



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

**CIVEX**

Brussels, 13 February 2023

**MEETING OF THE COMMISSION FOR CITIZENSHIP, GOVERNANCE,  
INSTITUTIONAL AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (CIVEX)**

**– 1 FEBRUARY 2023 –**

**ITEM 4.6**

**WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023**

**of the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX)**

## **WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2023**

### **of the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX)**

#### **1. Introduction**

The 2023 Work Programme of the CIVEX commission was developed having in mind the overarching priorities of the CoR for its current mandate<sup>1</sup>, the Strategic Guidelines for 2023 developed by the Conference of Presidents (CoP)<sup>2</sup>, as well as the European inter-institutional context and in particular the *European Commission's Work Programme for 2023*<sup>3</sup> partly driven by the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Indeed, many of the key initiatives outlined in this work programme follow-up on the proposals initiated by the citizens during the Conference. This approach sets out the milestones for the work to be carried out by the commissions of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 2023, ensuring continuity and coherence in delivering the CoR's political priorities.

2023 will be a crucial year for the European Union and its local and regional authorities. It will be marked by the enormous efforts required in the face of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, rising energy prices and the knock-on effects on the economy, while defending Europe's democratic values and pursuing its long-term goals and interests, such as successfully achieving climate neutrality by 2050, shaping Europe's digital future, strengthening its unique social market economy, building a Union of prosperity, and making Europe stronger in the world. At the same time, the European Commission has announced a number of important legislative initiatives for 2023, in line with the priorities agreed in a joint declaration by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

Against this background, the CoR has adapted its institutional approach to focus on the development and implementation of result-oriented planning, with a clear objective to increase the relevance and visibility of the CoR's political action in the inter-institutional context. For this reason, the work programmes of the CoR commissions set out the specific objectives in each policy area and put forward a strategy to channel CoR's political messages to the other EU institutions.

With a view to demonstrating and further developing its added value as an advisory body, the CoR has been developing new and innovative tools to gather evidence and expertise in support of the CoR's strategic activities. It is essential that the CoR effectively taps into the wealth of experience of its members and the local and regional authorities they represent in implementing its priorities and strategic orientations. In this regard, the CoR's studies programme will be designed to support the main objectives in the thematic planning of the Commissions, as well as to address the horizontal

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<sup>1</sup> In June 2020, shortly after its Constitutive Plenary Session of February 2020 and during a time of major disruptions caused by the Covid pandemic, the CoR defined its priorities for the current mandate in the Resolution *The European Committee of the Regions' priorities for 2020-2025 - Europe closer to the people through its villages, cities and regions*. (RESOL-VII/004 - 2020-01392-00-00-RES-TRA)

<sup>2</sup> COR-2022-4968-02-00-TCD-REF. On 29 November, following a joint discussion with the CoR commissions' chairs, the CoP adopted the Strategic Guidelines for the CoR's political activities in 2023.

<sup>3</sup> COM(2022) 548 final and annexes, available [here](#).

research needs of the CoR. Wherever possible, studies will also include a clear outreach dimension, with outcomes that can easily be used in institutional and public communication.

In terms of policy-making, more attention should be given to "outlook opinions" where the European Commission could request input from the CoR at a very early stage. In implementing the "active subsidiarity approach", the CoR toolbox will ensure coherence and synergies between the different strands of its Better Regulation activities throughout the policy making cycle. Therefore, in line with the Strategic Guidelines for 2023<sup>4</sup>, the objective will be to upgrade the quality of cooperation between the CoR, the European Commission and the other EU institutions by focusing on the European added value of all initiatives, the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, and the EU Better Regulation agenda.

The CoR will aim at strengthening relations with the Council and the incoming EU presidencies in 2023, with a view to optimising cooperation in longer-term multi-annual planning and political dialogue, particularly as regards legislative planning and the transparency of the process. The renegotiation of the cooperation agreement with the European Parliament will also provide a framework for improving cooperation throughout the legislative lifecycle.

Based on the CoR strategic guidelines for 2023 endorsed by the Conference of the Presidents and considering all the challenges ahead, the 2023 Work Programme of the CIVEX commission will focus on the below priorities.

## **2. Priorities of the CIVEX commission**

The remit of the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX) covers the following fields<sup>5</sup>:

1. Constitutional affairs
2. Democracy, devolution and multi-level governance
3. Subsidiarity and proportionality
4. Annual monitoring of the state of the EU regional/local authorities
5. Regional and local governance
6. Fiscal decentralisation
7. Better law-making and regional/local impact of EU legislation
8. Communication and connecting with citizens
9. The future of Europe
10. The area of freedom, security, justice and rule of law
11. EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
12. Active citizenship and integration
13. Migration policy, asylum and visas
14. Radicalisation, terrorism and security

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<sup>4</sup> COR-2022-4968-02-00-TCD-REF.

<sup>5</sup> COR-2022-02422-13-00-NB-TRA (EN).

15. External relations
16. Enlargement
17. Neighbourhood policy
18. Development cooperation
19. International treaties and negotiations

Support bodies related to the CIVEX remit:

*CORLEAP*

*ARLEM*

*Joint Consultative Committees<sup>6</sup> with Serbia, Montenegro and North Macedonia*

*Working Group on the Western Balkans, Working Group on Relations with Türkiye*

*Working Group on Ukraine*

*Nicosia Initiative (cooperation with Libyan municipalities)*

*Cities and Regions for Integration initiative*

*Better Regulation and Active Subsidiarity Steering Group (BRASS-G)*

*Subsidiarity Monitoring Network (supports all CoR commissions)*

*CoR-UK Contact Group*

*High-Level Group CoR - Congress*

## 2.1 Priority policy areas<sup>7</sup>

At its 15th commission meeting on 17 November 2022, the CIVEX commission approved the following priority policy areas<sup>8</sup> with high relevance to the EU agenda and direct impact on local and regional authorities on which to concentrate its efforts in 2023:

- 1) Follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe; better regulation and active subsidiarity for an EU that delivers**
- 2) Enlargement, Ukraine and Eastern neighbourhood**
- 3) Local democracy and citizens' participation, fundamental rights and rule of law**
- 4) Migration and integration**
- 5) Southern Neighbourhood and international partnerships: Strengthening resilience in the Southern Neighbourhood and in the world**

Details of these priority policy areas are provided in the following sections.

