



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
Euroopa Parlament Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο European Parliament Parlement européen Parlaimint na hEorpa
Europski parlament Parlamento europeo Eiropas Parlaments Europos Parlamentas Európai Parlament
Parlament Ewropew Europees Parlement Parlament Europejski Parlamento Europeu Parlamentul European
Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

Conference of Committee Chairs

13 June 2023

Summary Report

The Conference of Committee Chairs,

- having regard to the provisions of the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission, in particular to paragraphs 33-35 and its Annex IV,
 - having regard to the Structured Dialogue between committees and Commissioners, held during the first semester of 2023,
 - having regard to the Commission Work Programme 2023,
 - having regard to the hearings held for the Commissioners-designate before Parliament's consent on their nomination and in particular the commitments made by the Commissioners and the Commission Vice-Presidents during these hearings,
 - having regard to the exchange of views of the Conference of Committee Chairs with the Commission Vice-Presidents and the Commissioner for Budget and Administration on annual programming during the meeting of 4 October 2022,
 - having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on Better Law-Making (IIA on BLM) of 13 April 2016,
 - having regard to the positions expressed by each parliamentary committee in this report,
1. Welcomes the fruitful exchanges of committees with the relevant Commissioners and Commission Vice-Presidents in the framework of the Structured Dialogue held during the first semester of 2023, as well as in the meeting of the Conference of Committee Chairs with the Commission Vice-Presidents and the Commissioner for Budget and Administration on 4 October 2022; asks the Commission to duly take the results of these debates into account and to support the co-legislators to conclude as many legislative files as possible before the end of the current term;
 2. Recognises that the Commission had to work in a difficult context marked by the successive crises caused by the pandemic, energy supply and Russia's war against Ukraine; regrets however that during this term the Commission postponed several times many legislative proposals announced in its annual work programme, without duly justifying these decisions; regrets also that the Commission often missed to provide early information on the content and structure of the initiatives and legislative proposals prepared, particularly in the case of urgent and sensitive files;
 3. Urges the Commission to adopt in good time all the proposals announced in its CWP 2023; recalls that a Commission proposal can only be considered as presented to Parliament when translations into all the official languages are submitted and very much regrets the lack of providing all the language versions in due time for a number of

proposals, including of priority proposals, which considerably delays the decision making process in the end of term period;

4. Urges the Commission to do its utmost to facilitate the deliberations on all ongoing proposals in the Council with a specific focus on the files identified by the committees in this report and in the Joint Declaration for 2023-2024 with a view to conclude as many legislative files as possible before the end of the current term;
5. Reiterates, once again, its call to the Commission to use the urgent procedure only in justified cases of extraordinary circumstances and to provide committees with advanced information on the purpose and content of the proposals foreseen;
6. Welcomes the good cooperation and working relations established by many committees with their corresponding Commissioners and Commission services and stresses the importance of a dynamic dialogue between the committees and the Commission also outside of the structured dialogue exercise;
7. Insists on the need for the Commission to be represented by the Commissioner in charge during Parliament's plenary sessions or committee meetings on important files, so as to ensure a lively, informed and efficient dialogue between Commission and Parliament; similarly, calls on the Commission to be represented at an appropriate level during exchanges of views on Commission proposals in committee meetings in a way to provide meaningful and detailed explanations to Members;
8. Stresses that in their work, the Committees rely very much on the information and technical expertise provided by the Commission; calls therefore on the Commission to systematically provide committees with structured information, including background documents shared with Council and working parties, information considered as confidential and detailed implementation reports, including financial information; Underlines, in this regard, that the Parliament has to be treated equally as the Council; Urges the Commission to inform Parliament on the budgetary implications of new legislation and on the sources of funding; similarly, the Commission should consult Parliament or inform and give access to working documents before doing any pledges in international fora with financial implications or involving existing instruments;
9. Expects the Commission to continue to uphold the commitment made by its President to support the Parliament's right of initiative by responding with a legislative proposal to Parliament's legislative initiatives under Article 225 TFEU; welcomes that the Commission responded positively to nineteen Parliament's legislative initiatives; reiterates its call on the Commission to inform regularly Parliament on the progress of the initiatives and actions undertaken after the formal Commission reply, particularly when the Commission does not foresee the adoption of the corresponding legislative proposals within one year from the adoption of the legislative initiative by the Parliament;

10. Asks the President to bring the present Summary Report to the attention of the Conference of Presidents and to submit it to the European Commission.

POSITION
of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Committee on Foreign Affairs,

1. Calls on the VP/HR and the Commission to strengthen the proactivity, credibility and coherence of the EU's foreign and security policy, along with the democratic and rule of law conditionality in the EU's external relations and its external funding, with a particular focus on the accession countries; encourages the Commission to work on the integration of enlargement countries in the EU sectoral policies; recalls its position on rolling back on cooperation with partners failing to advance on policy alignment, including sanctions; urges the Commission to implement the findings of the European Court of Auditors Special Report 01/2022 ensuring an effective rule-of-law impact of EU financial assistance in the Western Balkans and to fully apply IPA III conditionality; insists on the need to urgently step up action against malign foreign interference, disinformation and hybrid threats and cooperate on migration; welcomes the European Council's decisions to grant EU candidate status to Ukraine, Moldova as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina and its readiness to grant Georgia EU candidate status provided that Georgia fulfils all the conditions set out by the European Commission; welcomes the decision granting visa-liberalisation to Kosovo; calls on the Commission to actively support Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in their ambition to fulfill as soon as possible the key priorities which are necessary for the start of accession negotiations;
 - 1a. Calls on the Council and the Commission to support the Government and Parliament of North Macedonia to take the necessary steps to advance in the accession negotiations; calls on the Council and the Commission to encourage Montenegro to advance on meeting benchmarks and closing chapters as well as to continue to facilitate the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue to achieve a comprehensive, legally binding agreement on the normalisation of their relations; considers that without clear and significant progress in regard to Türkiye's commitments in relation to the accession process, the Commission should not resume the accession negotiations with Türkiye, which have effectively been at a standstill since 2018; is however of the opinion that the Commission should enhance dialogue and cooperation with Türkiye on foreign policy and security issues to improve the alignment of Türkiye;
2. Reiterates the need to continue, expand and speed up the EU's support to Ukraine in the context of the ongoing Russian war of aggression, with particular regard to Ukraine's military, humanitarian and reconstruction needs; calls to enhance the diplomatic efforts to maintain the strongest possible unity among the international community in condemning Russia, defending international law and the rules-based international order; calls on the Commission to support the Belarusians fighting for Belarus' independence and helping Ukraine; calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with the EU's partners, to increase multilateral dialogue with countries in the Global South on the damage of the Russian war of aggression to the international rules-based order and the disastrous precedent of any impunity of Russian war crimes;

3. Welcomes the ten packages of restrictive measures adopted by the Council since the start of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and reiterates the importance that accession and candidate countries fully align themselves with EU sanctions; believes that the EU Global Human Rights Sanction Regime (EU Magnitsky Act) should be used more prominently in the context of the gross violations of human rights committed by Russia; calls on the Commission to improve significantly the mechanisms in place to monitor compliance with sanctions and ensure their strict enforcement; encourages the Commission to step-up its efforts towards collecting of evidence and prosecution of all crimes perpetrated by Russian armed forces and proxies in Ukraine; reiterates its call on the Commission, the VP/HR and the Member States to provide its full support to the ongoing investigation of the ICC in relation to the war of aggression in Ukraine, and to work together with Ukraine and the international community on setting up a special tribunal to investigate and prosecute the crime of aggression committed against Ukraine by Russia's leaders and their accomplices including Belarus regime officials; calls on the Commission and the co-legislators to complete the legal regime that would enable the confiscation of Russian assets frozen by the EU and for their use to address the various consequences of Russia's aggression against Ukraine calls on the Commission to develop a programme to build the capacity of both Member States and third countries to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction in their domestic legal systems;
4. Underlines the need to continue promoting dialogue and guaranteeing peace and a rules-based international order by strengthening multilateralism and further developing a strong democratic and parliamentary dimension to its external action; underscores that the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has further highlighted the need for the EU to continue building alliances and coordinate on sanctions; calls for intensifying cooperation with like-minded partners in the world, especially with transatlantic NATO allies, as well as expanding its partnerships, in particular with countries in the Global South among others through such initiatives as the Global Gateway; highlights the need to intensify the dialogue with the United Kingdom to examine possible ways for future cooperation and coordination on foreign, security and defence policy; strongly believes that the EU should pay more attention to the increasingly important role and initiatives of the Global South, notably of India, Brazil and South Africa; is of the view that the EU should try to have a better understanding of the Global South perspective and promote a partnership of equals to manage global issues and challenges;
5. Reiterates the need to comprehensively reflect and reform EU policies towards the Southern Neighbourhood, the Middle East and towards the Gulf region; highlights with utmost concern the situation and humanitarian crisis in Syria and the nearly-collapsed state of Lebanon; notes in this context Russia's and Iran's assertive behaviour in the region; expresses strong concern and calls for action in regard to the authoritarian consolidation and human rights violations by governments across the Middle East, notably in Tunisia, where the young democratic system is being dismantled by the presidency; underlines the necessity to continue the EU's diplomatic and political work to mitigate the effects of fragmentation in the Southern Neighbourhood and the broader Middle East and its interplay with geopolitical rivalries on the international scene; reiterates its commitment to achieving a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the parameters set out in the Council conclusions of July 2014 and

observes with concern the rise of tensions in the area; highlights the worsening political and security situation in the Sahel region, where military regimes are asserting their dominance; notes that there is a growing presence of Russian and Chinese strategic interests and increasing economic influence in the area; emphasizes in this regard the need for more regular high-level meetings with African counterparts;

