
| Communication focus on selected technical support projects to advocate for the green and digital transitions | Number of green and/or digital – focused projects showcased as Project in the Spotlight | 2 |
| Communication focus on selected projects to advocate for technical support offered to Member States to implement, revise and/or amend their RRP | Number of projects showcased on the Reform Support website | 2 |

Specific objective 1.3: Steering and coordination of the provision of the technical support across the Commission departments, and as part of the European Semester

The coordination mechanism, as set up under the TSI, was created to align relevant technical support with the Commission’s policy priorities and Member States’ reform priorities. In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to **coordinate with other Commission**

departments and stakeholders on the technical support the Commission provides to Member States. Such continued approach ensures synergies and the complementarity of its activities and avoids overlaps with other Commission support measures.

DG REFORM will also **contribute to country reports** under the guidance of SG RECOVER/ECFIN in the framework of the European Semester. Country analysis will focus on how technical support projects have supported the reform needs of the Member States', including those linked to the implementation of their RRP (see Specific Objective 1.2).

General objective: An economy that works for people

Specific objective 1.3: Steering and coordination of the provision of the technical support across the Commission departments, and as part of the European Semester

Related to spending programme: Yes

Main outputs in 2023:

External communication actions

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|--|---|--------|
| Increased interaction between DG REFORM and coordinating authorities, and among coordinating authorities | Number of TSI-workshops of the coordinating authorities network | 2 |
| | Usefulness of the event for the attendees | ≥ 80% |

Other important outputs

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Efficient and effective functioning of the technical support coordination mechanism with other Commission services | Percentage of satisfactory feedback from other Commission's services on DG REFORM as coordinator of technical support | % of satisfactory feedback ≥ 75% |
| Efficient and effective functioning of the technical support coordination mechanism within coordinating authorities in Member States | Percentage of satisfactory feedback from Member States coordinating authorities on DG REFORM as coordinator of technical support | % of satisfactory feedback ≥ 75% |
| Public information available on the technical support provided by other Commission services | Dedicated webpage (Support opportunities (europa.eu)) to be updated at least once a year | Q2 2023 |

Specific Objective 1.4: Improving, steering and coordinating knowledge on Public Administration and Governance as part of the European Semester and in the context of the technical support to Member States

DG REFORM leads the Commission work in the area of Public Administration and Governance. In 2023, it will aim to further reinforce the collaboration with the Member States and among the Commission services on the main challenges for public administration.

The Staff Working Document of 2021⁵ paved the way for further reflection on public administration developments within the Commission. The Staff Working Document **‘Supporting and connecting policymaking in the Member States with scientific research’**, elaborated by DG RTD and JRC with support from DG REFORM in the last quarter of 2022, defines avenues for strengthening the interaction between the policy makers and the research community to support policy decisions with scientific evidence. In the first half of 2023, DG REFORM will partner with DG RTD and the JRC for the organisation of a follow up conference with the professional communities to discuss adequate actions to implement the Staff Working Document. The conclusions from the conference will be complemented with practical experience gained from the relevant TSI projects as well as with additional country research and methodological work on the use of science in policymaking⁶.

In 2022 the Commission presented for the first time its **evidence-informed analysis on public administration for all EU Member States** in the European Semester spring package, through the “thematic annex 11: Public Administration”⁷. DG REFORM will continue to collaborate closely with the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) in producing a similar analysis for the 2023 European Semester spring package.

DG REFORM will develop further the **Commission’s Assessment Framework for Public Administration and Governance**, as an entry point for evidence informed analysis of country performance and challenges in the European Semester. DG REFORM piloted in 2022 new indicators on evidence in policymaking, policy coherence, and legislative quality. The framework was received positively by the Member States who recommended further development in order to widen the scope of objective data. In 2023, DG REFORM will continue its related work by testing new indicators for evidence in policymaking in more Member States and extending the areas where new indicators will be tested (e.g. policymaking and civil service).

⁵ Commission staff working document supporting public administrations in EU Member States to deliver reforms and prepare for the future [SWD\(2021\)101](#)

⁶ Thematic study on [“Evidence-informed policymaking. Building a conceptual model and developing indicators”](#).

