



Management Plan 2021

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**. This technical support helps 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 departments, and as part of the European Semester process, including in relation to the **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)**¹;
- **improves, steers and coordinates knowledge about public administration and good governance** in its role of lead department in this policy area and in the context of the technical support to Member States;
- **coordinates the Commission's efforts to support the reunification of Cyprus**, a process being led by the United Nations. DG REFORM is also responsible for implementing the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community and monitoring the application of the Green Line Regulation.

In 2021, DG REFORM will continue to provide tailor-made technical support to Member States under the terms of the new **Technical Support Instrument (TSI)**², which replaces the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) 2017-2020.

The new TSI is now part of the seven-year EU multiannual financial framework (MFF), with an increased budget³ envelope compared to the previous legal basis. It also includes the possibility for Member States to request technical support to prepare and implement their recovery and resilience plans (RRPs) financed through the RRF.

This additional remit is particularly important in 2021 to provide concrete practical support to Member States who are now, more than ever, in need of effective reforms. With the new priorities emerging from the COVID-19 crisis, DG REFORM will support Member States'

¹ Pending adoption of a Regulation based on COM(2020) 408 of 28 May 2020.

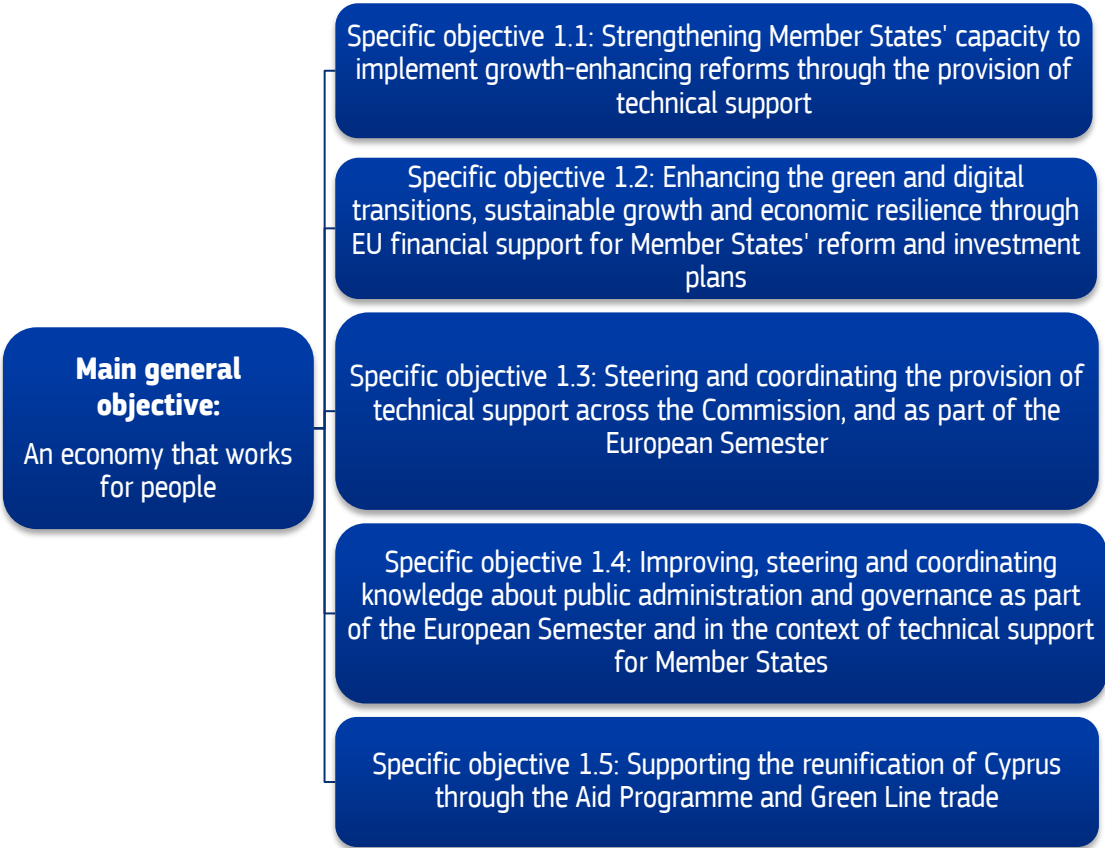
² Pending adoption of a Regulation based on COM(2020) 409 of 28 May 2020.