5a. Insists on the importance of addressing transnational threats faced by human rights defenders, opposition activists and other members of civil society from third countries whilst residing on EU territory;

6. Strongly encourages to continue promoting sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based cross-border connectivity within the scope of the EU Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia; reiterates its requests for a renewed, more assertive, comprehensive, united and coherent EU-China strategy; calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to seek for strategic cooperation with Taiwan; reiterates that the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy and the EU-ASEAN Joint Leaders' Statement of 14 December 2022 need to be implemented swiftly; encourages closer political exchanges, including increased high-level meetings, with like-minded partners in the Indo-Pacific, such as in particular Japan, South Korea and Australia, and encourages that the maintenance of a peaceful situation in the Taiwan Strait is made a regular issue of all our exchanges with partners in the Indo-Pacific; underlines that the cooperation should take into account the real needs of our partners on the ground; calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to pursue proactive diplomacy in the LAC region in particular considering the increasing and disproportionate influence of China and Russia in the region in comparison with the EU; stresses the importance of signing and ratifying the planned balanced and modernised association agreement with Chile, Mexico and Mercosur, notably the political and cooperation pillar;
7. Highlights the central role of the Global Gateway in tackling shared challenges on the basis of democratic values, equal partnerships and environmental sustainability; calls the governance of the Global Gateway Strategy to deliver on both the Team Europe approach by adequately including the Member States, the European Parliament, the business community, and potential additional stakeholders and on a stronger communication campaign on the Global Gateway's main objectives and achievements; calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to swiftly strengthen partnerships and develop strategically focused Global Gateway projects;
8. Calls for switching as soon as possible to qualified majority voting for decisions in some areas of the CFSP, including the facilitation of EU enlargement decision making, starting with priority areas within a year, such as the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EU Magnitsky Act) and other foreign policy areas, by using the passerelle clauses provided for in the Treaties, except for admission to the EU and the creation of military missions or operations with an executive mandate under the CSDP, for which unanimity must still be required;
9. Calls on the Commission:
 - to prevent any violation linked to the EU policies, projects and funding in third countries, in particular EU migration policy related funding, including by creating

a complaint mechanism for individuals or groups whose rights may have been violated by EU activities in these countries;

- to engage in proactive outreach to and support for journalist and independent media outlets in third countries with a view to supporting them, to make regular assessments of the press freedom environment in each respective third country;
- to defend the universality of human rights against its contestation from authoritarian and illiberal regimes;
- to make consistent use of clauses in agreements of the EU with third countries, which protect human rights with due attention to gender aspects, including closer monitoring and enforcement of human rights commitments, as well as a new complaint mechanism for alleged human rights abuses, to which stakeholders based in the concerned third countries would have access to;
- to ensure the implementation of a fully unified approach in the human rights protection and promotion in the world by EU Delegations and Member States' embassies;
- to propose an EU-wide visa scheme for human rights defenders at risk and their families, providing for flexible and quick procedures allowing for emergency evacuation;
- to present updated EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, in view of the evolving risks faced by human rights defenders, and the improvement of their implementation by the EU institutions and Member States;
- to avoid using budget support to third countries' governments as an operational modality for cooperation with countries witnessing widespread violations of human rights and repression of human rights defenders;
- to present a programme building the capacity of Member States and partner countries to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction in their domestic legal systems;
- to expand the scope of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime in order to sanction individuals and entities responsible for large-scale corruption, or if that is not possible, to establish a dedicated anti-corruption sanction regime;
- to ensure a more dynamic use of the EU global human rights sanction regime (EU Magnitsky Act);
- to carry out a prompt, transparent and comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness and added value of the mandate of the Special Envoy (SE) for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU, to provide the SE with adequate human and financial resources, and to adequately support the SE's institutional mandate, capacity and duties;
- to support actions aimed at ensuring full accountability for international crimes among others committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including through the establishment of an appropriate mechanism for the prosecution of the crime of aggression; in particular, to enhance its support for the investigations of the International Criminal Court on children and civilian abductions and other possible war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as for the establishment of mechanisms to record the damages that Russian armed forces and their proxies have inflicted in Ukraine.

10. With regard to security and defence, calls on the EU and its institutions to implement its commitments to develop European defence, in particular those new defence initiatives accelerated in response to Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, and to report regularly on their implementation, including on:

1. the Commission's commitment to complete a fully-fledged European Defence Union;
2. the Member States progress in implementing the defence commitments in the Versailles Declaration,
3. the ongoing 21 CSDP Missions and Operations (12 Civilian and 9 Military),
4. the full implementation in respect of agreed timelines of the Strategic Compass,
5. the replenishment and use of the European Peace Facility (EPF) to provide military equipment for Ukraine and to provide complementary assistance to third country partners (especially where CSDP missions and operations are providing training or capacity building),
6. the full and coordinated pursuit of new and existing initiatives of the Member States or the European Commission, including those from the newly established Joint Defence Procurement Task Force and the urgent question on how to establish strong formal links between all to end fragmentation and increase interoperability, namely:
 - the European Defence Fund (EDF),
 - the European Defence Agency's Capability Development Plan (CDP) and Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD),
 - the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO),
 - the proposal for European defence industry reinforcement through common procurement act (EDIRPA),
 - the EU initiatives linked to the announced EU ammunition plan for Ukraine,
 - the anticipated proposal for a European Defence Investment Programme (EDIP).
 - the enhancement of EU-NATO defence cooperation.

In terms of urgent needs, stresses that EDIRPA can only be a first step towards improving the EDTIB's capacities to supply EU Member States with the products and quantities needed and should be complemented with further initiatives, including the envisaged long-term European Defence Investment Program (EDIP) for which an adequate funding needs to be ensured; further calls for the EU to enhance its capacities for responding to hybrid warfare, including for the detection and response to disinformation campaigns targeting the EU institutions and CSDP Missions and Operations.

POSITION
of the Committee on Development

The Committee on Development,

1. Stresses that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its subsequent consequences on food insecurity and the overall cost of living has worsened an already difficult situation in developing countries; calls on the EU to address the root causes of global food insecurity and to develop a fairer, more resilient and sustainable agro-food system, taking biodiversity requirements in account which is in line with the European Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy and, also more generally, towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially number 2 (zero hunger); in this respect, reiterates its call on the Commission to lead by example by ensuring that hazardous pesticides banned in the EU are not exported to partner countries; calls on the EU to support partner countries to become food self-sufficient, in particular with regard to smallholder farmers in agroecological farming; denounces the inhumane Russian blockade of Ukraine's ports and grain exports, which has aggravated the risk of famine for millions of people outside Ukraine and has shown the vulnerability of supply chain dependency; calls on the Commission to continue supporting initiatives which ensure that wheat from Ukraine reach developing countries and facilitate grain export from Ukraine, such as the Black Sea Grain deal and the EU Solidarity lanes to reach developing countries without, at the same time, threatening the resilience of the EU agricultural sector and contribute to the alleviation of hunger; on a more general note, calls for the implementation of both short-term and long-term humanitarian-aid and food assistance-related measures in order to tackle the most urgent food security crises and to report back on all actions undertaken;
2. Is concerned by the growing development and humanitarian needs resulting from the changing geopolitical landscape and the limited funds available under Heading 6; calls for safeguarding of the funds originally allocated to developing countries, despite the massive needs of Ukraine; insists on the need for a thorough mid-term revision of the NDICI-Global Europe instrument that takes account of these increased needs; is concerned by the rising debt level in developing countries and reiterates therefore the need for a multilateral, long term and strategic approach on how to deal with debt, including debt relief in developing countries; requests the Commission to adopt an action plan linked to the mobilisation of domestic resources and innovative financial instruments and further calls for an acceleration of the reform of the European financial architecture for development and international financial institutions in order to maximise the use of resources;
3. Stresses that the level of expectation is high when it comes to the rolling out and delivery of the Global Gateway initiative; insists on the orientation of all the actions under this new initiative towards the need to implement the 2030 Agenda with its "leave no one behind" principle; welcomes the selection of flagship initiatives for 2023 to increase the visibility of EU actions and calls for rapid and tangible results to be produced on the

ground, as it will also help to counteract the flow of disinformation, which is currently at play in some of our partner countries, especially in the current geopolitical context; calls for the governance of the Global Gateway initiative to be aligned with that of the NDICI-Global Europe regulation in order to ensure better involvement of civil society and an increased role for the European Parliament; encourages the Commission to identify strategic Global Gateway investments in Africa and in Latin America ahead of the July 2023 EU-CELAC Summit; underlines the importance of revitalising the EU-Africa and EU-Latin America partnerships; and welcomes the upcoming release of the Communication on Latin America, which will cover other important aspects such as trade; on a more general note, insists that the EU needs to be seen as a reliable and trustworthy partner and strongly calls in this context for the rapid signature and entry into force of the new agreement between the EU and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS);