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<sup>6</sup> Bodies set up under Stabilisation and Association Agreements where the CoR represents the EU.

<sup>7</sup> An explanatory sheet for each proposed priority policy area is enclosed in Appendix III. These policy areas will also be the first to benefit from the thematic planning process.

<sup>8</sup> COR-2022-05560-00-00-TCD-TRA.

### 2.1.1 Follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe; better regulation and active subsidiarity for an EU that delivers

CIVEX activities on the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFE) refer to CoR policy priority 1: *'Bringing Europe closer to its people'*. Regarding the European Commission's (EC) political priorities for 2019-2024, this area falls under the priority *'A New Push for European Democracy'*. The EC Work Programme 2023 is widely inspired by the results of CoFE, both as it includes some key initiatives stemming from the 49 CoFE proposals, and as it adds the European Citizens' Panels to the EC decision-making toolbox, in order to gather citizens' recommendations ahead of key policy proposals.

Together with 328 detailed measures, the proposals address nine policy areas, out of which four come under the CIVEX remit<sup>9</sup>. One of them, **European democracy**, is particularly relevant and by nature cross-cutting, involving also possible institutional reforms that would allow the EU to better deliver on its objectives.

CIVEX follow-up activities to CoFE will be developed around four pillars:

- a) Providing input to/leading the CoR's **follow-up strategy in the context of the incoming European elections in 2024** and the CoR's involvement in the possible Convention for the revision of the Treaties;
- b) **Following up on the CoFE proposals** through political and legislative work, including via own-initiative opinions:
  - i. on better EU regulation and monitoring the implementation of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality from the specific perspective of promoting a culture of 'active subsidiarity' across all levels of governance in the EU and/or from a foresight perspective;
  - ii. showing the added value of giving a territorial dimension to the democratic functioning of the EU and promotion of European values and fundamental rights that will stem from CoFE;
- c) Intensifying CoR's efforts to **strengthen further involvement of LRAs** and to contribute to the EU policy and law-making through enhanced consultations and impact assessments, including through RegHubs, territorial impact assessments (TIAs) and CoR work in F4F, and bolstering overall the territorial dimensions of EU policies. This would also allow to deliver on the CoR's commitment to contribute to the development of strategic foresight from a local and regional perspective, as reiterated in its Resolution on the 2023 Work Programme of the European Commission;
- d) Ensuring coherence and synergies between the **CoR's better regulation instruments** through the activities of the Better Regulation and Active Subsidiarity Steering Group (BRASS-G) and through a study on the way that the different institutions' better regulation instruments interact.

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<sup>9</sup> European democracy; Values and rights, rule of law, security; EU in the world; Migration.

This priority area is clearly linked to the one on Local democracy and citizens' participation, fundamental rights and the rule of law (see below under 2.1.3).

### 2.1.2 **Enlargement, Ukraine and Eastern Neighbourhood**

On **Ukraine**, CIVEX activities will continue following the main four policy objectives:

- a. demonstrating strong and unequivocal **political support** to Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, to its people, and its local representatives and administrations. In this area, CIVEX will provide supporting documents for the CoP, Bureau and Plenary meetings debating Ukraine. Statutory meetings of the CoR Working Group on Ukraine will provide main focus points of political attention during the year (two to three meetings, first one on 24 February in Gdansk at the invitation of the Chair, Alexandra DULKIEWICZ).
- b. **supporting Ukraine's European integration process** (now accession process), reiterating the utmost importance of reforms, with a focus on decentralisation reform and devolution of powers. CIVEX will continue to work closely with the EC, EEAS and EP in this area. It will also highlight such support in a potential CoR opinion on *The role of local and regional authorities in support the accession of Ukraine to the EU (tbc)*.
- c. offering **CoR platform and networking capabilities** for steering the most urgent needs: humanitarian aid, helping Ukrainian refugees, and reconstruction efforts. On the latter, the work of the **Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine** will be supported by its secretariat (CIVEX), following its Action Plan 2022-23, which includes monthly working level meetings, political level meetings, and constant outreach activities. The Alliance will continue fulfilling its role of coordination of the efforts of LRAs from both the EU and Ukraine so that their voice is taken into account in the overall EU and international reconstruction effort. CIVEX will host a joint event organised with the Swiss and British Foreign Ministries and the OECD, as part of the official Lugano Ukraine Recovery Conference 2022 follow-up and London URC 2023 preparation. The **technical workshop "from Lugano to London"** is planned for April 2023 and will focus on the importance of decentralisation reform in the reconstruction process. CIVEX will also continuously develop and feed (together with colleagues from Dir D) the **Ukraine InfoSupport Hub**, and the webpage of the Alliance.
- d. promoting **peer-to-peer cooperation** opportunities, including city-to-city and region-to-region partnerships, both long-term and project based, and ensuring there is sufficient, preferably direct, funding for covering these offered by the European Commission. These efforts will take place particularly through the Alliance for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, but also as part of political work. A special highlight of such activities will be the second edition of the **summer camps for Ukrainian children**. In that respect, the CIVEX secretariat will also continue supporting the **internal Task Force - 6 on Ukraine**.

In response to the new European urgency on **Enlargement, Ukraine and the Eastern Neighbourhood**, CIVEX will also give renewed and strengthened attention to the **EU Enlargement**,

and will contribute to a continued process of integration of the Western Balkans countries into the EU and to continued dialogue and practical cooperation with local and regional authorities in Türkiye.

In this context, the CoR's work will focus on political dialogue and capacity building, stressing the need to prepare the local and regional authorities for the EU accession process to succeed. The CoR's enlargement tools – political bodies, events and opinions, as well as match making instruments – will be adapted to respond to the increasing challenges in this region including new perspectives for Ukraine and Moldova having acquired candidate status. The CoR will produce its annual opinion on the *2022 Enlargement Package* and if necessary, *ad hoc* responses to possible further enlargement documents.. Finally, specific attention will be provided to the **2023 Enlargement Day event**.