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2022-european-semester-country-reports_en

Moreover, DG REFORM intends to start working with the OECD to develop a **common methodology for comparative public employment indicators**. The development of this framework will enable the access to comparable information which is crucial for the assessment of many aspects of public employment, like structure of aging, gender, attractiveness, and the ability of EU-wide public administrations to ensure that the right skill sets and the human resources needed can be recruited, motivated and retained.

Launched in 2022, the **Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative** will provide a unique opportunity for civil servants of national administrations to experience the working methods and culture of other EU public administrations in selected areas. The high number of technical support requests for the PACE flagship received in the TSI 2023 call confirms that this initiative is a high priority for the Member States. As of 2023, the participating Member States will be paired according to their interests and capacity to host civil servants to best leverage all the knowledge available. DG REFORM will organise a workshop to promote good practices and lessons learned from the first exchanges.

In 2023, in order to contribute to the implementation of the Commission's Annual Work Programme 2023, DG REFORM will make proposals to "deepen and enhance administrative cooperation" with the Member States in the area of public administration and governance. The proposed actions will facilitate the building of good quality and resilient public administrations across the Member States, including the strengthening of "capacities, especially at local and regional levels".

DG REFORM will continue to organise regular and thematic meetings of the **Expert Group for Public Administration and Governance**⁸ to identify common challenges for public administration in the Member States and innovative approaches to address them.

As the chair of the **Inter-Service Group for Public Administration and Governance (IGPA)**⁹, DG REFORM will continue to organise regular meetings to facilitate the exchange of information and to share knowledge and experience in the area of public administration and governance among the Commission's services.

DG REFORM will present the results of the analysis on the cost of bad administration, as well as thematic and country specific papers on public administration related topics.

DG REFORM will also support the 2023 edition of the European Public Sector Awards, organised by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), to promote examples of public sector modernisation and reform.

⁸ Commission Decision C(2021)9535 of 17 December 2021 setting up the group of experts on public administration and governance.

⁹ The IGPA was established in 2015 to improve coordination and develop consistent and stronger synergies among the Commission's initiatives relating to public administration and governance.

General objective: An economy that works for people

Specific objective 1.4: Improving, steering and coordinating knowledge on Public Administration and Governance as part of the European Semester and in the context of the technical support to the Member States

Related to spending programme: Yes

Main outputs in 2023:

New policy initiatives

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|--|---------|
| Enhanced cooperation with the Member States on public administration and governance | Communication on enhanced cooperation with the Member States in the area of public administration and governance | Q4/2023 |

External communication actions

| | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Effective mutual learning and knowledge transfer | Workshop with the Member States and stakeholders on the Public Administration Cooperation Exchange (PACE) initiative | All 27 Member States represented |
|--|--|----------------------------------|

Other important outputs

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Efficient and effective coordination of public administration and good governance | Number of meetings of the Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance | 3 plenary meetings by the end of 2023 |
| | Number of meetings of the Inter-Service Group on Public Administration Quality and Innovation (IGPA) | 4 meetings by the end of 2023 |
| | Number of thematic papers on topics related to public administration | 3 thematic papers by the end of 2023 |
| | Publication of country specific information | Q4/2023 |

Specific Objective 1.5: Supporting the reunification of Cyprus through the Aid Programme and Green line trade

In 2023, DG REFORM will deliver on the objectives of the **Aid Programme** for the Turkish Cypriot community (TCc) by continuing to implement the previous annual work programmes under which funding is still available for commitment and implementation. DG REFORM will also adopt the 2023 annual work programme and amend the previous work programmes as needed in order to make the best use of resources.

DG REFORM will continue its efforts to assist the TCc to comply with the standards (e.g. from increasing the number of sheep and goats to improving hygiene standards throughout

farms and dairies) set by the package of two measures¹⁰, adopted by the Commission in 2021, registering ‘**Χαλλούμι (Halloumi)/‘Hellim’** as a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and laying down the conditions for movement of this product over the Green Line. DG REFORM will continue to co-chair and facilitate the activities of the informal Working Group on Halloumi/Hellim including stakeholders from both Cypriot communities.