4. Recalls that peace is a pre-condition for development and that human development is essential for the eradication of poverty; welcomes the upcoming launch of the inequality marker in the field of EU development policy, as fighting inequality can contribute significantly to human development; further welcomes the adoption of the EU Global Health Strategy, which was a long-standing demand of the European Parliament; insists on the need to follow a One Health approach and for renewed attention to be given to the strengthening of the primary health systems in developing countries; calls for the Strategy to address also the long-term consequences of infectious diseases; notes the progress made in the implementation of the Team Europe initiative on manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa, which is fundamental in order to ensure strong and resilient health systems;
5. Calls for further progress to be made in relation to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education) and the targets on universal primary education, equal access to education, including technical and vocational, and quality education for all; acknowledges that funding for education under the NDICI-Global Europe regulation has increased from 7% to more than 10%; calls however for quantitative data to be made available in order for the results of EU actions in this sector to be more tangible; further insists on the importance of addressing the quality of education also through adequate teacher training and welcomes in this context the launching of the Regional Teachers Initiative in Africa; calls on the Commission to continue on this track by further mainstreaming EU support for education; highlights, again, the importance of education, including technical and vocational training, for ensuring access to decent jobs and, thereby contribute to human development and economic growth in developing countries;
6. Calls for the EU to give renewed impetus to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which is lagging behind; expects the first ever EU SDG voluntary review to constitute the first step towards the establishment of an overarching EU strategy and roadmap and a funding plan for their realisation; calls on the Commission to prepare before the end of the year a Communication clarifying the application of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) in the context of the SDGs, as stated in the European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2023 on PCD (2021/2164(INI)); regrets that the concept of PCD is not properly implemented and calls for urgent measures to be taken in this regard; affirms that PCD is a substantive requirement in order to avoid EU policies having

negative impacts on poor and vulnerable people in developing countries and to seek and take advantage of opportunities to achieve synergies in pursuit of development objectives; underlines that the proposed new EU legislation on Critical Raw Materials is a case in point, presenting both opportunities and challenges jointly for developing countries and the EU; urges the Commission to assess properly the risks when designing such policies;

7. Expresses its serious concern regarding the rapidly-growing global humanitarian funding gap; calls on the Commission to explore all avenues to mobilise additional resources, including through a revision of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), in order to guarantee timely, predictable and flexible funding for humanitarian aid; insists that the current MFF Heading 6 is not sufficient in the context of rising humanitarian needs worldwide and the EU's commitment to be a credible global player and a reliable partner to third countries; encourages the Commission to engage actively with new donors and to look for possible new sources of funding, including from the private sector, with the aim to widen the donor base; invites the Commission to join the Parliament's call on EU Member States to contribute a fixed share of their gross national incomes to humanitarian aid and work towards its achievement;
8. Calls for a rapid and efficient implementation of the EU's humanitarian-development-peace nexus in order to maximise resources and the impact on the ground and strengthen resilience in crisis-affected countries; underlines that immediate relief is critical but that it cannot address complex and protracted crises alone; emphasizes therefore the need to focus on long-term solutions to address the root causes for the needs of humanitarian aid; stresses the particular challenges of women, children and youth in conflicts and humanitarian crises and calls on the Commission to adopt concrete measures to properly address the needs of people in vulnerable situations, in particular regarding gender-based violence and the exploitation and abuse of children; recalls the need to further develop an adapted and effective gender-responsive EU humanitarian action; highlights the importance of education as a key sector for the triple nexus; calls on the Commission to lead by example in delivering on the nexus approach by ensuring a strong coordination between its Directorates General and the European External Action Service.
9. Condemns the systematic violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) around the world and deplores the growing attacks on humanitarian workers, such as the recent attacks against humanitarian workers in Sudan, as well as discriminatory policies such as the ban on female workers in Afghanistan; calls on the Commission to present a "Humanitarian Diplomacy Strategy" to advocate for the protection and non-discrimination of civilians and humanitarian workers in line with IHL and humanitarian principles; calls on the Commission to hold accountable perpetrators of IHL violations; urges the Commission to work with the Council to include humanitarian exemptions in all EU restrictive measures regimes - mixed and autonomous - in line with UN resolution 2664 (2022) to ensure that they are not time-bound, as current exemptions which are limited to six months are not sufficient;
10. Condemns the unprovoked and unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the systematic violations of IHL and human rights committed by Russia, including the use of landmines; demands that the perpetrators be held accountable; calls on the Commission to continue to provide necessary financial and logistical support, as well as

equipment, training and expertise for demining in Ukraine; insists that the EU should lead the international efforts for Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction based on "build back better" principles and calls on the Commission to involve the European Parliament in those efforts to ensure effective parliamentary oversight.

POSITION
of the Committee on International Trade

The Committee on International Trade,

1. Stresses that the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis and further geopolitical challenges have hindered the post-pandemic recovery; supports the Commission's main message in the Work Programme 2023 that challenges of such scale can only truly be tackled collectively, as one Union; stresses that EU trade policy can play an important role in facilitating economic recovery and boosting economic growth while making the economy more resilient, inclusive, competitive and fit for the green and digital transitions, as well as focusing on shared prosperity and strengthening Europe's influence in a fast-changing world; welcomes the fact that in 2023 the intense work, including on important legislative files, is bearing fruit thereby further shaping the concept of EU's open strategic autonomy; looks forward to the Communication and debate on economic security;
2. Calls again on the Commission to develop and implement a more coherent approach covering the internal and external aspects of EU economic policies; reminds the Commission to go back to pre-COVID practice and to systematically carry out impact assessments, including any consequences on SMEs; recalls that this is particularly important in order to ensure full consistency of existing and future trade and investment legislation and agreements with EU's broader objectives; welcomes the continued dialogue with DG Trade and the participation of Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade, Valdis Dombrovskis at the INTA meetings; appreciates the availability also of Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager and DG Trade's Director General, the Chief Trade Enforcement Officer, Trade Chief Negotiators and other Commission's Directorates and EEAS to participate to INTA meetings and in camera Monitoring Groups dedicated to specific negotiations; reiterates the importance that exchanges with representatives of DG Trade in INTA committee meetings are both of political and technical nature.
3. Underlines the importance of the intense legislative work on new instruments to fill the gaps in the trade and investment toolbox to ensure level-playing field for EU companies; thus, welcomes the Commission proposal for a policy tool to ban products made from forced labour, and looks forward to the trilogues on corporate sustainability and due diligence, since this is a landmark law for sustainable value chains and international trade; welcomes the conclusion of the trilogues on an instrument to preserve the sovereign political choices of the Union and its Member State against economic coercion; after the new rules addressing distortive foreign subsidies came into force, is looking forward to the first applications of the new instrument and will continue to closely monitor its implementation; welcomes the on-going work on the revision of the regulation applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences; welcomes the use of trade legislation to respond to geopolitical challenges, notably through autonomous trade measures and macro-financial assistance to Ukraine and Moldova; urges, where possible, timely referral

of legislative proposals to Parliament; notes the importance of the modernisation of the legal framework of trade defence instruments, in order to compete globally and defend open, sustainable and assertive and fair trade; looks forward to the review of the regulation on foreign direct investment screening; underlines, in this context, the need to better communicate and explain outside the EU that EU autonomous trade measures are not of a protectionist nature and urges the Commission and the EU delegations in third countries to use proactively all their tools to change this perception of the EU's trade agenda;

4. Reiterates its strong commitment to multilateralism and rules-based cooperation in international trade; supports the efforts of the Commission in view of the next Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2024, including for the restoring of all WTO's functions; stresses once again the importance of securing meaningful progress on the Joint Statement Initiatives (JSIs) and of exploring wider commitments on strengthening of the sustainability dimension of the WTO; invites the Commission to continue the cooperation, in the framework of the WTO, with the United States, Japan and others to counter global subsidy race; invites the Commission to take the lead also in other international fora, including for the cooperation on economic coercion at G7;
5. Considers it important to continue EU engagement with the US in the context of EU-US Trade and Technology Council; welcomes Executive Vice-Presidents Dombrovskis and Vestager continued engagement to transparency and democratic scrutiny by the Parliament; notes with concern that the de-escalation of trade tensions with the US following the Inflation Reduction Act is not conclusive yet and that no permanent solution has been found to US steel and aluminium tariffs and the Airbus/Boeing dispute; in this context, looks forward to the early conclusion of a Critical Minerals Agreement between the EU and the US; calls on the COM to strengthen with tangible measures the transatlantic legal framework via best practices guidance regarding foreign direct investments screening mechanism; deeply regrets the Chinese sanctions, still in place against individual Members of European Parliament and one parliamentary committee; expects the EU's Global Gateway deeper coordinated with trade policy strategy to be reinforced in order to respond to China's Belt and Road Initiative and build connectivity partnerships to promote the EU's economic and geostrategic interests;
6. Stresses the importance of modern, comprehensive trade agreements and calls on the Commission to come forward with concrete suggestions on how to streamline and expedite the process so that agreements may be referred to Parliament for consent proceedings more expeditiously; in this context, expects the signature of the trade agreements with Chile and hopefully also Mexico by the end of 2023; expect to receive soon the referral for the agreement with New Zealand and for the Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement (SIFA) concluded with Angola; expects meaningful progress in the negotiations with Australia during the current legislative term; welcomes the quick negotiations with Kenya on an interim Economic Partnership Agreement; calls on the Commission to seize the window of opportunity in Mercosur countries by increasing its diplomatic efforts to make progress towards finalisation with the agreement with Mercosur; supports the Commission's ambition of closing the negotiations with Indonesia under the current mandate, and notes the resumption of negotiations with Thailand; regrets that the negotiations with India are proceeding very slowly; stresses again the

broad support in Parliament to start the negotiations with Taiwan on a Bilateral Investment Agreement; calls for full implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Withdrawal Agreement in all its parts, including the trade-related aspects of, in particular, the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, in line with the recently agreed Windsor Framework; calls on the Commission to further engage with reliable partners in order to diversify our supply chains, their resilience and their sustainability, deepen our cooperation on critical emerging technologies, digital issues and raw materials, including for key agricultural products, and help tackle global challenges;

7. Stresses once again that the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' (MSMEs) level of utilisation of EU's FTAs is not satisfactory and, while welcoming the introduction of new tools such as SMEs centres or SMEs helpdesks, recalls once again that particular attention should be paid to MSMEs taking better advantage of trade agreements and to trade facilitation measures, notably with the inclusion of an SME chapter in FTAs; calls on the Commission to ensure that any administrative and regulatory requirements for MSMEs are adapted to their capacities and size and continue to develop MSME-specific accompanying tools; emphasises that the digital transformation has the potential to be another key enabler for sustainable development;
8. While welcoming the efforts of the Chief Trade Enforcement Officer, calls again for further reflection and resources on how to make implementation and enforcement of international trade agreements more effective, including through better coordination with the EU and Member States offices in third countries and DAGs; in this context, calls for more cooperation with like-minded partners; in particular, calls on the Commission to continue engaging with Parliament on improving the implementation and the enforcement of Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) chapters, including the conclusion of the TSD review; stresses the importance of strengthening the Union's innovative enforcement methods and welcomes the Commission's openness to look at the cooperative approach and to consider, among other options, sanctions as a last resort; stresses the importance of including dedicated gender chapters or strong gender provisions in future trade agreements; underlines that the revised 15 point action plan should be reflected in all EU future trade agreements, including the reviews, thus reflecting the new EU ambitions;
9. Welcomes the EU's ongoing leadership in the negotiations for a Multilateral Investment Court under UNCITRAL and looks forwards to seeing clear developments in the discussions related to the code of conduct of adjudicators; reiterates expectations for a swift decision about a possible withdrawal the EU from the ECT at the latest before the November 2023 Extraordinary Conference of the Energy Charter.