In 2023, it is expected that the EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Council will set up the legal base for a new Joint Consultative Committee, and CIVEX will facilitate its formation and operations. In that respect, CIVEX will remain alert to local and regional challenges in the enlargement process, and be ready to offer its expertise in co-operation with the relevant EU institutions and Delegations.

The **CORLEAP** Annual meeting 2023 is to be held in September 2023 in Georgia, which is indicative of the continued and intensified interest of Georgia, a country with a "European perspective", in this multilateral format of LRA cooperation. CORLEAP's role should be reconsidered, as bilateral cooperation is organised for some countries and others are currently not in the position to engage in structural cooperation. The CoR opinion on the *Future of the Eastern Partnership* will provide some important input and guidance in this regard.

### 2.1.3 Local democracy and citizens' participation, fundamental rights and rule of law

A functioning and resilient democracy at all levels, including local and regional ones, is a democracy built on the EU's fundamental values: respect for human dignity, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. CIVEX activities in this context fall under CoR policy priority 1: *Bringing Europe closer to its people*. The work on strengthening local and regional democracy and enhancing citizens' engagement will be developed in synergy with the activities on the CoFE described in paragraph 2.1.1.

In 2023, this priority will be supported through external activities. On 11 May 2023, CIVEX will hold an external seminar on *'Disinformation – regional and local dimensions of a global challenge'* in Elbląg, Poland. The objective will be to underline the commitment of the CoR and EU local and regional authorities to counter disinformation campaigns, raise awareness of local communities about disinformation techniques, exchange experiences and present best practices of EU local and regional governments in the fight against disinformation and strengthen the resilience of local communities to propaganda and disinformation.

On 18-19 September 2023, an external CIVEX meeting and conference on *"Strengthening the European citizenship by promoting European identity and democratic values"* will be organised in Timișoara, Romania. The focus of the conference is to focus on boosting local and regional democracy and governance, following the recommendations of the Conference on the Future of Europe, while at the same time increasing the relevance and visibility of the CoR in delivering its messages, also through an interaction with citizens and politicians. The conference aims to provide a practical and tangible added value. With the host region Timișoara being the European Capital of Culture 2023, it

will also be an opportunity to share European cultures, bring people together and reflect upon our common European identity.

The CIVEX commission will further pursue efforts to support the application of the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** at the level of regions and cities, EU institutions and bodies, as well as to strengthen the culture of respect for the **rule of law** at regional and local level.

The CIVEX secretariat will also continue providing support in the award process of the Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award established by the CoR, the City of Gdańsk and the International Cities of Refuge Network to recognise courage and excellence in the promotion of freedom, solidarity and equality.

Consultative work in this area will be structured as indicated in Appendix II and III and evidentially supported by high-quality studies.

#### 2.1.4 **Migration and integration**

In 2023, the CIVEX commission will concentrate its efforts on the priority policy area of migration and integration in line with the CoR's overarching political priority 2, '*Managing fundamental societal transformations: Building resilient regional and local communities*'. The key objective will be to ensure that the views and recommendations of CoR members on this diverse policy area are effectively recognised in the policy-making process at the EU level, be it through the uptake of the CoR's recommendations by other EU institutions in their policy-making or through a direct participation of CoR members in political fora and exchanges. Consultative work in this area will be structured as indicated in Appendix II and III and evidentially supported by high-quality studies.

Implementation of the **integration partnership** between the European Commission and the CoR in line with the **Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027** will continue to be crucial in 2023, so as to bring the benefits of this partnership to the CoR members and the members of the CoR's **Cities and Regions for Integration** network. Capacity-building events are foreseen as indicated in Appendix III.

#### 2.1.5 **Southern Neighbourhood and international partnerships: Strengthening resilience in the Southern Neighbourhood and in the world**

Resilience to climate change, food and energy security, or political instability are among the key challenges which the CoR and its CIVEX commission will address in its Southern Neighbourhood policy and international partnerships for development.

As regards the Mediterranean area, the CoR will continue shaping the local and regional dimension of the EU's South Neighbourhood policy, bringing to the fore a territorial dimension to the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), through the activities of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (**ARLEM**), and promoting multi-level governance and decentralised cooperation around the three shores of the Mediterranean. In line with ARLEM's three priority areas for 2023-2025 (*inclusive cities*,



*climate action in the Mediterranean and energy and food security*)<sup>10</sup>, ARLEM will prepare two reports on sustainable urban development and civil protection, to be adopted in autumn 2023. ARLEM will also continue to contribute, via its members, to the **Union for the Mediterranean's** ministerial meetings in 2023 (ministerial meetings on sustainable urban development in May, on higher education in the third quarter and the Regional Forum, which gathers Ministries of Foreign Affairs, in the fourth quarter of the year).

Looking also beyond the EU's neighbourhood, the CIVEX commission will follow up on the 2022 CoR opinion on "**The CoR's role in boosting subnational climate diplomacy ahead of COP27 and COP28**". Moreover, continuing a long-standing cooperation and following up from the CoR's initiative in the first opinion on LRAs in development cooperation, it will co-organise the 8th edition of the **Forum "Cities and Regions for International Partnerships" together with the EC (DG INTPA)** in November 2023. Being a leading international meeting on the role of local authorities in development cooperation/ partnerships, the forum provides a platform for dialogue among LRAs from the EU and partner countries as well as with EU institutions.

### **3. Follow-up of opinions**

The CoR opinions of the European Committee of the Regions are the main tools to convey the political viewpoint of the CoR to the other institutions of the European Union. In the current term of office, the CoR and its constitutive bodies, as well as all services of the administration, will put additional focus on the follow-up of opinions and the thematic communication strategy in advance as well as following their adoption, in order to ensure that the messages of the CoR can achieve the greatest political impact in the EU decision-making process.

### **4. Interinstitutional cooperation**

The CIVEX commission will continue developing its relations with the European Parliament's AFCO, AFET, DEVE, JURI and LIBE committees, with the Joint Parliamentary Committees with candidate and pre-candidate countries, the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, with the European Commission's Directorates-General NEAR, REGIO, COMM, HOME, JUST, INTPA, JRC and its Secretariat-General, and with the EEAS as well as with the Council. In particular, the CIVEX commission will continue to liaise closely with the Legal Pathways and Integration Unit of the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) to further the partnership agreement on integration matters between the CoR and DG HOME.