In addition, considering the important steps already made to enable the launch of PDO certification checks in the TCc, targeted multi-annual support will continue to further help Turkish Cypriots in the implementation of upgrades to meet the EU standards. It is expected that in 2023, the activities of the delegated body in charge of the controls of the Union public health and animal health requirements will commence.

DG REFORM will also continue to oversee the implementation of the **Green Line Regulation**, which constitutes a legal system governing the crossings of the Green Line by people and goods. Efforts will continue to ensure that the objective of increased trade across the Green Line is integrated in all areas of support, and to address identified specific challenges to Green Line trade, including through the Aid Programme.

DG REFORM will chair the **inter-service group on Cyprus** with a view to helping remove obstacles for Turkish Cypriots to enjoy their rights as EU citizens and allow businesses and civil society organisations to benefit from EU programmes already implemented in the Republic of Cyprus. This aims to bring the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU and thus contribute to the reunification of Cyprus.

DG REFORM remains ready to support the leaders of the two communities and the United Nations in the **reunification process**. The extent of this activity depends on the political situation on the island and the resumption of negotiations.

DG REFORM will continue to organise **external communication activities** (events, awareness raising campaigns, competitions, publications, etc.) related to the TCc through the EU InfoPoint in Nicosia. The visibility activities will continue with the purpose of increasing the positive perception within the TCc towards the EU, while promoting European priorities and culture, ultimately paving the way to the reunification of the island.

¹⁰ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/591 of 12 April 2021 and Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/586 of 12 April 2021.

General objective: An economy that works for people

Specific objective 1.5: Supporting the reunification of Cyprus through the Aid Programme and Green Line trade

Related to spending programme: Yes

Main outputs in 2023:

New policy initiatives

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|------------------------------------|---|------------|
| The annual work programme for 2023 | Publication of the work programme on the Europa website | By Q3/2023 |

External communication actions

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|--|--|
| Visibility events (physical presence and online) | Number of events | 400 |
| EU policy/impact on the Turkish Cypriot community | Number of publications and audio-visual products | 25 factsheets/booklets/audio-visual products |

Other important outputs

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|--|----------------|
| Amendment to the Aid Programme's annual work programmes for 2020-2022 as needed | Publication of the amended work programmes on the Europa website | By Q4/2023 |
| Economic and social development actions for the Turkish Cypriot community | Number of scholarship grants awarded in 2023 for studying in an EU Member State | Minimum 120 |
| | Number of cultural heritage projects completed in 2023 | Minimum 4 |
| | Volume of Green Line trade in 2023 | EUR 10 million |
| Increased transparency on the implementation of the Aid Programme and the Green Line Regulation | Publication of the 'Annual Report 2023 on the implementation of the Aid Regulation' on the Europa website | By Q3/2023 |
| | Publication of the 'Annual Report 2023 on the implementation of the Green Line Regulation' on the Europa website | |

Part 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for 2022

The internal control framework¹¹ supports sound management and decision-making. It notably ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are taken into account and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

DG REFORM has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the service's internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and be subject to a specific annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

In 2023, DG REFORM will ensure the implementation of:

- ✓ actions on gender equality, managerial excellence, staff engagement, learning and development and talent management, in collaboration with DG HR;
- ✓ its budget, according to the principles of sound financial management and legality and regularity;
- ✓ its main internal and *ex post* control actions to provide elements of assurance for the Authorising Officer's annual declaration and identify areas of improvement or recoveries where necessary;
- ✓ awareness-raising activities and controls with a view to maintaining a high level of knowledge among staff and DG REFORM stakeholders in the area of anti-fraud, as well to prevent, detect and correct fraud and irregularities;
- ✓ audit recommendations to improve processes where necessary;
- ✓ measures, including digital solutions in support to management of operations and reporting activities, ultimately leading to synergies and efficiency gains.

A. Human resource management

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue its best efforts to deploy its resources in the most effective way in support of policy delivery and core business in all DG REFORM locations.

The greatest obstacle to the full deployment of technical assistance to MS are the limited HR in DG REFORM. Without a substantial increase in Human Resources, DG REFORM will be offering less technical support than what is legitimately requested by MS under TSI. Additional specialised resources should primarily come in 2023 from the published reserve list of the EPSO competition for experts in technical support to Member States' structural reforms.