³ From EUR 222.8 million in current prices over the period 2017-2020 to a proposed budget envelope of EUR 864.4 million in current prices over the period 2021-2027.

efforts to implement reforms aimed at recovery and resilience of economies, including those linked to the socially inclusive, green and digital transitions.

The 2021 Management Plan defines the actions and outputs planned for 2021 in pursuit of DG REFORM’s general and specific objectives, as set out in its Strategic Plan for 2020-2024, and the political priorities of the von der Leyen Commission.

DG REFORM’s main general and specific objectives, 2020-2024



PART 1. Delivering on the Commission's priorities: main outputs for the year

As set out in its Strategic Plan for 2020-2024, **DG REFORM's activities contribute primarily to the achievement of the Commission's General Objective 3, 'An economy that works for people'.**

Reforms enable Member States to build resilient economic and social structures. Effective implementation of reforms, timely and adequate transposition and implementation of EU legislation, and efficient and effective use of EU funds are all vital for encouraging investment, unlocking Member States' growth potential, raising living standards and supporting economic and social convergence in the EU.

Moreover, in its 2021 Work Programme⁴, the Commission made it clear that *'to be able to address the investment and reform needs, we must increase and assess the effectiveness, efficiency and capacity of public administrations and services across the European Union'*.

To help Member States address their reform challenges, DG REFORM provides technical support for the design and implementation of institutional and administrative reforms under the new TSI. Given the wide range of areas in which it provides support, DG REFORM's activities also contribute to other Commission priorities, including the 'European Green Deal' and 'A Europe fit for the digital age'.

In addition, DG REFORM will provide technical support to Member States to help them prepare their Just Transition Plans.

DG REFORM support will be linked to the EU's Recovery Plan and can help Member States to prepare and implement their recovery and resilience plans under the RRF, a key programme in the EU's 'Next Generation EU' recovery instrument. The RRF will offer large-scale financial support for public investments and reforms to help the EU and its Member States recover from the severe economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and set a course for sustainable growth.

In 2021, DG REFORM will contribute to these ambitions by pursuing the following specific objectives and main outputs.

⁴ COM(2020) 690 final of 19.10.2020

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1.1: STRENGTHENING MEMBER STATES' CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT GROWTH-ENHANCING REFORMS THROUGH THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT

In 2021, the response to the COVID-19 emergency will be of high priority for Member States' economic policies. Under such circumstances, the need for reform appears to be even greater than in the past. DG REFORM will support Member States in addressing their pressing new reform challenges, aiming to contribute to a swift and sustainable economic and social recovery.

Next year, DG REFORM will provide tailor-made **technical support to Member States under the terms of the new TSI**, which succeeds the SRSP, and is part of the Recovery Plan. The technical support projects will be implemented through direct and indirect management. In addition, a number of technical support projects will also be implemented with in-house (DG REFORM-led) technical expertise. The REFORM-led support will mainly focus on projects with a strong link to EU policies and priorities where the DG's expertise - including experience acquired by colleagues in other Commission departments - can be used to good effect.

DG REFORM will continue to deliver, in a timely manner, existing and new technical support projects agreed with Member States, by ensuring relevant and high quality deliverables. This will help Member States' national authorities to design and ultimately implement institutional and administrative reforms that are sustainable and improve resilience, strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion, and support the public administration in preparing appropriate investments.

These objectives will be pursued in close cooperation with the Member States, through the exchange of good practices, processes and methodologies, stakeholder involvement, where appropriate, and more effective and efficient management of human resources.

DG REFORM will continue to monitor and evaluate its technical support, both at project and programme level. After the closure of individual projects, DG REFORM will continue to collect **feedback** from relevant stakeholders, including beneficiary authorities, technical support providers and DG REFORM policy officers. The feedback that is collected, on the design and implementation of projects, and the interactions with stakeholders will help the DG to optimise the technical support it provides to Member States in terms of lessons learned and areas for improvement. DG REFORM will also further develop its **practices for assessing project outcomes**. It is expected that an appropriate and regular assessment of the extent to which the outcomes of technical support projects have been achieved, can constructively feed into the progress reports of the programme.