As the commission with responsibility for governance issues and providing the support to the BRASS-G, CIVEX will continue to build its cooperation with the better regulation services of the EU institutions, notably the European Commission and the European Parliament.

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<sup>10</sup> ARLEM action plan 2023-2025, adopted on 8 November 2022 (COR-2022-04821-00-03-TCD).

The CIVEX commission will explore opportunities to substantiate its opinions by commissioning additional analysis from the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), as provided for in the cooperation agreement between the CoR and the European Parliament. The CIVEX commission will also continue to foster established cooperation with the European Investment Bank.

Where appropriate, the CIVEX commission will invite to its meetings the representatives from the rotating EU Presidency, relevant MEPs, in particular EP rapporteurs, high-level representatives of the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee.

## **5. Cooperation with other organisations and bodies**

The CIVEX commission will continue to work closely with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, notably in the context of the annual dialogue on the multilevel protection and promotion of fundamental rights, as well as with other EU agencies and bodies active in areas falling within its remit. To improve evidence and data on the policies within the CIVEX remit at the local level, CIVEX will continue to foster the mutually beneficial cooperation with the OECD aimed at data collection and analysis.

In the framework of its work on local and regional democracy, and specifically also in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, CIVEX will continue its cooperation with the European associations of local and regional authorities, including CPMR, CEMR and Platforma, NALAS, AER, and Eurocities.

CIVEX will continue to work with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on the basis of the common priorities and methods of cooperation set out in the Cooperation Agreement between the two institutions. Areas of joint interest will include the support to Ukraine, the fight against corruption, cooperation within the framework of the Neighbourhood policy, as well as more broadly strengthening democracy on the local and regional level, including in approaches to disinformation.

The CIVEX commission will also seek to develop its relations with the Stabilisation and Association Councils of the countries with which the CoR has established JCCs, as well as with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), in order to foster economic and social development, the consolidation of democracy and respect for human rights in South-East Europe. Finally, the CIVEX commission will continue to work closely with all the associations and stakeholders active in the areas of development cooperation from a local/regional angle.

## **6. Complementary activities**

### **Organisation of conferences and seminars**

As outlined in the thematic sections, CIVEX intends to organise or cooperate with relevant institutional counterparts in organising events linked to the priorities of its consultative agenda.

The following external events are planned, but remain subject to the health situation and sanitary rules in place:

### CIVEX external activities in 2023

- a) 18-19 September 2023: External meeting and conference on '*Strengthening the European citizenship by promoting European identity and democratic values*', in Timișoara, Romania.
- b) 11 May 2023: External seminar on '*Disinformation – regional and local dimensions of a global challenge*' in Elbląg, Poland.

### Studies

Subject to internal approval and availability of resources as well as the agreement of political groups, studies could be commissioned for targeted research and expertise which is not available in-house or elsewhere on the following (but not limited to) topics:

- *EU institutions' better regulation instruments: comparative analysis with a focus on synergies, complementarity and reinforced cooperation*
- *State of local and regional democracy*
- *Successful anti-corruption strategies of local governments*
- *Attracting global skills and talents to EU's cities and regions*
- *Sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean*
- *E-services for citizens at local level: what good came out of COVID-19 pandemic in EaP countries*
- *New avenues for enforcing functional cooperation at local and regional level in EaP countries.*

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**N.B.:** Annex and Appendices overleaf.

**APPENDIX I**

**List of documents already attributed to the CIVEX commission to be dealt with in 2023**

<b>Reference of European Commission document</b>	<b>Title of European Commission document</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Scheduled adoption by the CoR</b>
N/A	<b>The Future of the Eastern Partnership from a local and regional perspective</b>	CIVEX VII-019  Rapporteur: <b>Alin Adrian NICA</b> (RO/EPP)  Council Presidency referral  Rule 41(b)(i)	1 February 2023 (CIVEX)  15 – 16 March 2023 (Plenary)
<b>COM(2022) 457 final</b>	<b>The European Media Freedom Act</b>	CIVEX VII-020  Rapporteur: <b>Mark SPEICH</b> (DE/EPP)  Rule 41(b)(i)	1 February 2023 (CIVEX)  15 – 16 March 2023 (Plenary)
<b>COM(2022) 528 final</b>  <b>SWD(2022) 332 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 333 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 334 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 335 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 336 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 337 final</b> <b>SWD(2022) 338 final</b>	<b>Enlargement Package 2022</b>	CIVEX VII-021  Rapporteur: <b>Anna MAGYAR</b> (HU/ECR)  Rule 41(b)(i)	18 April 2023 (CIVEX)  5 – 6 July 2023 (Plenary)

## APPENDIX II

### List of the principal legislative and non-legislative proposals corresponding to the political priorities of the CIVEX commission for 2023<sup>11</sup>

Reference of European Commission document	Title of European Commission document	Procedure	Scheduled adoption by the CoR
N/A	Foresight as an instrument of better regulation in EU policy-making	Own-initiative opinion Rule 41 (b) (ii)	TBC
N/A	The role of local and regional authorities in support the accession of Ukraine to the EU	Possibly Swedish Presidency referral Rule 41 (b) (i)	TBC
N/A	The role of local and regional authorities in countering foreign information manipulation and interference	Possibly Swedish Presidency referral Rule 41 (b)(i)	TBC
Reference TBC	Defence of democracy package (legislative and non-legislative)	Q2 2023 Own-initiative opinion (Rule 41(b)(i))	TBC
Reference TBC	Anti-corruption package (legislative)	Q3 2023 Own-initiative opinion (Rule 41(b)(i))	TBC
Reference TBC	Legal migration - Recognition of qualifications of third country nationals (legislative and non-legislative)	Q3 2023 Own-initiative opinion (Rule 41(b)(i))	TBC
Reference TBC	2023 Rule of Law Report	A debate in CIVEX could be organised on the basis of the	TBC

<sup>11</sup> The list is indicative and subject to change.