The onboarding of a dedicated internal communication assistant in 2022 will allow DG REFORM to design an **internal communication strategy** that will focus on increasing staff engagement and fledging out its intranet and training platform.

¹¹ [Communication C\(2017\)2373 - Revision of the Internal Control Framework](#)

DG REFORM continues to promote gender balance in middle and senior management and will continue to strive towards a gender-balanced, diverse representation in management in 2023 and beyond.

In 2023, a coaching and networking package will be provided to Deputy Heads of Unit, Heads of Sector and Team Leaders in order to support them in their management of staff and their adaption to their responsibilities.

DG REFORM will continue monitoring and implementing the actions highlighted in the Directorate-General's local HR strategy, in co-operation with DG HR and the corporate HR strategy, paying close attention to staff engagement and staff well-being.

Objective: DG REFORM employs a competent and engaged workforce and contributes to gender equality at all levels of management to effectively deliver on the Commission's priorities and core business.

Main outputs in 2023:

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|---|---|
| Ensure staff satisfaction through a fair staff allocation and regular workload assessment | Overall job satisfaction indicators in DG REFORM staff survey | Equal to or greater than Commission average results in staff survey |
| Ensure staff well being through central and local initiatives. | Staff well being indicators in DG REFORM staff survey | Equal to or greater than Commission average results in staff survey |
| Ensure staff have all the necessary skills and knowledge required to do their job | Staff satisfaction level with internal trainings | >70% |
| Increased equality and diversity at all levels of management | Number of female managers at middle and senior management | Equal to or greater than Commission average |
| Promote equality, diversity and inclusion | Overall level of awareness of DG REFORM staff on equality, diversity and inclusion, incl. DG REFORM's Equality Mainstreaming Work Plan. | >70% |
| Develop and support Managerial excellence via coaching, job shadowing, mentoring | Dedicated coaching opportunities provided to Deputy Heads of Unit, Heads of Sector and Team leaders | Q1/Q2 2023 |

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Internal Communication Strategy | Adoption by DG REFORM management | Q4 2023 |

B. Sound financial management

The main objective for 2023 remains to plan, implement, monitor and report on the spending of its financial resources in compliance with the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions and the sound financial management principle.

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to manage the annual commitment appropriations¹² envisaged under the work programmes for the TSI (EUR 118.98 million), the Aid Programme (EUR 31.74 million), the related administrative support lines (EUR 2.08 million and EUR 1.87 million, respectively) and any available funding allocated under the previous work programmes. DG REFORM will implement its budget by **direct and indirect management**.

In addition, DG REFORM will manage the following payment appropriations estimates¹³ related to both programmes: EUR 149.56 million on operational credits and EUR 3.95 million on the administrative support lines, as well as the payment appropriations carried over from 2022 for administrative projects.

DG REFORM will also implement the assigned revenues resulting from Member States payments for additional technical support (Articles 7 and 7(2) of the TSI and RRF Regulations). DG REFORM will be responsible for implementing other decentralised expenditure from the “global envelope” for a total of EUR 0.78 million.

Finally, DG REFORM will ensure that the implementation of its (operational) commitment and payment appropriations remains higher than 95% and 90%, respectively, and that more than 90% of all payments are made within the contractual timelines. DG REFORM ex-post controls will be implemented in accordance with the ex-post control strategy to provide the Authorising Officer with comprehensive elements of assurance for his annual declaration and to ensure financial recoveries where necessary. DG REFORM will continue to foster awareness of the results of the ex-post control activities with grant beneficiaries, entrusted entities and its staff with a view to preventing errors in financial management.

¹² Draft Union annual budget for financial year 2023 Section III Commission [SECO3.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#).

¹³ Statement of estimates of the Commission for the preparation of the 2023 Draft Budget, Document III Figures by MFF heading, programme, section, budget line and nomenclature changes; SEC(2022) 250 final, PART 3/6

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions.