POSITION
of the Committee on Budgets

The Committee on Budgets,

1. Recalls that unforeseen events, notably Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the substantial increase in the borrowing costs for the European Recovery Instrument (EURI), linked to the sharp rise in interest rates, have pushed the MFF 2021-2027 to its limits, exposing shortcomings in terms of size, structure and rules; urges the Commission to make full use of all relevant programmes and instruments in 2024 but reiterates its concern that the Union is currently ill-equipped to respond to any potential future crises and needs and to meet its international obligations; expects the Commission to draw the obvious conclusions and propose an ambitious revision of the MFF, with fresh resources and sufficient budgetary flexibility to enable the Union to finance its new political priorities and to swiftly and effectively respond to newly emerging needs; stresses that Parliament should be fully involved in the decision-making process concerning the budgetary architecture of the Union;
2. Emphasises that the European Sovereignty Fund, which the Commission is expected to propose as part of the MFF mid-term revision, should finance investments in key sectors with a view to strengthening the Union's strategic autonomy and the green and digital transitions in a comprehensive way, thereby reducing the dependence of strategically important sectors on third countries including, among others, health, raw materials, food, chemicals and space; expects the Commission to base its proposal on a thorough needs assessment and an in-depth analysis of existing funding gaps, taking due account of existing funding instruments; underlines that the Fund should be integrated into the MFF and financed from fresh money rather than redeployments only;
3. Calls on the Commission to include in its proposal for the MFF mid-term revision a structural solution for EURI, preferably by placing the EURI repayment costs over and above the ceilings to reduce pressure on the MFF;
4. Urges the Commission to do whatever it can to ensure progress on the first package of new own resources presented in December 2021 and secure an adoption of this first package by the Council by the end of 2023; welcomes, in this regard, the new fiches allowing the Member States to make their calculations; reminds the Commission of its obligation, under the legally binding Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA) of 20 December 2020, to present the second basket of additional new own resources by June 2024 and its commitment to do so in the third quarter of 2023 in its 2023 annual work programme; calls on the Commission to consider possible own resources beyond those specifically mentioned in the roadmap; stresses that particular attention should be paid to the recommendations of the Parliament; expects the Commission to ensure that additional revenue from new own resources covers at least the repayment of the Recovery Instrument costs;

5. Calls on the Commission to apply the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation in a rigorous and timely manner each time it detects a breach of the rule of law, while making sure that beneficiaries of EU funds are protected in the event that sanctions are adopted; asks the Commission to also make full use of other mechanisms to protect the Union budget, notably those in the Financial Regulation and Common Provisions Regulation;
6. Welcomes that additional funding will be brought to the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) by REPowerEU, which will contribute to the necessary investments in critical infrastructure, energy storage, renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, and energy-related research and innovation; notes that 2023 is the last year in which RRF funds may be committed and that disbursements and implementation are set to peak in 2023, but urges the Commission to continue its close monitoring of the RRF in 2024 and to advise Member States with a view to preventing excessive focus on the implementation of Recovery and Resilience Plans to the detriment of other Union programmes; expects the Commission to regularly inform the budgetary authority about the implementation of external assigned revenue under NGEU, including in the context of interinstitutional meetings;
7. Underlines that the InvestEU programme has been effective in leveraging sustainable and innovative investment and in providing capital support to SMEs hit by the pandemic and the energy crisis; notes that a large part of the EU guarantee is provided through NGEU and therefore needs to be committed by the end of 2023, leaving only EUR 11.37 billion for the period 2024-2027; reiterates its call for a revision of the InvestEU Regulation with a view to broadening the scope of capital support and creating an additional window for investment in strategic sectors; calls on the Commission to conduct a thorough assessment of how the potential of InvestEU can be maximised and to put forward proposals in this regard;
8. Reminds the Commission of the importance to meet the mainstreaming targets for climate (30 %) and for biodiversity (7.5 % for 2024 and 10 % from 2026) laid down in point 16 of the IIA; deplores that the biodiversity financing gap over the period 2021 and 2030 amounts to around EUR 18.69 billion per year; expects the Commission to take stock of the progress of climate mainstreaming efforts and to examine whether the targets have been reached or are on track to be reached; calls on the Commission to undertake all efforts, including, where relevant, the presentation of appropriate proposals, to achieve the spending targets laid down in the IIA and in particular the intended impact in both Union budget and the EURI expenditures;
9. Highlights that Heading 6 was under-resourced from the beginning of the MFF, a situation exacerbated by the rapid deterioration of the international context since then, as a result of the food, energy, climate and economic crises, both in neighbouring countries and beyond; asks the Commission to pay special attention to the funding of actions under Heading 6, since the Union must continue to fulfil its crucial role in supporting communities and regions in need around the world; deplores the fact that the persistent under-financing of humanitarian assistance has necessitated repeated reinforcements, in particular from the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve, which is depleted for humanitarian assistance outside the Union until the beginning of September 2023 and

might subsequently be used to cover the EURI costs; calls, therefore, for the strengthening of the funding available for external solidarity;

10. Stresses that the current unprecedented geopolitical challenges necessitate a paradigm shift in EU defence policy and financing in order to boost military and civilian capabilities and defence and production capacity and improve interoperability between the Member States; looks forward to the forthcoming Commission proposal to establish a European Defence Investment Programme and insists that it must be accompanied by fresh resources.

POSITION
of the Committee on Budgetary Control

The Committee on Budgetary Control,

1. Encourages the Commission to ensure that the negotiations on the recast of the Financial Regulation are finalised while taking full account of the negotiating mandate adopted by a large majority in the Parliament; emphasizes especially the need for a better management of the EU's finances and a modernisation of the EU budget via a higher degree of digitalisation and an improved democratic accountability via robust parliamentary oversight;
2. Calls on the Commission to ensure a continuous vigorous monitoring and scrutiny of the implementation of the RRF-programmes including through ensuring transparency on final beneficiaries and the protection of the EU's financial interests, in particular ensuring full access of the ECA, EPPO and OLAF to information systems used in the implementation of funds; recalls furthermore, that for the Parliament equal treatment of Member States, regardless of their size, is of the utmost importance;
3. Requests that the Commission continues to implement the Rule of Law conditionality mechanism Regulation in a strong and consistent manner enabling the regulation to play its full potential role in protecting the EU's finances; insists in this connection, that procedures under the regulation are not terminated before there are firm and irrevocable evidence that the conditions for termination have been fully met;
4. Encourages the Commission to ensure that all upcoming proposals including on the possible establishment of a "Sovereignty Fund" will ensure that normal scrutiny and democratic control functions can be fully implemented and respected; underlines that the weaknesses concerning audit and control with spending identified in relation to the RRF-programmes should be fully addressed in any proposals where financing is not linked to costs;
5. Calls on the Commission to ensure a swift and thorough follow-up on all the relevant elements in European Parliament's discharge resolutions for 2021 and communicate the subsequent initiatives and actions to the Parliament as soon as possible; calls furthermore, since discharge for the year 2022 will be the last under the current legislature, on the Commission to ensure that also for the 2022 discharge, Parliament's resolutions will be subject to a thorough follow-up during 2024.