		European Commission's Annual Rule of Law report	
<b>Reference TBC</b>	Joint Communication on the update of the EU maritime security strategy	The CIVEX commission will examine which aspects of these proposals may have direct relevance for local and regional authorities and react accordingly.	TBC
<b>Reference TBC</b>	Setting a sanctions framework targeting corruption	The CIVEX commission will examine which aspects of these proposals may have direct relevance for local and regional authorities and react accordingly.	TBC

## APPENDIX III

### Explanatory sheet for each Priority Policy Area

<b>Policy area</b>	<b>Follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe; better regulation and active subsidiarity for an EU that delivers</b>
<b><i>CoR commission</i></b>	<b>CIVEX</b>
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p>CIVEX activities on the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFE) refer to CoR policy priority 1: "Bringing Europe closer to its people". As concerns the European Commission's political priorities 2019-2024, this area falls under the priority "A New Push for European Democracy". The EC WP 2023 includes some key initiatives stemming from CoFE proposals; moreover, it considers that CoFE was an unprecedented exercise in participative and deliberative democracy on a European scale, and a way to improve policymaking, which succeeded in developing an ambitious and inspiring vision for the EU.</p> <p>CoFE resulted in 49 proposals and 328 detailed measures addressing nine policy areas, out of which four belong to the CIVEX remit. One of them, European democracy, is particularly relevant and by nature cross-cutting, involving also possible institutional reforms that would allow the EU to better deliver on its objectives.</p> <p>CoFE proposals contain crucial advances for the CoR across many policy areas, notably in terms of acknowledging the principles of active subsidiarity and multilevel governance, a stronger involvement of local and regional authorities and of the CoR throughout the EU policy-making process, and new forms of citizens participation, notably by making citizens' panels a permanent feature of the EU policy-making toolbox (see the explanatory sheet on Local democracy and Citizens' participation).</p> <p>CIVEX follow-up activities will be developed around two pillars:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Providing input to/leading the CoR follow-up strategy and the CoR involvement in the possible Convention for the revision of the Treaties;</li> <li>(2) Following up on the CoFE proposals through political and legislative work, including via own-initiative opinions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) on better EU regulation and monitoring the implementation of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality from the specific perspective of promoting a culture of 'active subsidiarity' across all levels of governance in the EU;</li> <li>b) showing the added value of giving a territorial dimension to the democratic innovations that will stem from CoFE (in this regard, please see the explanatory sheet on Local democracy and Citizens' participation);</li> </ol> </li> <li>(3) Intensifying CoR efforts to strengthen further LRAs' involvement and to contribute to the EU policy- and law-making through enhanced</li> </ol>

	<p>consultations and impact assessments, including through the RegHubs and CoR work in F4F, and bolstering the territorial dimensions of EU policies. This would also allow delivery of the CoR's commitment to contribute to the development of strategic foresight from a local and regional perspective, as reiterated in its Resolution on the 2023 Work Programme of the European Commission;</p> <p>(4) Ensuring coherence and synergies between the CoR's Better Regulation instruments through the activities of the Better Regulation and Active Subsidiarity Steering Group (BRASS-G).</p>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives in 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation of a thematic debate on CoFE in all five CIVEX meetings held in 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1 February: CoFE and the territorial dimension of European democracy.</li> <li>– 29 March: CoFE State of play and the way forward</li> <li>– 23 June: Beyond CoFE. A territorial perspective</li> <li>– 28 September: CoFE follow-up</li> <li>– 17 November: Report on the CoR implementation of the CoFE proposals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A study on <i>The territorial dimension of the Conference on the Future of Europe and its follow-ups</i>, drafted by CASE/Milieu, was published in June 2022;</li> <li>• Organisation of two CoFE related sessions and contribution to the plenary session of the Marseille Summit as well as to the Marseille Manifesto;</li> <li>• Support to the CoR/LRA delegation in CoFE (preparation of background notes and other materials, active role in the CoFE secretariat and in the TF4, monitoring and reporting activities, coordination with the High-Level Group on Democracy and with the Directorate for Communication);</li> <li>• Contribution to the CoR CoFE follow-up activities and strategy, including via the CoFE secretariat and the TF4;</li> <li>• Follow-up of relevant opinions adopted in 2021 through the organisation of relevant events and the participation of rapporteurs to debates and events;</li> <li>• Contribution to the European Commission's Annual Report on Subsidiarity 2021 (published August 2022) which recognises the CoR's important contribution;</li> <li>• Creation of the BRASS-G by CoR Bureau decision on 28 June;</li> <li>• CoR 10th Subsidiarity Conference on "The Future of Europe: Daring more EU democracy- Creating EU added value", 11 November 2022, Valencia, Spain;</li> <li>• Contribution to the F4F Platform's Annual Work Programme with two opinions drafted by CoR members, representing 20% of all opinions adopted by the Platform in 2022;</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EWRC workshop "F4F Platform – simplifying EU law", held on 11 October 2022.</li> </ul>
Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2023 with timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative and political work on CoFE proposals relevant to the CIVEX remit, including via own-initiative opinions;</li> <li>• Preparation of the CoR contributions to the possible Convention for the revision of the Treaties;</li> <li>• Inter institutional cooperation: EP relevant committees, notably AFCE, EC SG, JRC, EPRS, EESC;</li> <li>• Ensuring coherence and synergies between the different strands of CoR better regulation activity through the work of BRASS-G; meeting of BRASS-G in the first trimester of 2023;</li> <li>• Providing coordination and support to the participation of the CoR representatives in F4F and the RegHub, and enhancing CoR contribution to the F4F annual work programme 2023;</li> <li>• Organisation of information/training sessions for CoR members or/and representatives of LRAs, such as Regional Offices and LRAs organisations, on better regulation: CoR better regulation policy cycle, instruments, interinstitutional cooperation, role of LRAs in better law-making;</li> <li>• Possible joint organisation of a Better Regulation conference/seminar with the OECD and the European Commission;</li> <li>• Study on <i>EU institutions' better regulation instruments: comparative analysis with a focus on synergies, complementarity and reinforced cooperation</i>.</li> </ul>
Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible Convention for the revision of the Treaties; Relevant AFCE report (activation of Article 48 TEU) due in spring (tbc);</li> <li>• Possible renewal/revision of bilateral cooperation frameworks with European Parliament and European Commission, including with a view to recognising the CoR contribution to better regulation activities.</li> </ul>