Main outputs in 2023:

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|---|---|
| Effective controls: legal and regular transactions | Risk at payment | Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure |
| | Estimated risk at closure | Remains < 2 % of relevant expenditure |
| Efficient controls | Budget execution | >95% of operational commitment appropriations >90% of operational payment appropriations |
| | Timely payments | >90% of payments (in value) made on time |
| Economical controls | Overall estimated cost of controls | Remains < 5% of funds managed (i.e. payments made in a year) |
| Efficient and effective <i>ex post</i> control activities | % of implementation of the annual <i>ex post</i> control activities | 100% of financial audits on grants and desk reviews on procurement |

C. Fraud risk management

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to **implement the action plan of the Anti-Fraud Strategy** (AFS) adopted in 2021. This includes **preventive** activities (e.g., continued mandatory training on ‘ethics and integrity’; management of sensitive functions; information to reinforce staff knowledge about fraud and irregularities), as well as activities **aimed at detecting, reporting and correcting fraud** (e.g., controls to detect instances of plagiarism in deliverables; review of meetings and communication with interest representatives, etc).

An active collaboration with the [European Anti-Fraud Office](#) (OLAF) and the [European Public Prosecutor’s Office](#) (EPPO) will be continued to maintain, on one hand, the internal capacity to prevent/detect fraud and irregularities, and, on the other hand, to ensure appropriate management and follow up of any investigations, as necessary.

Finally, DG REFORM will continue to contribute to the revision of the **Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS)** and to the implementation of its action plan, as well to the ‘Commission Annual Report on the Protection of the European Union’s financial interests - Fight against fraud’ by reporting on the technical support projects (e.g. development of national anti-fraud strategies or risk management) carried out in any Member States in the field of anti-corruption.

Objective: The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS)¹⁴ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction¹⁵ of fraud.

Main outputs in 2023:

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|---|--------|
| Improved fraud awareness and effective fraud prevention and detection actions | % of implementation of the annual actions set out in DG REFORM anti-fraud strategy action plan. | 100% |

D. Digital transformation and information management

In 2023 DG REFORM will focus on the implementation of the following priorities of the European Commission’s **New Digital Strategy**:

- **Digital culture:** DG REFORM will design and implement a **knowledge management and internal communication strategy** with the objective of increasing the staff’s digital skills, increasing staff engagement and fostering collaborative working practices.
- **Digital transformation:** in the field of digital transformation, DG REFORM will leverage its IT governance framework and the lessons and initiatives identified during the 2021 “Business Process Simplification” exercise (see point F) to streamline its processes and tools with a focus on user-centricity.
- **Business-driven digital transformation:** DG REFORM will continue to invest in data visualisation and reporting tools such as **Qlik Sense (real-time reports and dashboards)** to work towards its goal of becoming a data-driven organisation. DG REFORM will also continue to improve its Jira information system (a database covering the operational implementation of technical support to Member States) to address user-centricity concerns, to continue implementing project management features and to improve the management of the project and programme evaluation process.
- **Seamless digital landscape:** DG REFORM will continue its collaboration with the Directorate-General for Informatics (DG DIGIT) on its digital modernisation initiatives and will kick off its key digital transformation project based on the recommendations of the studies carried out in 2021 and 2022. The intention is to gradually replace existing systems by adopting and integrating with reusable European Commission information systems.

¹⁴ Communication from the Commission ‘Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget’, COM(2019) 196 of 29 April 2019 – ‘the CAFS Communication’ – and the accompanying action plan, SWD(2019) 170 – ‘the CAFS action plan’.

¹⁵ Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which particularly refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

- **Green, resilient and secure infrastructure:** in 2023, DG REFORM will complete its **IT security risk assessment** based on the corporate IT Security Risk Management (ITSRM) methodology and will liaise with the Security Directorate of the Directorate-General for Informatics (DG DIGIT) to ensure that this assessment and action plan are compliant with the Commission's IT security framework. The assessment will allow DG REFORM to finalise the IT security plan of its key information system and to integrate the IT security recommendations of DG DIGIT into its digital transformation and modernisation plan.