Furthermore, DG REFORM will increase its specialised expertise to build a stronger in-house capacity in the field of project design and to strengthen its evaluation practices. This will ultimately help to improve the quality of technical support delivered to Member States.

At the level of the programme, in 2021 DG REFORM will initiate the **ex-post evaluation of the SRSP**, in line with the Commission’s provisions on Better Regulation. The ex-post evaluation will build on the findings of the mid-term evaluation, which was finalised in September 2020, and will focus particularly on the longer-term impact and sustainability of the programme’s actions. To ensure an independent and objective evaluation, DG REFORM will engage an external contactor to carry out an evaluation study.

DG REFORM will strengthen its **external communication** activities to increase the visibility of its work. One major element of this approach is the creation of a new website as part of the corporate Europa portal. The new DG REFORM web portal will provide clear, well-structured and targeted information about technical support projects in Member States and the DG’s role in policy development.

Furthermore, DG REFORM will continue to develop and update information materials, such as factsheets and brochures, to communicate its work and the results of its technical support projects.

DG REFORM will also explore ways to increase its visibility on social media and in the press. In cooperation with the Commission Representations in the Member States, DG REFORM will also work with beneficiary authorities and implementing partners to strengthen visibility and awareness of the real benefits of reforms in the EU and for its citizens.

General objective: An economy that works for people		
<i>Specific objective 1.1: Strengthening Member States’ capacity to implement growth-enhancing reforms through the provision of technical support</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: yes</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Evaluations and fitness checks		
Output	Indicator	Target
Increased stakeholders’ involvement in improving the Programme performance.	Closed projects (%) for which stakeholders are asked to provide feedback	100%
Increased efficiency of the assessment process of the projects’ outcomes	Advanced process automation	Q1 2021
Improved in-house capacity to design projects	Number of workshops held	15
Ex-post evaluation of the SRSP 2017-2020	Ex-post evaluation draft interim report	Q4/2021
External communication actions		
Output/Result	Indicator	Target
Updated brochures to improve	Estimated number of downloads	500

communication about DG REFORM's activities	in 2021	
New website on Europa to promote the SRSP/TSI	Number of visits in 2021	45 000
Communication focus on selected projects to advocate for the programme	Number of projects showcased during the year	8
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Efficiency of technical support projects related to reforms	Percentage of technical support projects that are a minimum 'on the ground' and 'closed' at maximum.	100% of projects selected for funding under SRSP 2020 and 50% of projects selected for funding under TSI 2021
Effectiveness of technical support projects related to reforms	Percentage of technical support projects having produced the expected results out of the total number of projects started	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

In accordance with the TSI Regulation, as of 2021 DG REFORM will also provide technical support to Member States to prepare and implement their RRP, whose approval is a precondition for Member States' access to funds⁵ under the RRF.

It is expected that such investments and reforms will contribute to absorb the social economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis. The RRP should set out the reform and investment agenda for the coming years, which should effectively address challenges identified in the context of the European Semester, particularly the country-specific recommendations adopted by the Council. The plans should also include measures to address the challenges faced by Member States in their green and digital transitions.

According to the proposed RRF Regulation, Member States will have to submit their final RRP to the Commission at the latest by 30 April 2021. Member States may also submit a draft plan earlier, as of 15 October 2020, with their national draft budget and engage in discussions with the Commission.

⁵ The total amount of grants available will be EUR 335 billion in current prices, and EUR 268 billion in loans in current prices. Funding under the Facility will be made available in accordance with the estimated costs of the proposed reforms and investments contained in the RRP to be submitted by the Member States.

As part of the first 2021 call for technical support requests under the TSI, DG REFORM received six general requests from Member States for support to prepare and/or implement their RRP. In addition, the DG received about 300 sector-specific technical support requests, where Member States indicated a link with the implementation of national RRP.