Policy area	Enlargement, Ukraine and Eastern neighbourhood
<i>CoR commission</i>	CIVEX
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p>The unjustified and brutal war Russia is waging against Ukraine has massively changed the geopolitical context with significant implications for the policies of the European Union, including in relation to energy, migration, the economy, food security and EU enlargement. Cities and regions are of the first respondents in many aspects of this crisis and strongly affected in many ways.</p> <p>The CoR's work in relation to Enlargement, Ukraine and Eastern neighbourhood is therefore a cross-cutting priority, which deserves continued attention across all Commissions.</p> <p>As for our work with candidate countries and potential candidates, especially those that acquired the status already in previous years, most of them in the Western Balkans, the CoR strives to continue their overall "Europeanisation": preparing their local and regional authorities for their countries' eventual EU membership; developing cooperation and exchange of experience and views between the LRAs in EU Member States and their counterparts in partner countries, and also cross-border cooperation between LRAs in two or more partner countries, including through peer-to-peer cooperation; nurturing local democracy, rule of law, respect of fundamental rights, and good governance at local and regional level.</p> <p>CORLEAP is now expected to focus more on enlargement policy, but may undergo some reassessment against the background of the further evolution of the Eastern Partnership and the prospects of the European Political Community.</p>
Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives in 2022	<p>Ukraine: The CoR initiated and took a very active role in the Alliance for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, serving also as a hub for connecting Ukraine's local and regional needs with EU MS LRA's offers of help.</p> <p>October 2022: adoption of the opinion by Dario NARDELLA (IT/PES) on <i>the role of EU cities and regions in rebuilding Ukraine</i>.</p> <p>September 2022: publication of the study on <i>Challenges and opportunities of LRAs' involvement in the reconstruction of Ukraine</i>.</p> <p>April 2022: Resolution on the <i>EU regions and cities' support for Ukraine</i>.</p> <p>Enlargement: The 2022 Enlargement Day was the first to involve Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Georgia, alongside other enlargement countries from the Western Balkans and Türkiye. With the political will to revive EU enlargement, there is a renewed EU (and CoR) emphasis also for countries of the Western Balkans. The beginning of EU accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia, as well as EC and</p>

	<p>Council decision to give BiH candidate status are important signs in that direction.</p>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2023 with timeline</p>	<p>CIVEX will continue its work of support to Ukraine's reconstruction and EU accession process. It will continue its leading and coordination role in the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, by mobilising both the political level and the working level of the Alliance.</p> <p>CIVEX will also continue the work with the extended CoR Working Group on Ukraine, with ultimately a possible change of the working group into a fully-fledged Joint Consultative Committee and start preparatory work for a working group with Moldova. It will firmly embed the two new candidate countries, Ukraine and Moldova, into its enlargement work, including in its annual Enlargement Days event. Preparations are also furthered to establish JCC Albania.</p> <p>Overall, CIVEX will give renewed and strengthened attention to the Enlargement process, and will contribute to a continued process of integration of the Western Balkans countries into the EU and to continued dialogue and practical cooperation with Turkey. In this context, the work of the CoR will focus on political dialogue and capacity building, stressing the need to prepare the local and regional authorities in the EU accession process.</p> <p>CORLEAP Annual meeting 2023 is to be held in September 2023 in Georgia, showing continued and intensified interest of Georgia, a "potential EU candidate country", in this multilateral format of LRA cooperation. CORLEAP's role should be reconsidered as bilateral cooperation is organised for some countries and others are currently not in the position for a structural cooperation. The CoR opinion on the Future of the Eastern Partnership would provide some important input and guidance in this regard.</p> <p>The CoR will produce its annual opinion on the EC enlargement package and focus on enlargement countries of the Western Balkans and Türkiye as well as the accession countries that received their status in 2022.</p> <p>The CoR will request EPRS to produce studies for the Enlargement Days, for more general and country-focused topics.</p>
<p>Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<p>Other EU institutions, notably EEAS and DG NEAR, are increasingly aware and appreciative of the CoR efforts in the area of enlargement and Eastern Partnership. They consult with the CoR secretariat regularly and exchange experience and views. Their representatives take part in the CoR external bodies, such as JCCs, WGs, and multilateral bodies such as CORLEAP.</p>

<b>Policy area</b>	<b>Local democracy and citizens' participation, fundamental rights and rule of law</b>
<b>CoR commission</b>	<b>CIVEX</b>
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p>In 2023, further strengthening of the EU's capacity to defend democracy and the rule of law, as well as ensuring media freedom and pluralism and to strengthen a pluralistic, equal and inclusive society will be needed.</p> <p>CIVEX activities in the context of local democracy, fundamental rights and rule of law' fall under CoR policy priority 1: "Bringing Europe closer to its people". In relation to the European Commission's political priorities 2019-2024, these activities correspond to the priorities "A New Push for European Democracy" and "Promoting our European way of life". The outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFE) is particularly relevant for the policy area of European democracy, as it is explained in the European Commission Work Programme (EC WP) 2023.</p> <p>Beyond the specific initiatives proposed<sup>12</sup>, the EC considers that the benchmark to evaluate the long-term success of the CoFE will consist in how the involvement of citizens in priority and ambition setting will improve, as well as in designing and making policies at European level.</p> <p>CIVEX work in this area will follow several strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. to follow-up on the <b>European Democracy Action Plan (EDAP)</b>, and the upcoming Defence of Democracy package, particularly in view of the European Parliament elections in 2024;</li> <li>ii. to follow-up on <b>CoFE</b> outcome and notably on the inclusion of European citizens' panels in EU policy-making toolbox, whereby CIVEX will work on participatory democracy focusing on the added value of giving a territorial dimension to such innovations, as well as on the link between participatory and representative democracy;</li> <li>iii. to further promote and support the application of <b>EU Charter of Fundamental Rights</b>, particularly at the level of regions and cities;</li> <li>iv. to promote a culture of respect for the <b>rule of law</b> among local and regional politicians, highlighting the role and contribution of local and regional authorities to the protection of fundamental rights and the rule of law; to step up the involvement of the CoR, LRAs and civil society in promoting a culture of respect for the rule of law and to ensure that LRAs are not unfairly hit by the sanctions in the case of funding conditionality.</li> </ol>

<sup>12</sup> The three new initiatives presented in the EC EWP 2023 under "A new push for European democracy" all stem from CoFE proposals.