In 2023, DG REFORM will strengthen the implementation of corporate principles of data governance for its key data assets in view of reaching the 60% milestone. The implementation actions were reduced in 2022 in light of the ongoing study on the digital modernisation of its information systems given the potential impacts on the underlying data assets. The nomination in late 2022 of a dedicated Local Data Correspondent will also help DG REFORM achieve its data governance compliance objectives.

As part of the Commission's effort to consolidate its **collaboration solutions and tools**, in 2023, DG REFORM will finalise the transfer of knowledge, data and files over to the corporate platform. DG REFORM will also take this opportunity to create a central knowledge management repository to document its internal processes, working methods and key documents.

In 2023, DG REFORM will continue to develop the functionalities and content of its MyREFORM intranet site, launched in 2021. While remote or hybrid working continues to be the norm, **information and knowledge sharing** across the DG will continue to be mainly online. This will entail local webinars (the above-mentioned 'knowledge hours') and regular all staff virtual meetings to encourage a collaborative and inclusive work ethos. Regardless of the way they are delivered, staff engagement and communication actions will focus on networking and team-building activities to strengthen DG REFORM's cohesive culture. In 2023, senior management engagement with staff will continue via the video weekly debrief of the management meetings and regular town halls in both Directorate A and Directorate B.

In the area of **data protection**, DG REFORM will continue to raise awareness on protection of personal data among its staff via targeted trainings (for example, trainings for newcomers, trainings on specific issues – preventing and handling data breaches) with the objective to promote a data protection culture and to maintain the targets set in the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018) 7432 final).

In addition, DG REFORM will carry out an annual review of processing operations and data protection internal guidances to ensure they are kept up to date and reflect any changes in the processing operations; and will establish a clear administrative process for handling data subjects' requests.

Objective: DG REFORM is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

Main outputs in 2023:

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|--|---|
| Implementation of the corporate principles for data governance for DG REFORM key data assets | Percentage of implementation of the corporate principles for data governance for DG REFORM key data assets | 60% |
| DG REFORM IT strategy for the integration with or adoption of reusable EC information systems | Adoption of the long-term IT strategy following a risk assessment | Q2 2023 |
| Qlik Sense – additional dashboards and reports | New reports for DG REFORM and DGs for the follow-up of TSI projects | Q3/2023 |
| | New strategic indicators report for DG REFORM Senior Management | Q2/2023 |
| Jira – project management features are available to staff | Rollout of project management features in the Jira system | First set of features delivered in Q4/2022 (work breakdown structure, portfolio view & reminders/alerts), the next set will be delivered in Q2/2023 |
| Improved information and knowledge management | Percentage of newcomers in the relevant units trained in Jira and Qlik Sense | 100% |
| | Number of data quality errors in Jira | Decreasing |
| | Knowledge management guidance and tools | Q2/2023 |
| | % of unfiled documents | < 1.50% |
| | Adoption of an internal communication strategy | Q2/2023 |
| IT security compliance | % of IT priority controls implemented for all information systems (attested or exempted) | 100% |
| Yearly review of IT security plans | % of IT security plans reviewed and updated (if necessary) on a yearly basis | 100% |

| Output | Indicator | Target |
|---|---|--|
| Transparent communication to individuals ahead of each processing operation performed by DG REFORM | Number of complaints received from the European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) | None |
| Increased staff awareness about cybersecurity | Number of internal communication actions and trainings on cybersecurity | At least one internal communication action per quarter and three training sessions during the year |
| Increased staff awareness about data protection | Number of trainings on data protection (including targeted trainings on specific issues) | At least 3, including presentations to newcomers. |
| Maintenance of records of processing of personal data reflecting any changes in processing operations | Number of reviewed records of processing in the public register | Max. 7 |
| Guidance on administrative process to handle data subjects' requests | Proposal on administrative process for handling data subjects' requests presented to management | By the end of 2023 |

E. Sound environmental management

In 2023, in order to contribute to the corporate objective of reducing the environmental footprint of the Commission's daily operations, DG REFORM will:

- relay locally the Commission's eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) campaigns on **waste management, resources efficiency and sustainable mobility**,
- strive to maintain a **high awareness among its staff about sound environmental management** and share environmentally-friendly good practices, and
- upon moving to the new building, relaunch the network of green ambassadors to promote innovative measures/actions in the new working environment

In line with the Commission's new working methods moving towards a **'digital transformation'**, DG REFORM will continue to promote fully electronic approval,

registering and archiving of documents by strengthening **paperless working practices and procedures**, including for financial and contractual operations (see point F).