Under the TSI, DG REFORM may organise, where necessary, additional dedicated calls in response to specific emerging needs among Member States. These include, as a matter of priority, the preparation, amendment, implementation and revision of national RRP.

DG REFORM will also provide technical support to Member States to prepare their Just Transition Plans. These should identify social, economic and environmental challenges faced by Member States, their needs in terms of development, reskilling and environmental rehabilitation, and the operations and governance mechanisms that will be established in order to meet their targets.

In **external communication**, the new DG REFORM website and specific communication materials, such as factsheets and updated brochures, will include, where appropriate, information about the technical support offered to Member States to implement their RRP. DG REFORM also intends to engage more actively with media, social media and journalists, as appropriate, to raise awareness about the Commission’s support for Member States.

General objective: An economy that works for people		
<i>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</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: yes</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
External communication actions		
Output/Result	Indicator	Target
Communication focus of selected projects to advocate for the programme for the green and digital transitions	Number of projects showcased	2
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Support to Member States for preparing/implementing their RRP	Number of requests for support received from Member States	≥6

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

In 2021, DG REFORM will continue to **coordinate the technical support provided by the Commission to Member States with other Commission departments and with other stakeholders.**

The coordination mechanism - which was established to align relevant technical support with the Commission’s policy priorities and Member States’ reform priorities - will be updated under the terms of the TSI. DG REFORM will strengthen its efforts to develop synergies and the complementarity of its activities, and to avoid overlaps with other Commission support measures.

Further to DG REFORM’s contribution to the European Semester⁶ country reports, the European Semester will be aligned with the RRF and, as a consequence, the Commission’s economic analysis may be focused on the national RRP’s rather than the European Semester country reports and CSRs. Therefore, DG REFORM’s regular annual contribution to the European Semester country reports will be provided in the form defined by DG RECOVER/ECFIN in the framework of the RRF.

General objective: An economy that works for people		
Specific objective 1.3: <i>Steering and coordination of the provision of the technical support across the Commission departments, and as part of the European Semester</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: yes</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Output	Indicator	Target
Strengthened coordination mechanism with other Commission services	Adoption of revised guidance on the coordination mechanism, agreed with all Commission services	Q3/2021
Efficient and effective functioning of the technical support coordination mechanism within Commission departments	Percentage of satisfactory feedback on coordinating technical support	% of satisfactory feedback ≥75%
Efficient and effective functioning of the technical support coordination mechanism within Coordinating Authorities in Member States		% of satisfactory feedback ≥75%
Overview of the technical support provided by other Commission	Number of other Commission departments’ in-depth presentations on the technical	At least 5 presentations from 5 Commission departments

⁶ The European Semester is a framework for economic and employment policy coordination, covering all related items in a comprehensive way.

departments	support that they provide	
	Overview table to be updated at least once per year.	One update throughout 2021
Efficient and effective contribution to the European Semester	Number of DG REFORM contributions to the preparation/assessment of RRP	At least one annual contribution for a minimum of 4 countries
	Number of meetings with Member States on the RRP in which DG REFORM participates	At least for 4 countries

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

Since 2018, DG REFORM has further developed its role as the leading policy department for **Public Administration and Governance (PAG)** in the Commission. By chairing the Inter-service Group for Public Administration and Governance (IGPA), DG REFORM has ensured regular meetings, facilitated the exchange of information and shared knowledge and experience in the area of public administration and governance. In this context, DG REFORM has led reflections on promoting and implementing good governance in Member States. This has helped to improve coordination and develop consistent and stronger synergies among the Commission’s many initiatives relating to public administration and governance.

In 2021, DG REFORM and the IGPA will continue their activities, with regular meetings to ensure quality and innovation within public administrations. Additional meetings will also be organised to discuss specific topics such as the role of public administrations as an engine of recovery, strategies for reform and the (re)definition of principles and indicators for public administration. DG REFORM will: present its analysis of the quality of the Member States’ public administration in 2020 (EUPACK – overview and 27 'national' reports); continue to consolidate the knowledge management system for public administration and governance; and manage the extensive expertise gained through DG REFORM projects with a view to sharing best practices, where possible.