POSITION
of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs,

Macroeconomic Considerations

Economic Prospects for the EU

1. Stresses that the war in Ukraine continues to have economic consequences on the EU and requires EU unity and a joint strategy; notes that inflation has disrupted EU economic forecasts; stresses that debt service costs are likely to increase in the foreseeable future; therefore calls on the Commission to analyse adequate and coordinated policy responses, and reforms to mitigate the negative impact of the increase of debt service costs and of the inflation, and to assess and where appropriate to address the impact of rising corporate profits on inflation, complementing the ECB's monetary policy action and creating a strong EU level playing field for the advantage of SMEs;

Economic governance reform

2. Welcomes the adoption by the Commission of legislative proposals for reforming the economic governance framework of the European Union; calls for reforming the rules in a way that combines debt reduction and the promotion of key investments related to the twin transitions and the EU's strategic autonomy; notices the divergence of views already expressed in the Council; recalls the need to make progress on this issue before the deactivation of the General Escape Clause; calls for a full involvement of the Parliament at an early stage to allow for a fluid and transparent negotiation process; calls on the Commission to facilitate the work of the co-legislators with the goal of establishing a new coordinated regime of economic governance by the beginning of next year; reminds its calls for a proper involvement of the Parliament in the European Semester process; highlights that fiscal guidance should avoid pro-cyclical biases and promote upward convergence; calls on the Commission to apply its role in relation to the coordination of economic and fiscal policies in a way that ensures that those policies contribute to the reduction of inflation and work in tandem with the ECB's monetary policy stance;

Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and REPowerEU

3. Notes that the adoption of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) was hailed as a success for the European project; reiterates that effective and efficient implementation of the RRF is a key priority; stresses therefore that the focus of the Commission's work should be on the transparency of the actual implementation and ensuring that European funds generate a tangible added value in line with the policy priorities outlined in the RRF and REPowerEU in particular; calls for more cooperation and transparency between the EU institutions in the monitoring of the implementation of the national recovery and resilience plans; calls on the Commission to halt disbursements in case respective milestones and targets are not sufficiently met in order to protect the EU's financial integrity; welcomes the REPowerEU amendments to the RRF regulation giving European citizens and business additional funds for extra investments for diversification of energy

sources, tackling energy poverty, creating more energy efficiency and foster cross border cooperation;

Digital Euro

4. Stresses that a digital euro should be designed as a public good to provide clear and visible economic and social added value and benefits to European citizens and to consumers and should have the advancement of financial inclusion as a core value; underlines that these benefits need to be very clearly communicated; stresses that the digital euro could complement but is not supposed to be a replacement for cash; upholds that the digital euro has the potential to increase the monetary sovereignty by giving a vital public digital alternative over private digital currencies; highlights the need to ensure the digital euro is trustworthy, easy to use and secure, while also ensure there is a balance between the need to preserve anonymity and the use of cash and the fight against fraud and money laundering activities; calls for the adoption of a legislative proposal on the digital euro;

Banking Regulation

5. Stresses that a truthful, fair and swift implementation of the Basel III standards and the completion of the Banking Union are key components of a robust European banking landscape, especially in light of recent turmoil in Switzerland and the US; considers that EU banks' specificities should be taken into account where there is sufficient and robust evidence that the international framework does not capture these specificities in order to ensure an appropriate balance between well capitalised European banks and preserving their competitiveness, particularly compared to their international competitors; calls on the Commission to facilitate a swift agreement; takes note of the Commission proposals for reforming the EU bank crisis management and deposit insurance (CMDI) framework and regrets that the Commission failed to propose the CMDI framework within the timeframe it committed itself to in the 2021 Commission Work Programme; considers the adoption of the CMDI proposals as a step in the right direction, but acknowledges that they are far from completing the third pillar of the Banking Union; calls for strengthening the resolution framework by clarifying its scope and making the public interest assessment more clear;

Financial Services

Retail Investment Strategy

6. Notes with regret the significant delay in the adoption of the Commission's legislative proposal on a Retail Investment Strategy, which was foreseen to be published in Q1 2022; expects an ambitious proposal that facilitates easy market access for retail investors and reduces inconsistencies in current European financial services legislation; underlines that as guiding principles the proposal should facilitate a wide choice of products and distribution channels as well as the reduction of red-tape and compliance costs; requests further that the proposal includes provisions that deal with the challenges brought about by digital distribution channels, in particular in relation to the risk of regulatory arbitrage; stresses furthermore the importance of ensuring that the Retail Investment Strategy will deliver a strong and more coherent investor protection framework that fosters trust and investment by retail investors into capital markets;

Sustainable Finance

7. Stresses that greenwashing practices in the financial services sector remain a problem despite the implementation of the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR); notes that the Commission already promised in its strategy for financing the transition to a sustainable economy¹ that it would come forward with minimum sustainability criteria for SFDR products; welcomes the Commission's intention to launch a public consultation to assess the implementation of the SFDR; urges the Commission to come forward as soon as possible with legislation to improve the SFDR; calls on the Commission to put forward a legislative proposal on ESG ratings in order to strengthen their transparency, reliability and comparability and combat potential greenwashing by ESG rating providers; stresses that the intended proposal should not be overly prescriptive and leave room for different methodologies;

Digital Finance

8. Welcomes the finalisation of the first comprehensive regulatory framework for crypto-assets; underlines the need to effectively tackle persistent risks for investor protection and market integrity in the transition to full application of the new legislation in 18 months from publication; calls further on the Commission to carry out without delay the preparation of the necessary follow up actions to complete the framework and ensure appropriate monitoring of future developments; calls on the Commission to swiftly adopt the open finance package drawing on the lessons of a successful PSD2 implementation and thus enabling competition;

Central Clearing and derivatives

9. Reiterates its call to the Commission to continue working to ensure the EU's autonomy with regards to central clearing, in spite of the decision to extend the temporary equivalence of UK based CCPs until 30 June 2025; calls therefore on the Commission to facilitate a swift agreement by co-legislators on the review of the central clearing framework so that the rules aiming to strengthen the European clearing ecosystem can have an effect as early as possible; notes regulatory and supervisory challenges posed by commodity derivatives markets, including by energy commodity derivatives and asks the Commission to assess the need for appropriate actions;

Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing (AML/CFT)/ Targeted Financial Sanctions

10. Regrets the lack of transparency by the Commission and the Member States with regard to the progress made in freezing and seizing the assets of persons subject to targeted sanctions; urges the Commission to provide more information to the Parliament on the activities of the Freeze and Seize Task Force; calls on the Commission notably to publish a list of assets that have been frozen or confiscated following Russia's invasion of Ukraine; calls on the Commission to facilitate a swift adoption of the AML framework legislative package, in particular establishing an anti-money laundering authority at the EU Level, with the necessary powers for imposing fines to entities and the adequate capabilities for ensuring adequate oversight of cross-border operations; stresses the need

¹ [COM\(2021\)0390](#).

to have joint efforts to conduct a transparent, objective, fair and efficient AMLA seat selection process, in line with the Court of Justice's judgments of 14 July 2022¹;

Competition Policy

11. Takes note of the Temporary Crisis Framework adopted by the Commission to support the economy in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine; calls on the Commission to safeguard the integrity of the internal market and a level playing field; is concerned about the risk of increasing fragmentation within the internal market due to excessive relaxation of state aid rules; underlines that a new European Sovereignty Fund could support the European industrial strategy and help mobilising private investments to strengthen the EU's open strategic autonomy; stresses that a strong and robust competition policy is a fundamental part of the single market; calls on the Commission to adopt a plan to increase Europe's attractiveness, via predictable and simplified regulatory environment, including by cutting red tape for EU businesses, and in particular for SMEs and start-ups; welcomes the Commission's Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework enlarging the scope of existing framework; reiterates that any flexibility should be targeted, temporary, proportionate and consistent with EU policy objectives and not create permanent distortions in the internal market; stresses that the EU response to the US Inflation Reduction Act must not lead to unfair subsidy competition and that the Commission should use all tools at its disposal to prevent this and to safeguard the integrity of the internal market and a level playing field;

Taxation

12. Recalls that the Pandora Papers have revealed once again the misuse of shell entities for purposes of tax avoidance and highlighted the important role of intermediaries in setting up these structures; notes that the Parliament adopted its opinion on the proposal for an Unshell Directive and is preparing an own INI report on Pandora Papers; calls on the Commission to support the Parliament's amendments in the Council's negotiations and to insure that effective sanctions against the misuse of shell companies are maintained in the final version of the Directive; looks forward to the Commission's proposal expected in June 2023 on regulating intermediaries and underlines the need for a robust framework for intermediaries to prohibit the creation and operation of schemes which could enable tax evasion and aggressive tax planning, as well as facilitating and contributing to the concealment of wealth and assets; takes note of the adoption of the EU Directive implementing Pillar 2 and calls on Member States to implement the new rules in a proportionate and effective way; reiterates its call on the Commission to make a proposal on the publication of effective tax rates paid by large companies based on the Pillar 2 methodology of the OECD; awaits the Commission's proposal to implement Pillar 1 agreement, once the technical aspects of the multilateral convention are agreed at OECD level; calls on the Commission to submit an alternative proposal for a digital levy or similar proposal in the event of clear lack of progress by the end of 2023; awaits the Commission's new proposal for an EU single corporate tax rulebook (BEFIT), based on a fair, comprehensive and effective formulary apportionment and a common tax base of income taxation for businesses; considers that this will benefit SMEs and business seeking

¹ Judgments of 14 July 2022, *Italy and Comune di Milano v Parliament and Council*, C-106/19 and C-232/19, EU:C:2022:568; and *Parliament v Council*, C-743/19, EU:C:2022:569.

to do business across Member States; trusts that the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework agreement facilitates an agreement on corporate tax reform at EU level; calls on the Commission to respect the announced deadline for submitting a proposal (Q3 2023); calls on the Commission to be ambitious in its legislative proposal for a common system for the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of tax abuse in the area of withholding tax expected in June 2023 to ensure that payments generated within the Union are taxed at least once before leaving it and invites the Commission to take on board the recommendations by the European Parliament in its resolution 'A European Withholding Tax Framework'; such a proposal should be accompanied by rules facilitating exercising shareholder rights in a cross-border context; calls on the Council to resume negotiations on the revision of the Interest and Royalties Directive, including a possible minimum effective tax rate for royalties and interests and asks the Commission to start a structured dialogue with both the Parliament and the Council on a possible revision of the proposal; takes note of the Commission's commitment to implement its reiterated commitment to make full use of the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) to curb aggressive tax planning in the internal market, such as notably article 116 TFEU; welcomes the Commission's efforts to address policies in Member States which allow aggressive tax planning through the assessment of Recovery and Resilience plans; takes note of the Council agreement on broadening the scope of the Code of Conduct on Business Taxation to include tax features of general application; calls on the Commission to contribute to relaunching the Council's discussion on a comprehensive reform of the Code and the process of listing non-cooperative jurisdiction, and to implement Parliament's recommendations in its resolutions on reforming the EU list of tax havens and on reforming the EU policy on harmful tax practices (including the reform of the Code of Conduct Group); highlights the recent policy developments in the area of personal income taxation; calls on the Commission to assess the impact of tax regimes that are designed to attract high-net worth individuals on the Single Market and Member States' revenues; calls on the Commission to take the legislative measures if needed to ensure legal certainty and tax fairness for cross-border workers and self-employed persons in the EU, taking into consideration the growing tax incentives offered to digital nomads; recalls that any initiative must be implemented in full respect of the EU competences framework; highlights the importance of closing the VAT gap, notably by taking concrete steps towards a definitive VAT system and start the effort of reforming this tax with a Single EU VAT registration procedure and the Single EU VAT number by 2023; welcomes the engagement of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in the fight against VAT fraud which revealed several carousel fraud schemes that are estimated to have cost governments several billion euros in total; calls on the Commission to make a proposal to ensure that the EPPO has access to the necessary information and tools to better combat VAT carousel fraud, including from EUROFISC.