<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives in 2022</p>	<p><u>Democracy and citizens' participation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of the opinion on <u>Reinforcing democracy and integrity of elections</u> (April plenary, rapporteur Vincenzo BIANCO, IT/PES);</li> <li>• Publication of the study "<i>Developing a handbook on good practice in countering disinformation at local and regional level</i>";</li> <li>• Publication of the study "<i>State of local and regional democracy – a youth perspective</i>";</li> <li>• Participatory exercise of co-drafting with youth an EU Charter on Youth and Democracy, an initiative launched jointly with the European Youth Forum.</li> </ul> <p><u>Fundamental rights</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building seminar on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights for CoR staff: introduction, principles, relevance to the CoR, local dimensions;</li> <li>• Annual dialogue with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) – debate on the fundamental rights implications of the war in Ukraine at the CIVEX meeting held on 17/11/2022;</li> <li>• Adoption of the opinion on <u>Extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crimes</u> (for adoption at the November/December Plenary, rapporteur Aleksandra DULKIEWICZ, PL/EPP).</li> </ul> <p><u>Rule of Law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per the annual Rule of Law Report, the focus in this area is on four strands: justice systems, anti-corruption frameworks, media freedom and pluralism, and institutional checks and balances. In 2022, Mark SPEICH (DE/EPP), was appointed as the rapporteur on European Media Freedom Act, with adoption in plenary foreseen on 15 March 2023.</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2023 with timeline</p>	<p><u>Democracy and citizens' participation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative and political work on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– files presented in 2022</li> <li>1. Media Freedom Act (legislative and non-legislative, Article 114 TFEU, published in September 2022).</li> <li>– files announced for 2023</li> <li>2. Defence of democracy package, including an initiative on the protection of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence. The package would also refer to the development of a civic space and citizen participation as a cornerstone of democratic resilience (legislative and non-legislative, Article 114 TFEU, Q2 2023).</li> <li>– preparatory work in view of the 2024 elections to the European Parliament.</li> <li>3. Disinformation (possible own-initiative opinion, Q2 2023).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participation in the European Commission high-level event on</li> </ul>

	<p>democracy and election-related matters, as outlined in the European Democracy Action Plan (fall 2023);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study on the <i>State of local and regional democracy</i>;</li> <li>• As a follow-up to CoFE (see also the explanatory sheet on CoFE, Better regulation and active subsidiarity), capacity building for CIVEX members on participatory democracy, piloting deliberative processes in key selected dossiers, in cooperation with Directorate D, and contributing to the drafting of a charter on citizens' participation in cooperation with other institutions;</li> <li>• Inter-institutional cooperation: EP AFCO and LIBE, EC SG and DG CNECT, JRC, EPRS. EESC.</li> </ul> <p><u>Fundamental rights</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual dialogue with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) – debate on fundamental rights issues (tbd) to be held at one of the CIVEX meetings in 2023;</li> <li>• Strengthened cooperation with FRA on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights at the level of regions and cities, through capacity building seminars, publications, studies, awareness raising events, invitation of speakers and experts, and exchange of information and expertise;</li> <li>• Stronger involvement of the CoR in the inter-institutional dialogue as a follow-up to the CoR opinion on a <i>Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU</i> (Jean Luc VANRAES (BE/Renew E.)), adopted in July 2021;</li> <li>• Promotion of the local dimensions of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in the frame of the European Week of Regions and Cities 2023.</li> </ul> <p><u>Rule of law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible opinion on the <i>Anti-corruption package</i> (Q3 2023): Update of the anti-corruption legislative framework (legislative initiative);</li> <li>• Study on <i>Successful anti-corruption strategies of local governments</i> (Q1);</li> <li>• Depending on the organisation of the annual Conference on rule of law by the European Commission (CoFE's proposal 25) <i>a conference on Rule of Law</i>, with a particular involvement of the members constituting the "Pact of Free Cities", could be organised to foster inclusiveness in the legislative process and also to address some concerns about the limited involvement of civil society organisations at local level, as expressed in the <u>Rule of Law Report 2022</u>;</li> <li>• Piloting cooperation with the European Commission (DG JUST) on including CoR members in national dialogues on rule of law organised by its representations in Member States.</li> </ul>
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<p>Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<p><u>Democracy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 2023: <i>Defence of democracy package</i>, including an initiative on the protection of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence (legislative and non-legislative initiative);</li> <li>• European citizens' panels will deliberate on EC initiatives on food waste, virtual worlds (Q2 2023) and learning mobility (Q3 2023).</li> </ul> <p><u>Fundamental rights</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q4 2023: <i>Annual report on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU</i> (Since 2021, following the strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter in the EU, the Charter report focusses every year on a different thematic area of strategic relevance governed by EU law).</li> </ul> <p><u>Rule of law</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 2023: <i>Rule of law report 2023</i>;</li> <li>• Q3 2023: <i>Anti-Corruption Package</i> - Update of the anti-corruption legislative framework (legislative initiative).</li> </ul>
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Policy area	Migration and Integration
<i>CoR commission</i>	CIVEX
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p><b>Policy objectives</b></p> <p>In its work in this area, the CIVEX commission shall be guided by specifications in points 41 and 42 of the CoR's Resolution on its political priorities 2020-2025.</p> <p><b>Key challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consultative work:</i> Ensure that the views and recommendations of CoR members contained in CoR opinions on this policy area are effectively recognised in the policy-making process at the EU level, in particular via close cooperation with the European Parliament;</li> <li>• <i>Political work:</i> Build an open and regular dialogue between EU institutions and local and regional authorities on issues of migration and integration;</li> <li>• <i>Capacity-building</i> of LRAs on integration policies: implementation of the <u>integration partnership between the European Commission and the CoR</u> in line with the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021 – 2027, bringing the benefits of this partnership to the CoR members and the members of the CoR's Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants Network.</li> </ul>
Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives in 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For a detailed overview, see contribution of the CIVEX Commission to the Impact Report 2022</li> <li>• Opinion on <u>Revised Schengen Area Governance</u> (Antje GROTHEER (DE/PES))</li> <li>• Opinion on Legal migration – <u>Attracting Skills and Talent to the EU</u> (Giuseppe VARACALLI (IT/renew E.))</li> <li>• Impact of the opinion on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum – key recommendations included in the <u>European Parliament report</u> by Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR (ES/S&amp;D)</li> <li>• CIVEX organised an external <b><u>CIVEX commission meeting and conference</u></b>, in Alimos, Greece, in June 2022, on "<i>The impact of managing migration and integration on LRAs, especially in border regions, and the need to enhance support to LRAs by the EU institution</i>", which provided an opportunity for a high-level political dialogue on this topic</li> <li>• Supporting evidence-based policy making: CIVEX published a study on <u>EU cities and regions welcoming Ukrainian refugees – mapping multilevel coordination</u></li> <li>• <u>Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants</u> – network activities organised by CIVEX:</li> <li>• Webinar on <u>Multi-level governance for migrant integration - Launch Event of OECD Reports</u></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Regions and Cities Week workshop organised jointly with the OECD and Eurochambres: <u>Joining forces: a multi-stakeholder dialogue on initiatives fostering local refugee integration</u></li> <li>• 2-day conference co-organised by the CoR, the Council of Europe Development Bank and the European Commission on <u>Migrant access to healthcare: From emergency responses to sustainable solutions</u></li> </ul>
Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2023 with timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Opinion</i>: Legal migration - Recognition of qualifications of third country nationals (non-legislative and/or legislative, Q3 2023).</li> <li>• <i>Follow-up on the adopted opinions</i> regarding the New Pact, Legal Migration – Skills and Talent Package, and Schengen area.</li> <li>• <i>Supporting evidence-based policy-making</i>: a handbook or a TIA on <i>Attracting global skills and talents to EU's cities and regions</i>.</li> <li>• Supporting cities and regions by implementing the integration partnership between the CoR's <i>Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants network</i> and DG Home with the following objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building an open and regular dialogue between EU institutions and local and regional authorities on integration;</li> <li>2. Building capacity and promoting exchange of experiences for local and regional authorities;</li> <li>3. Improving evidence and data on integration at the local level.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Joint Roadmap</u> on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum signed between EP and Council (to be finalised by February 2024).</li> <li>• Current 18-month Programme of the Council covering trio presidencies until June 2023 (January – June: Sweden) and next Programme of trio presidencies from July 2023 onwards (Spain, Belgium, Hungary).</li> <li>• Follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe - conclusions of the Citizens' Panel "EU in the world/Migration".</li> </ul>