DG REFORM will continue to emphasise the importance of public administration as a precondition for successful reforms, fairness and cohesion. It will increase its efforts to consolidate the Commission’s views on the importance of public administration by publishing a document on the quality of public administration in the Member States; this document will define a coherent policy framework, creating strong and complementary links among all funding instruments and linking the internal and external dimensions of PAG. The Commission will also promote a framework for regular policy dialogue and mutual learning with the Member States.

DG REFORM will help to improve the Commission’s analysis and approach to public administration through the Assessment Framework for Public Administration and Governance, which provides for a systematic and coherent overview of Member States’

performance in areas with a direct link to economic efficiencies and their ability to implement reforms. This will bring a structured approach to the assessment of quality in the Member States and support analysis of this area, notably in the adapted European Semester and the RRP. Finally, DG REFORM will launch a study on the cost of bad administration.

DG REFORM will publish online the related methodology, the country data and the results. This will provide a solid platform for dialogue with Member States in the context of the European Semester.

DG REFORM will also continue to design and test new indicators, improve data collection methods, provide access to data and possibly work with the OECD to measure integrity in public administrations. Activities to adapt the public administration assessment process to the new financing instruments for reforms available under the MFF for 2021-2027 will continue.

DG REFORM will also support the 2021 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.

General objective: An economy that works for people		
Specific objective 1.4: <i>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</i>		<i>Related to spending programme: yes</i>
Main outputs in 2021:		
Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Enhanced knowledge and communication about public administration and governance	Adoption of a Commission Staff Working Document on public administration and governance	Q1/2021
	Online publication of the methodology, country data and results related to the Assessment Framework on Public Administration and Governance	Q3/2021
Efficient and effective coordination of public administration and good governance as part of the European Semester process	Number of meetings of the IGPA	4 meetings by the end of 2021
	Number of policy documents on topics related to public administration	3 policy documents by the end of 2021
	Launch of a study on the cost of bad administration	Q3/2021
	Preparation of version 3 of the Assessment Framework on Public Administration and Governance	Q4/2021

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1.5: SUPPORTING THE REUNIFICATION OF CYPRUS THROUGH THE AID PROGRAMME AND GREEN LINE TRADE

In 2021, DG REFORM will deliver on the objectives of the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community 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 2021 annual work programme and amend the previous work programmes to optimise the utilisation of resources.

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 persons and goods.

Moreover, DG REFORM remains ready to provide assistance to the leaders of the two communities and to the United Nations to contribute to the settlement process. However, the extent of this activity depends on the political situation and the resumption of negotiations on the island.

The results of the **mid-term evaluation** will be released in the first semester of 2021. This evaluation will provide an independent assessment and evidence of the progress made during 2013-2018 towards the objectives set in the underlying Aid Regulation.

DG REFORM will continue to organise **external communication activities related to the Turkish Cypriot community** (monthly newsletters, events and visibility campaigns, TV spots, etc.) through the EU Info Point in Cyprus, with a budget of about EUR 1 million. The planned communication activities will continue to raise awareness about the EU, provide information about EU policies and actions in support of the Turkish Cypriot community, and promote European priorities and culture. The lessons learned from communication activities carried out in 2020 will be taken into account to help develop the main priorities and activities for the Turkish Cypriot community after the COVID-19 outbreak.

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 2021:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
The Aid Programme's annual work programme for 2021	Publication of the work programme on the Europa website	By Q3/2021

Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Mid-term evaluation of the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community 2013-2018	Final report approved and published in the Commission's inter-institutional database	By Q2/2021

External communication actions

Output/Result	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/publications 2 booklets on Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and the EU's COVID-19 response 10 audio-visual products

Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Amendment to the Aid Programme's annual work programmes for 2018-2020	Publication of the amended work programmes on the Europa website	By Q4/2021
Economic and social development actions for the Turkish Cypriot community	Number of scholarship grants awarded in 2021 for studying in an EU Member State	Minimum 120
	Number of cultural heritage projects completed in 2021	Minimum 4
	Volume of Green Line trade in 2021	EUR 5 million
Annual Report 2020 on the implementation of the Aid Regulation	Publication of the report on the Europa website	By Q3/2021
Annual Report 2020 on the implementation of the Green Line Regulation	Publication of the report on the Europa website	By Q3/2021

PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for the year

The internal control framework⁷ supports sound management and decision-making. It ensures, in particular, 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 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 2021, DG REFORM will ensure:

- ✓ that its organisational structure and relevant controls: (i) are in place and are cost-effective, (ii) proportionally address the main risks of the organisation, and (iii) function effectively;
- ✓ maintenance of a high level of awareness and communication about the Commission's internal control framework and DG REFORM's annual control monitoring criteria;
- ✓ ongoing monitoring, systematic reviews and reporting of its main internal and ex-post control actions and indicators, to provide elements for the Authorising Officer's annual declaration of assurance;
- ✓ the implementation of the new anti-fraud strategy, which will be aligned with the Commission's anti-fraud strategy, and the controls applicable to the DG;
- ✓ effective and timely implementation of the audit recommendations issued in the context of the IAS and ECA external audits.

A. Human resource management

In 2021, DG REFORM will continue to deploy its resources in the most effective way in support of policy delivery and core business. For this purpose, DG REFORM will implement a **reorganisation of the Directorate-General** as of 16 January 2021 to better align the structure with its business needs and policy priorities.

In line with the female appointments to middle and senior management positions in 2020, DG REFORM will continue to **promote gender balance** in recruitment and future middle and senior management positions. DG REFORM's network of female candidates with managerial potential will continue to provide practical career development support to eligible female candidates for management positions.

⁷ [Communication C\(2017\)2373 – Revision of the Internal Control Framework](#)

Enhancing **staff engagement and satisfaction**, while maintaining a high level of productivity, is a key priority for DG REFORM. This process started with an analysis of the results of the 2018 Staff Survey and has continued with a participatory reflection exercise, which led to the establishment of a ‘sounding board’, and with a series of lunch-time information events (‘knowledge hours’) and tailor-made training sessions in DG REFORM. A new mandate will be defined for the sounding board, an awareness campaign will be organised in the first quarter of 2021 and the knowledge hours will continue.

DG REFORM believes that staff engagement can be further promoted by informing and actively involving newcomers. The DG will therefore revamp the welcome session for newcomers to give them a comprehensive overview of the DG’s mission, roles and activities and to facilitate the development of a stronger network among colleagues.

Finally, based on the adoption of its **HR strategy** in January 2021, DG REFORM will plan and implement key outcomes around the six corporate pillars: talent management, diversity and inclusion, leadership and management, workplace and wellbeing, technology, organisation and culture.

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 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Increased number of female managers	% women recruited in middle /senior management positions	At least 1 additional female manager in 2021
	Number of meetings of the female talent network	4 meetings in 2021
Enhanced staff engagement	Revamped induction programme for newcomers	Q2/2021
	Organisation of knowledge hour events	5 knowledge hour events in 2021
DG REFORM human resources strategy	% of staff job descriptions and % of validated objectives recorded	80% 60%
	Adoption of the strategy % implementation of the actions planned for 2021 in DG REFORM’s HR strategy	Q1/2021 50% by the end of the year

B. Sound financial management

In line with its revised financial circuits, in 2021 DG REFORM will continue to manage the annual commitment appropriations⁸ envisaged under the work programmes of the TSI (EUR 114.36 million), the Aid Programme (EUR 24.11 million), the related administrative support lines (EUR 2 million and EUR 1.87 million, respectively) and funding allocated under the previous work programmes which is still available for implementation. The budget will be implemented by **direct and indirect management**.

In addition, DG REFORM will manage payment appropriations: EUR 139.73 million on operational credits and EUR 3.87 million on the administrative support lines, as well as the payment appropriations carried over from 2020 for administrative projects.

DG REFORM will also be responsible for implementing other decentralised expenditure from the global envelope for a total of EUR 1.3 million, and for carrying out its own accounting (review) activities.

The overall objective for 2021 remains to plan, implement, monitor and report on the spending of financial resources in compliance with the sound financial management principle. The DG will also ensure that the control procedures put in place provide the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, including prevention, detection, correction and follow-up of fraud and irregularities.