POSITION
of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs,

1. Stresses the need to ensure the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR), including the relevant EPSR Action Plan headline targets for 2030, at EU, national, regional and local level in all its areas, and to keep under close scrutiny the monitoring of its implementation; stresses the importance of ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities, inclusive access to the labour market and active support to employment for everyone; calls on the Commission to continue making the fight against youth unemployment a priority, including by making full use of the opportunities provided by the ESF+, to promote labour market integration and the creation of sustainable and quality entry-level employment positions which ensure that young people have access to social security and minimum wages; highlights the importance of facilitating access for young people, including young persons with disabilities, to adequately remunerated, quality and inclusive traineeships and apprenticeships; calls on the Commission to duly and diligently follow-up on Parliaments legislative initiative report on quality traineeships in the Union;
2. Highlights the crucial importance of the European Year of Skills 2023, marked at a time when many sectors, regions and employers face skills shortages; stresses, in this respect, the importance of investments in upskilling and reskilling of workers to ensure their competences are aligned with the needs of a modern and inclusive labour market and a competitive economy; calls on the Commission to establish a mapping of the sectors and workers facing a lack of training opportunities and to develop additional skills partnerships in core industrial ecosystems; stresses, furthermore, the importance of promoting and adapting quality vocational education and training (VET) for a skilled workforce, which in turn supports the sustainable competitiveness of European industry and quality job creation;
3. Calls for close monitoring of active outreach and active labour market measures to ensure equal participation of those furthest from quality jobs on the labour market; calls on the Commission to strengthen the efforts to combat firmly age discrimination and to follow up on the implementation report of Directive 2000/78/EC after 20 years with a view to strengthening the framework for combating discrimination based on religion or belief, age, disability and sexual orientation in employment and occupation and thus to ensure inclusion of all people in the labour market; calls for promoting active aging, better lifelong learning opportunities for older persons and improving their skills, including digital skills, and for strengthening social services and the silver economy, including in rural areas and in regions at risk of depopulation; in this regard, calls on the Commission to prepare an EU action plan on demographic change and solidarity between generations, taking into account the diversity and complexity of the situation in specific age groups as well as differences in the Member States; highlights that the social economy needs to be supported, among others by facilitating access to finance and markets, including the

digital single market, and by creating better framework conditions for cooperation and cross-border activity; is awaiting, in this context, an ambitious Council recommendation on developing social economy framework conditions; recalls principle 14 of the EPSR on the right of everyone lacking sufficient resources to adequate minimum income benefits, and reiterates Parliament's resolution of 15 March 2023 on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion; stresses, furthermore, the crucial role of the ESF+ in the modernisation of social protection and developing a skilled and resilient workforce in line with the principles of the EPSR; notes that the ESF+ programming precedes the current crises, and calls for a reinforced ESF+;

4. Highlights the importance of ensuring quality jobs, decent working conditions, workers' rights and social progress, in particular in the context of the green and digital transitions; reiterates Parliament's resolution of 2 February 2023 on revision of the European Works Council Directive, and welcomes the Commission's commitment to follow up with a legislative proposal and the official launch of the two-stage consultation of European social partners; calls, moreover, on the Commission to invest further efforts to strengthen socially responsible public procurement, so as to require economic operators to fully respect workers' right to collective bargaining and the applicable collective agreements;
5. Welcomes the Commission continued work on protecting workers from exposure to dangerous substances; remains committed, after the mandate obtained to start inter-institutional negotiations on asbestos at work, to ensuring a high level of workers' protection; reiterates its call on the Commission to raise further the bar in respect of the EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021-2027 by updating it in the light of technical developments, the evolution of labour markets and the digital and green transitions; calls on the Commission, in that respect, to propose without delay legislative initiatives, in consultation with the social partners, on mental health at work, on musculoskeletal disorders, the 6th revision of the CMRD, as well as to update and turn the 2003 Commission Recommendation concerning the European Schedule of Occupational Diseases into a directive creating a minimum list of occupational diseases and setting out minimum requirements for their recognition and adequate compensation for individuals concerned; welcomes the ongoing negotiations of the European social partners of an agreement on telework and the right to disconnect¹ so as to protect all European workers and avoid fragmentation; calls on the Commission to invest further efforts so that the Council authorises Member States to ratify ILO Convention 190 concerning violence and harassment in the world of work as a matter of priority;
6. Regrets that the Council has already rejected two provisional agreements reached with the Parliament on the revision of Social Security Regulation; stresses in this regard the importance of concluding a political agreement before the end of the mandate; calls on the Commission to put forward a legislative proposal for a European social security pass to provide national authorities, such as labour and social security inspectorates, and social partners involved in labour and social security inspections, with a real-time instrument to effectively enforce national and EU law on labour mobility and social security

¹ European Social Dialogue Work Programme 2022 - 2024, p. 5: Review and update of the 2002 Autonomous Agreement on Telework to be put forward for adoption in the form of a legally binding agreement implemented via a Directive.

coordination in line with the Parliament resolution of 25 November 2021; looks forward to the forthcoming proposal of the digital mobility package¹ and calls on the Commission to make full use of digital means to protect and facilitate the freedom of movements of mobile workers, in particular cross-border, frontier and seasonal workers;

7. Stresses the need for the full implementation of principle 11 of the EPSR on the right of children across the EU to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality; highlights that, in accordance with the Child Guarantee, the effective and free access to high quality services such as early childhood education and care, education and school-based activities, healthcare, as well as effective access to adequate housing and healthy nutrition for children in need are necessary conditions for ensuring equal opportunities and fighting poverty and social exclusion; stresses also that addressing child poverty requires appropriately funded, comprehensive and integrated measures, such as the European Child Guarantee at national level; calls, in this context, on the Commission to invest further efforts so that all Member States submit and implement their national action plan and highlights the need for an increase in the funding of the European Child Guarantee with a dedicated budget of at least 20 billion euro and for Member States to allocate at least 5 % of their allocated ESF+ funds to fighting child poverty and promoting children's well-being;
8. Calls on the Commission for more transparency and to include Parliament in its work as focal point towards the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its report on the EU due for 2024; urges the Commission to step up its efforts to accelerate the implementation of all flagship initiatives announced in the Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030, in particular the employment package and the European Disability Card, and to include Parliament in all related work, notably its disability platform; recalls that Parliament has urged the Commission to come forward with a proposal on the European Disability Card well ahead of the 2024 European elections, and with a broad scope so as to include access to cross boarder social benefits;
9. Reiterates its calls on the Commission to invest efforts in order to significantly strengthen the social dimension of the EU's economic governance framework; emphasises, in this context, the importance of setting up distributional impact assessment requirements for national reform programmes to ensure that they contribute to reducing social, economic and regional inequalities, and calls for a social convergence framework to monitor social convergence risks, prevent negative social spill-over effects and establish social targets; reiterates its call for a further integration of the European Pillar of Social Rights into the Semester process, including the full implementation of the Child Guarantee, as well as the further revision of the social scoreboard; emphasises the importance of a more democratic European Semester process, with Parliament closely involved in setting macroeconomic and social policy priorities through the ordinary legislative procedure; welcomes the Commission communication entitled 'Long-term competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030' aiming to rationalise and simplify reporting requirements for each of the green, digital and economic thematic areas, and the Commission's

¹ Commission Work Programme 2023, p. 8: "We will present an initiative for the digitalisation of social security systems and social safety nets in support of labour mobility, in connection with the ongoing work on ESSPASS (European Social Security Pass)."

presentation of a proposal for achieving this by autumn 2023; calls on the Commission to demonstrate this commitment swiftly, thereby addressing the cumulative effects of the regulatory burden for EU employers and improving the competitiveness of all undertakings in the EU, including small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);

10. Stresses that, by participating in Europe's labour markets, refugees can contribute to strengthening the EU's economy and help support their country and people at home; calls for a coherent set of active labour market policies, including the recognition of professional qualifications in particular by using the EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals, and improved employment services, in order to accelerate this process on the basis of a proper assessment of the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive; reminds that the majority of Ukrainian refugees are women and children, and stresses that Member States should ensure that the implementation of the European Child Guarantee safeguards access to free services of high quality for children fleeing Ukraine on an equal footing with their peers in the host country; calls on the Commission to provide more support, including financial assistance, to Member States in delivering aid to refugees.