Objective: DG REFORM takes account of its environmental impact in their actions and actively promotes measures to reduce the related day-to-day impact of the administration and its work, with the support their respective EMAS Correspondents/EMAS Site Coordinators.

Main outputs in 2023:

I. More efficient use of resources (energy, water, paper):

| Output | Indicator | Target (2019 as baseline, as appropriate) |
|---|---|---|
| Priority action to support the Greening the Commission Communication and action plan | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in corporate energy saving actions, by closing down DG REFORM buildings during the Christmas and New Year's / summer holiday period, and/or optimisation of the temperature in EC buildings. | % of DG REFORM building(s) (e.g. CHAR and/or MERO) participating in the optimisation of comfort hours and/or comfort temperature | 100 % of DG REFORM building participating in optimisation of comfort hours and/or comfort temperature |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff awareness actions to reduce energy use in the framework of EMAS corporate campaigns and/or awareness actions about DG REFORM total energy consumption in collaboration with OIB. Staff awareness actions to reduce water use in the framework of EMAS corporate campaigns and/or awareness raising actions about DG REFORM water consumption in collaboration with OIB. Paperless working methods at DG level (such as use of e-signatories) | Number of awareness actions related to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy consumption Water consumption | At least 3 emails to be sent to all staff/ messages to be published on MyReform |
| | % of staff informed on energy and water consumption Systematic use of electronic workflows (% of registered documents approved in full electronic mode (without the circulation of paper signatories)) | 100 % of staff informed via all staff emails and/or MyReform news item >90% |

II. Reducing CO₂, equivalent CO₂ and other atmospheric emissions

| Output | Indicator | Target (2019 as baseline) |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|
| Priority action to support the Greening the Commission Communication and action plan | | |

| Output | Indicator | Target (2019 as baseline) |
|--|---------------------|--|
| Staff awareness actions on reducing GHG emissions (such as actions on sustainable commuting during EU Mobility week and Walk corporate events; on sustainable commuting in collaboration with OIB (e.g. availability of bike parking facilities, lockers and showers, promote the reduction of parking spaces' use amongst staff). | % of staff informed | 100 % of staff informed via all staff emails and/or MyReform news item |
| III. Reducing and management of waste | | |
| Staff awareness actions about waste reduction and sorting in the framework of EMAS corporate campaigns and/or staff awareness actions about DG REFORM waste generation in collaboration with OIB where appropriate (for example, promote and label the waste sorting schemes in place). | % of staff informed | 100 % of staff informed via all staff emails and/or MyReform news item |

F. Initiatives to improve the economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

In 2023, financial management in DG REFORM is expected to be implemented in a more digital environment, which will ultimately further increase the efficiency of processes. While operating the e-grant corporate for TSI since 2021 and after having piloted a few procurement procedures in the e-procurement tool, DG REFORM will fully use the corporate **e-procurement tool** for awarding its contracts and ensuring follow-up of their implementation. In 2022, DG REFORM on-boarded its framework contract for services related to the provision of technical support to Member States to the corporate e-procurement system, using it for the 'reopening of competition' procedures for setting up specific contracts. This will allow DG REFORM to streamline most of its operations until now based on the manual management of requests for services and offers for the provision of technical support to Member States. Furthermore, the e-procurement and e-grant solutions are expected to be directly linked to Summa, the new corporate financial and accounting system. Such interoperability will contribute to reliability of data and reduce time currently devoted to separate encoding of financial information.

Finally, in the context of the **Business Process Simplification** started in 2021, and by building on the improvements already made in 2022 (e.g., revised templates, guidance, training, workshops, automatic documentation/IT reporting features), DG REFORM will continue to implement practical digital/automated solutions, for instance in the areas of contract and project management, evaluation, and communication. A further developed

training offer, including in knowledge management, is deemed to improve faster understanding and implementation of processes/tools and therefore create further **efficiency gains**.