In this context, 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.

Furthermore, to ensure adequate management of the risks linked to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions, DG REFORM will update its ex-post control strategy to align its activities with the new TSI (replacing the SRSP), its increased budget and related implementation modes. In this framework, and in line with DG BUDG guidance, the **financial audits and other ex-post controls** during the year will support the Authorising Officer's declaration of assurance on operations carried out in 2021.

⁸ Draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021 (COM (2020)300 of 27.7.2020).
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/budget/data/DB/2021/en/SEC03.pdf>

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 2021:

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
	Time to pay Time to register invoices	>90% of payments made on time >96% in 7 days
	Time to notify beneficiaries Time to sign grant agreements	<6 months <3 months
Economic controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	Remains <5% of funds managed (i.e. payments made in a year)
Efficient and effective ex-post control activities	Updated ex-post control strategy	By Q2/2021
	% implementation of the annual ex-post control activities in the ex-post control strategy	100%

C. Fraud risk management

In 2021, DG REFORM will start implementing the action plan of the new DG REFORM Anti-Fraud Strategy (AFS), which includes activities aimed at prevention, detection, reporting and correction of fraud. The AFS also includes communication actions to maintain staff awareness about anti-fraud measures at the Commission, namely how to recognise and report on fraud and irregularities, fraud risks and indicators, and how to deal with fraud, where appropriate. The level of staff awareness of anti-fraud measures will be monitored as part of the internal control annual assessment.

DG REFORM will continue contributing to the implementation of the action plan of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS) and to the 'Commission Annual Report on the Protection of the European Union's financial interests - Fight against fraud'. To this end, the DG will report any technical support provided during the year in response to Member States' requests to, for instance: enhance the functioning or supervision of government services working against fraud; increase the knowledge and capacity to identify and mitigate fraud risks in key policy areas.

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)⁹ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction¹⁰ of fraud

Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective anti-fraud activities	Adoption of a new anti-fraud strategy	By Q2/2021
	% implementation of actions planned for 2021 in DG REFORM's anti-fraud strategy action plan	100%
Increased level of anti-fraud awareness	Survey of staff awareness of anti-fraud	≥70% positive response rate

D. Digital transformation and information management

In 2021, DG REFORM will continue to deliver on its **internal communications** blueprint and the development of its intranet, which will be aligned with the corporate internal communication strategy. Should remote working continue to be the main mode of working, information and knowledge sharing across the DG will continue to be predominantly intranet-based and conducted entirely online. This will entail on-demand local webinars (the above-mentioned 'knowledge hours') and regular 'all staff virtual meetings' to foster a collaborative and inclusive work ethos.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 'telework by default' approach, staff engagement and communication actions will all focus on ensuring that networking and team-building activities continue to take place, although virtually, to strengthen the cohesive culture of the DG. It is expected that such actions will support staff members in the upcoming reorganisation of the DG that will take place in January 2021.

In the field of **digital transformation**, DG REFORM will establish a local Information Technology governance framework. A Digital Solutions Modernisation Plan will then ensure compliance of DG REFORM digital solutions with the core principles established in the Commission's Digital Strategy. The Plan will set out a long-term strategy to ensure that existing and future digital solutions will be secure, user-centric and data-driven.

Furthermore, DG REFORM will continue to improve information systems such as JIRA (a database covering the operational implementation of technical support to Member States and the Aid Programme) and QlikSense (real-time reports and dashboards), which support

⁹ Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget', COM(2019) 176 of 29 April 2019 – 'the CAFS Communication' – and the accompanying action plan, SWD(2019) 170 – 'the CAFS Action Plan'.

¹⁰ Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which refers in particular to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

its main business processes. These improvements will ensure easier and consistent updating, monitoring and reporting of operations across the DG.

As regards **data protection**, in 2021 DG REFORM's two main objectives are: (1) to ensure that processing operations, which will be based on the new TSI Regulation, are communicated to 'data subjects' in a transparent manner; (2) to ensure that internal practices, information and communication tools and systems are resilient, so as to minimise the impact of personal data breaches. This will help to mitigate risks to data subjects' rights and freedoms. Moreover, DG REFORM will continue to raise awareness about data protection rules among its staff to achieve the targets set in the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan for 2024.