POSITION
of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,

Environment and Climate

1. Underlines once again that the invasion of Ukraine has stressed even further the urgency by which EU has to rapidly phase out its dependency on fossil fuels, and diversify its energy supplies away from Russia, reiterates the importance of implementing all climate legislation in line with international commitments and the increased climate ambition, including through the Climate law and the European Green Deal ambition; takes note that the Council confirmed in its Conclusions of 24 October 2022 that it stands ready, as soon as possible after the conclusions of the negotiations on the essential elements of the ‘Fit for 55’ package, to update, as appropriate, the NDC of the EU and its Member States, and urges the Commission to proceed swiftly with such request before COP28; stresses the need to maintain consistency and stringency across all measures under the climate and energy package; calls on the Commission to implement the Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change; encourages the ongoing work to strengthen the F-gas Regulation as well as the Regulation on substances that deplete the ozone layer in order to ensure its effective contribution to the EU’s climate targets; calls on the Commission to ensure a science-based implementation of the Taxonomy Regulation;
2. Stresses that the IPCC Synthesis Report of the 6th Assessment Report underlined that limiting global warming under 1.5 °C requires “rapid and deep and, in most cases, immediate greenhouse gas emissions reductions in all sectors in this decade”; Reiterates that in order to reach the EU’s 2030 target and its long-term climate neutrality objective a swift and predictable reduction in emissions should therefore be prioritized, while at the same time the removals by natural sinks should be enhanced; encourages the ongoing work to establish a Carbon Removal Certification Framework in this regard; stresses that all sectors need to do their fair share of emissions reductions including the transport sector where emissions have been growing, notably in aviation and maritime transport; calls, in this context, to safeguard the EU’s legislative autonomy in implementing the ETS Directive and in taking domestic climate action in all sectors of the economy, including in international aviation and maritime transport, to ensure the achievement of our economywide emissions reduction commitment, while at the same time working towards higher global ambition in international fora, such as IMO and ICAO; stresses that it is crucial for the Commission to implement CBAM and engage in climate diplomacy with third countries, in particular to promote CBAM;
3. Stresses the urgent need for a holistic approach to tackle the loss of biodiversity in line with the 2030 Biodiversity strategy, the new Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN High Sea Treaty, notably by expanding the legal protection of terrestrial and marine protected natural areas, as well as strengthening restoration via the EU Nature restoration Regulation, including by the establishment of legally binding EU nature restoration targets to restore ecosystems; welcomes the adoption of the Regulation to stop imported

deforestation, which includes due diligence obligations for the placing, making available and exporting from the EU market of forest risk commodities; calls on the Commission to present its proposal on Soil Health Law, foreseen for June 2023, with full respect for the subsidiarity principle, for the protection and sustainable use of soil, addressing all major soil threats;

4. Welcomes the targets presented in the Farm to Fork and the Biodiversity strategies; underlines the importance to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to achieve a paradigm shift towards sustainable food systems; welcomes the proposal for a revision of the Directive on sustainable use of plant protection products and urges the Commission to present the proposals on reduction of food waste and date marking, as soon as possible, in line with its earlier commitment;
5. Welcomes the Chemicals strategy for sustainability and urges the Commission to continue implementing the actions laid down in that strategy as well as in EP resolution of 2020¹; supports the Zero pollution action plan for water, air and soil; considers it imperative, in this context, that the Commission presents impact assessed legislative proposals to rapidly substitute endocrine disruptors, all non-essential uses of PFAS and other harmful chemicals, in production and use as well as in imports to the EU; calls on the Commission to present as soon as possible, and at the latest by June 2023, the long awaited revision of the REACH Regulation and underlines the importance of the ongoing revisions of the Ambient Air Quality Directive, the various water Directives and the Industrial Emissions Directive in order to better address pollution;
6. Welcomes the Circular Economy Action Plan and urges the Commission to continue implementing the actions laid down in the new Circular Economy Action Plan and in the EP resolution on the Action Plan²; stresses the importance of laying down binding EU targets for 2030 to significantly reduce the EU material and consumption footprints and bring them within planetary boundaries by 2050, using the indicators adopted by Eurostat as part of the updated circular economy monitoring framework; calls on the Commission to tackle plastics in a comprehensive way; urges the Commission to adopt a general phase-out of intentionally added microplastics and to reduce, through new mandatory regulatory measures, the unintentional release of all microplastics at source; reiterates the need to reinforce the essential requirements for packaging and to reduce packaging waste and (over)packaging while safeguarding the functionality of the product, therefore underlines the importance of the ongoing legislative work on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation; underlines that sustainable, circular, safe and non-toxic products and materials should become the norm in the EU market and not the exception and should be seen as the default choice, which is attractive, affordable and accessible for all consumers; underlines the necessity to continue the legislative work on sustainable products to set horizontal principles for product policy and binding requirements on products placed on the EU market;

Health and Civil Protection

¹ Resolution of 10 July 2020, P9_TA(2020)0201

² Resolution of 10 February 2021, P9_TA(2021)0040

7. Calls on the Commission to focus on implementation in 2023 of the health policy measures towards a strong and inclusive European Health Union and for prevention, preparedness and response to public health emergencies in line with relevant agreements reached in the inter-institutional negotiations; considers that the regulatory framework should include provisions aimed at lowering the EU's dependence on third countries for the provision of essential medicines and medical material; reiterates, the importance of the HERA to face current and future public health crises, including the threat of antimicrobial resistance; calls on the Commission to proactively support the European Parliament with the necessary technical knowledge in order to conclude negotiations on the proposals for the European Health Data Space, Substances of Human Origin and Fees payable to the European Medicines Agency before the end of this legislature; calls for the full implementation of the EU's crises response as part of the European Health Union, the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, Healthier Together - EU non-communicable disease initiative, the EU Global Health Strategy and the agreements found on the strengthened EU4Health Programme and the Union Civil Protection mechanism;
8. Regrets the delay of the Pharmaceuticals Package and underlines the importance of adopting all legislative and non-legislative measures to implement the Pharmaceutical strategy as soon as possible to ensure the availability, affordability and security of supply of medicines, the continuation of pharmaceutical research and development in the Union, and the strategic approach to pharmaceuticals in the environment to tackle pharmaceutical pollution; in this context, the fight of antimicrobial resistance based on the One Health approach is especially important; notes with great unease that even before the COVID-19 outbreak, the lack of availability of essential life-saving medicines, commonly used medicinal products and medical devices was on the rise in Europe with a profound impact on health and quality of life outcomes; calls on the Commission to apply the lessons learned from the first procurement contracts with pharmaceutical companies when negotiating new contracts especially in terms of ensuring transparency and accountability, particularly in relation to public spending, liability, global production and solidarity; calls on the Commission to ensure full implementation of the Medical Devices and In-vitro Medical Devices, Clinical Trials and Health Technology Assessment regulations and to present as soon as possible a proposal on orphan devices;

Food safety

9. Is concerned by the delays and absence of the reforms concerning the consumption side announced by the Farm to Fork Strategy and expected for the most part by the end of 2022; urges the Commission to present proposals for a legislative framework on sustainable food systems as soon as possible and in any case before the end of the year, for a harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling system with full respect to the One Health approach to ensure a holistic approach on human health, animal health and the environment (e.g. including mandatory front-of-pack information on carbon footprint and animal welfare), for an origin labelling and alcoholic beverages labelling with their ingredients and nutritional contents, for a revision of legislation on food contact materials, and awaits the belated establishment of science-based nutrient profiles; notes the outcome of the Commission's staff working document on new genomic techniques; calls for the future consultation as part of the impact assessment, to uphold the highest standards of transparency, to take into account the views of all relevant stakeholders, and

to be underpinned by the precautionary principle, as well as the need to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health and consumers' right to information;

10. Welcomes the entry into force of the Regulation on transparency and sustainability of EU risk assessment in the food chain; considers that scientific studies submitted to EMA and ECHA should also be publicly available; calls on the Commission to apply the principles set down in the Transparency Regulation to all stakeholders in the food risk assessment process and to reinforce close cooperation and coherence between all European evaluation agencies, EMA, EFSA and ECHA.

POSITION
of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy,

Industry and SMEs

1. Stresses the importance of an EU competitive, wealth-generating manufacturing industry and the need to support comprehensive manufacturing ecosystems with complete supply chains, with the aim of bringing prosperity and employment to citizens in all regions of Europe; underlines the key role of EU industry as a world-wide technology leader and the need to be highly competitive at global level; welcomes, in that regard, the recent interinstitutional agreement on the Chips Act and calls for its quick final adoption and implementation; welcomes the Critical Raw Materials Act and the Net Zero Industry Act and calls on the Commission to continue its work towards creating a favourable regulatory environment for all industrial sectors, including net-zero industries, pharma and biotech, and ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability of European industry, with the aim of achieving the 2030 and 2050 climate objectives, increasing high-quality jobs and driving the transformation to climate neutrality and sustainable circular economy; stresses the need to develop concrete and actionable transition pathways for all industrial ecosystems; emphasises that critical raw materials are indispensable for a wide set of strategic industrial sectors and for the EU to keep mitigating the risks for supply chains related to dependencies in strategic sectors and to enhance its economic resilience; stresses the need to improve the limited capacity of domestic sourcing, processing and recycling, in the aftermath of the pandemic and the energy crisis following Russia's invasion of Ukraine;
2. Calls on the Commission to help SMEs by increasing investment in new technologies, continuous innovation and ensuring a competent and skilled workforce, favouring the implementation of more sustainable business models, green and digital transformation initiatives and improving internal processes; calls on the Commission to assess how future legislative proposals would not add unnecessary or disproportionate administrative costs on, and generate benefits for, EU industry and in particular SMEs, especially by using the “SME Test”, the “Think Small First”, the “Once-Only” and the “One in, one out” principles, in order to ensure that they deliver on the 2030 and 2050 climate and energy objectives, while maintaining their competitiveness; calls on the Commission to present concrete proposals with the aim to reduce administrative burden on EU industry and SMEs and to assess how coherence between different legislations can be improved in order to reduce administrative costs and bureaucratic burden and to ensure a simple and comprehensible legal framework; notes that the SME Relief Package, which is planned for the second half of 2023, can be used to point the way towards a noticeable burden reduction to support SMEs in the midst of the ongoing transformation; points out that, in view of the war in Ukraine, energy prices, inflation and rising interest rates, the subsidy framework should be adapted to the financing reality of SMEs; emphasises that the competitiveness check should be a key part of a balanced EU decision-making and should be applied in the context of any EU policy and law-making process;