<p align="center"><b>Policy area</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Southern Neighbourhood and international partnerships: Strengthening resilience in the southern neighbourhood and in the world</b></p>
<p align="center"><i>CoR commission</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>CIVEX</b></p>
<p>Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) promotes awareness and action at local and regional level on the foundational EU values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, human rights and the rule of law. These values should be also at the core of the external relations of the EU, which the CoR is supporting on a sub-national level.</li> <li>• The key challenges in working with neighbouring countries are linked to the lack of political stability, as well as the generally slow advance of reforms towards more democratic political systems, respectful of human rights.</li> <li>• Promote development cooperation between LRAs in the EU and partner countries to determine challenges and priorities, exchange good practices, and foster concrete cooperation initiatives contributing to achieving the SDGs and monitoring the process thereof.</li> </ul>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives in 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CoR plenary adopted the opinion on <i>The CoR's role in boosting subnational climate diplomacy ahead of COP27 and COP28</i> on 12 October 2022 (rapporteur: Olgierd GEBLEWICZ, PL/EPP, President of West Pomerania Region). As rapporteur, Mr Geblewicz was be part of the CoR Delegation to the COP27.</li> <li>• At the seventh Regional Forum in Barcelona on 24 November 2022, the co-presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean encouraged ARLEM to continue amplifying the voices of local and regional authorities and to promote the territorialisation of the Euro-Mediterranean sectoral policies.</li> <li>• ARLEM organised the fifth edition of the ARLEM award "Young local entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean", opening up new cooperation perspectives notably with the members of its evaluation committee, above all the UfM (on communication), but also DG NEAR, the JRC, the ETF, EUROCHAMBRES, Anima Invest, Medcities, the Intermediterranean commission of CPMR and Womenpreneur.</li> <li>• ARLEM participated at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)'s Ministerial Conferences on Employment and Labour on 18 May in Marrakech (Morocco), on research and innovation on 27 June online, on strengthening the role of women in society on 26-27 October in Madrid (Spain), and, finally at the Seventh Regional Forum at the level of ministers of Foreign Affairs (Barcelona, 24 November).</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing the long-standing cooperation and following up from the CoR's initiative in the first opinion on LRAs in development</li> </ul>

2023 with timeline	<p>cooperation, the CoR will co-organise the next edition of the forum "Cities and Regions for International Partnerships" together with the EC (DG INTPA) in 2023 to provide a forum for dialogue among LRAs in the EU and partner countries on development cooperation at the local/ regional level, as well as for dialogue with EU institutions. This should be held in November 2023 (tbc) and thematically linked to the plenary session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CoR could support the ARLEM's decision to draw up a report on Sustainable urban development (to be adopted at the next ARLEM plenary in Autumn 2023), with a 10-page study (focussing on Mediterranean partner countries, complementing CoR expertise for the EU part).</li> <li>• The CoR could support ARLEM's decision to draw up a report on civil protection (to be adopted at the next ARLEM plenary in Autumn 2023), with a 10-20 page study.</li> <li>• ARLEM through CoR members will take part in the UfM Ministerial Conferences foreseen in 2023: sustainable urban development (May), higher education (Q3) and the Regional Forum (Q4).</li> <li>• Follow up on the adopted opinion regarding the CoR's role in boosting subnational climate diplomacy ahead of COP27 and COP28 (to be held in Dubai (UAE) from 6-17 November 2023).</li> </ul>
Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation	In line with the priorities established by the EC in its Work Programme for 2023, the three topics in which the ARLEM Action Plan 2023-2025 will focus are: resilient and inclusive cities, climate change and food and energy security.