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 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
DG REFORM Information Technology Steering Committee	Mandate and first meeting of the IT Steering Committee	Q1/2021
DG REFORM Digital Solutions Modernisation Plan	Adoption of the Plan	Q2/2021
QlikSense – automatic report generation and delivery	Automatic reports generated and sent to key stakeholders	Min. 2 reports by Q3/2021
Improved knowledge management	Percentage of 2021 newcomers to relevant units trained in JIRA	100%
	Number of encoding errors in JIRA	Decreasing rate
Transparent communication about processing operations to data subjects	Number of records of processing operations published in the register of the Data Protection Officer of the Commission	Maximum 5
Improved internal communication	Adoption of the updated DG REFORM Internal Communication Strategy (aligned with the corporate strategy)	Q1/2021
	Further development of the DG REFORM intranet site	Q2/2021
	Number of 'all staff meetings' to be organised (online/physical presence, as appropriate)	8
Increased awareness of data protection	Number of presentations to DG REFORM staff	5

E. Sound environmental management

To contribute to the corporate objective of reducing the environmental impact of the Commission's daily operations, in 2021 DG REFORM will continue to raise **awareness among its staff about sound environmental management** and will support - as far as possible - the actions taken at corporate level.

Using its dedicated **Green intranet platform**, DG REFORM will relay locally the Commission's eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) campaigns, create a network of green ambassadors, and promote the sharing of environmentally-friendly good practices and ideas.

In line with the new working methods of the Commission 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**, also for financial and contractual operations. The use of secure electronic signatures for contracts and grant/contribution agreements will be enforced.

DG REFORM will also promote **adequate waste management**, keeping in mind that the environmental benefits of waste prevention are greater than those of recycling.

Whatever the place of work, whether at home or in the office, DG REFORM will encourage its staff to **save energy** by switching off lights and electrical equipment when not in use. Small actions on a large scale can make a significant contribution to **reducing CO2 emissions** in the long run. In order to combine 'Fit at work' and "Fit at home" practices, DG REFORM will encourage healthy lifestyle choices, including **sustainable mobility for its staff** when commuting from home and moving between Commission buildings.

Objective: DG REFORM takes full account of its environmental impact in all its actions and actively promotes measures to reduce the related day-to-day impact of the administration and its work

Main results and outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Enhanced internal communication activities to raise staff awareness, including corporate EMAS campaigns relayed locally	Number of green targeted messages/initiatives promoted on the DG intranet site, including for sustainable mobility of staff	10
	Creation of an internal network of green ambassadors and number of meetings of the network	>2
Systematic use of electronic workflows	% of registered documents approved in full electronic mode (without the circulation of paper signatories)	>90%

% of unfiled documents

Maintained <0.10%

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

In 2021, financial management is expected to take place in a digital environment that will further increase efficiency in the processes. DG REFORM will continue to adopt the corporate **e-procurement and e-grant modules** for selecting and awarding its contracts and grant agreements. Pilot activities were started in DG REFORM in 2020 to ensure wider use of the main functionalities (e.g. launch of requests for services, evaluations, signature of contracts) in 2021.

In view of the transition to corporate digital solutions, DG REFORM will continue to streamline its **financial management processes**, namely the simplification of financial workflows and procedures and the improvement of the quality of the financial transactions.

DG REFORM will deploy an upgrade to the QlikSense reporting and data visualisation platform that will send out custom-made reports directly to the DG's policy officers and middle and senior managers on a regular basis. This initiative will improve the efficiency of the DG's **internal reporting capabilities** by alleviating the need to manually collect and format the data and by ensuring delivery of data in a systematic and timely manner.

In 2020, DG REFORM developed a **digital manual of its business processes, covering all the stages of technical support**, from the submission of project requests by Member States to the evaluation of project outcomes. By building on this digital manual, in 2021 DG REFORM will identify possible paths to automating certain manual tasks, ultimately gaining efficiency in the existing business processes.