Research and Innovation

3. Underlines the importance of the ex-post evaluation of Horizon 2020, the interim evaluation of Horizon Europe, and the Strategic Plan 2025-2027; calls for a plan that builds upon the findings of those evaluations in order to enhance synergies with other funds, promote innovation and technology leadership, attract global businesses and talent, and stimulate growth in strategic sectors; highlights the importance of supporting frontier research and breakthrough scientific contributions, through world-class research infrastructures; renews its calls for further engagement with the Ukrainian research sector, including actions to support Ukrainian scientific institutions and researchers; calls for a legislative proposal to prevent undue constraints on the freedom of scientific research and to achieve a genuine European Research Area; calls for an effective approach to widen participation in Horizon Europe without precluding Parliament's say in association of third countries to future programmes; calls for the creation of an EIT Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) on water;

Energy

4. Considers that the Union is facing an extraordinary energy crisis with particularly high and volatile prices and serious concerns about security of supply caused by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; welcomes the Commission's reactivity to address the challenges related to the weaponisation of energy by Russia, which has had grave consequences on the Union's energy supply and energy prices and dramatic socio-economic repercussions; welcomes in particular the strategic vision of the REPowerEU Plan that aims to diversify energy supplies, boost energy savings and accelerate the clean energy transition; expects the Union to reach its ambitious objective of ending dependence on Russian fuels without any further delay; stresses that energy security and decarbonisation are two faces of the same coin as a more renewable and decentralised energy system will reduce our external dependencies; believes that the Union played a central role in stabilising wholesale energy markets through effective legislative action on strategic gas storage, coordinated measures to start joint purchases of gas, strategic sanctions on Russia and systematic measures to reduce gas consumption at all levels; considers, however, that several of those measures could have been decided under the ordinary legislative procedure without recourse to Article 122 TFEU; stresses the need to analyse all emergency measures taken under Article 122 TFEU as regards their effectiveness and consequences on the European internal energy market;
5. Welcomes the proposal on the Electricity Market Design (EMD) aiming at a long-term structural electricity market reform to make the market more resilient and ensure secure and affordable energy supplies, especially from clean sources; calls for an effective approach to ensure that the electricity system is fit for the purpose of integrating ever greater shares of renewable energy and ensure low and stable energy costs for consumers while improving market transparency, surveillance and integrity; calls for greater flexibility of the electricity market, while accelerating the integration of renewables and improving the predictability of their production; calls for greater empowerment of consumers and for strengthening the rights of vulnerable citizens enabling them to take control of their energy use by harnessing the full potential of new digital technologies and fully benefit from self-generation; welcomes also the proposal on the Regulation on Wholesale Energy Market Integrity and Transparency (REMIT) that sets out Union's

oversight rules for wholesale electricity and gas markets to counteract market abuses such as insider trading and market manipulation; calls to adapt REMIT to the existing and evolving market circumstances and increase transparency to avoid market manipulation;

6. Stresses the importance of an accelerated expansion of renewable energies that will bring Europe greater independence and security; underlines therefore the importance of the concept of overriding public interest when balancing EU environmental laws, with the aim to expedite permitting procedures for RES installations and to speed up relevant procedures, including tacit approvals where certain steps of permitting processes should be considered as approved in case competent authorities do not react within a certain deadline; underlines the paramount role of hydrogen for Europe's energy transition with less bureaucratic requirements that would need to be regularly reviewed; calls on the Commission and Member States to commit to an EU Hydrogen import strategy as Europe will have to import the largest share of the hydrogen needed for its energy transition;
7. Expects the Commission and Member States to ensure full implementation of the Fit for 55 package legislation and to speed up the path toward the Union's climate neutrality goals as the best way to reduce its dependency on energy imports from unreliable third country suppliers and to improve its resilience to future external shocks, including those related to climate change; highlights the need to invest into interconnectors and energy storage as they have an important role in cutting Union's electricity costs and integrate renewable energy especially in areas where demand is higher; stresses the need to implement the REPowerEU and the Recovery and Resilience Plans with special emphasis on cross-border energy infrastructure investments;

ICT

8. Welcomes the various legislative and non-legislative proposals that the Commission has already presented in the area of ICT, such as the Gigabit Infrastructure Act that will put forward new rules to enable faster, cheaper and more effective data-intensive connectivity via rollout of Gigabit networks across the EU; believes that considerable progress has been made during this legislative term to make the Union better equipped to manage the twin transition, in order to enable high-level digitalisation in all areas of the society and the economy in a sustainable, energy efficient, cyber secure and affordable manner, increasing digital skills, and to create a competitive and robust data economy, so that the Union remains competitive and is able to reap benefits at global scale; notes that the digital divide in Europe is still very significant, with considerable differences between Member States and regions and that recent data suggests that in rural areas less than 40% of the European population uses broadband; underlines therefore the need for proper implementation and enforcement of the new digital legislations and urges Member States to commit all necessary resources; calls on Member States to meet the digital targets set in the Digital Decade Policy Programme and calls on the Commission to support Member States and local authorities in that respect; stresses that the new legislative proposals in the digital area, such as the Data Act and eIDAS, require adequate resources to be provided to the competent authorities in Member States and necessitate setting up coordination mechanisms, in order to enable them to carry out the complex range of additional tasks they need to fulfill;

9. Stresses that cutting-edge EU cybersecurity capabilities and tools are of utmost importance, given the greater pressure put on our society and economy by increased cyber threats and attacks; calls on the Commission to start preparing for the review of the Cybersecurity Act; insists that the mandate and tasks of the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) need to be further strengthened and the Agency needs to be equipped with the necessary human and financial resources to fulfil all tasks attributed to it in recent EU cybersecurity legislation;

Space

10. Stresses the need to re-evaluate the Union's Space Programme as regards its dependencies, resilience and security, taking also account of environmental considerations; believes that the new Union Secure Connectivity Programme requires a transparent, competitive, reliable and sustainable launching plan and calls on the Commission to explore all possible launcher, manufacturer and consortium options in order to guarantee its swift deployment, as well as regularly report on the progress of its implementation; urges the Commission to address the issue of access to space and space traffic at Union and international level, including by promoting a 'Space Law'; calls on the Commission to present a common framework for the Union's Secure Connectivity programme and the Union's Space Programme, including by better coordinating and eventually merging all programmes into a single Regulation.

POSITION
of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection,

1. Stresses that over the decades, the internal market has been bringing sustainable economic growth, continuous job creation, resilience and prosperity for generations of European citizens and businesses; underlines that the success of the internal market should not be taken for granted, especially in view of the recent health and geopolitical crises, and therefore, Union policies should be constantly strengthened, modernised and further developed to ensure that EU goods and services remain globally competitive in the future while responding to social and environmental sustainability demands and ensuring a high level of consumer protection; welcomes the latest proposals put forward by Commission, in particular on the Single Market Emergency Instrument, Forced Labour, and Short-term rentals, but expresses concerns with regard to the delays and the quality of several initiatives, which could undermine the smooth adoption of key proposals before the end of the legislative term;
2. Stresses that the online and the offline world are strongly interconnected and therefore the digital aspects of the internal market should be appropriately addressed through ambitious long-term solutions, promoting innovation and prosperity, as well as consumer choice, consumer control and consumer trust in the digital single market and in cybersecurity; calls, in this regard the Commission to focus efforts on the implementation and enforcement of the recently adopted landmark legislation, namely the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act, and of all other legislation to the benefit of businesses and consumers and to address the fragmentation of rules in the single market; stresses that the development of a future proof regulation of Artificial Intelligence is another essential step in the creation of a globally competitive digital economy; notes that the Commission should develop a vision for virtual worlds that promotes innovation, ensures consumer protection, especially for vulnerable consumers (including minors), and is future proof, fully compliant with EU legislation and values; underlines furthermore, the need to achieve a swift adoption of the Regulation on the transparency and targeting of political advertising, to harmonise at Union level the rules on political advertising, in particular in online services, and ensure a transparent, fair and open electoral process in all Member States, as a pillar of EU democracies;
3. Calls on the Commission to maintain a strong focus on consumer protection, especially on vulnerable consumers, including the digital and green transitions; welcomes the agreements reached at interinstitutional level on the General Product Safety Regulation and the Consumer Credits Directive, which will enhance the free movement of safe products and will help the internal market for credits function smoothly while creating at the same time a high level of consumer protection; stresses the need to advance and conclude the negotiations on the Distance Marketing of Consumer Financial Services, Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition, Political Advertising and Data Act files; welcomes the recent proposal on Product Liability and awaits the upcoming

proposals on the revision of the Package Travel Directive and the revision of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation and the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) framework; underlines the importance of the proper enforcement and harmonisation of consumer rights and calls on the Commission to further support and coordinate both Member States' public enforcement actions and individual and collective private enforcement of consumer rights in this regard;

4. Welcomes the adoption of the Commission proposal on the Right to Repair and Green Claims and underlines the need to advance swiftly; stresses the importance of ensuring legal certainty between the Green Claims proposal and the proposal on Empowering Consumers for a Green Transition; points out the importance to ensure coherence of all further interlinked initiatives such as the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products, Green Claims and the Right to Repair initiatives in order to avoid duplication of requirements, provide clear information to consumers and set clear obligations for business;
5. Stresses the need for enhanced consumer protection in the online environment, for example in the context of e-commerce contracts, against dark patterns, price personalisation and influencers' marketing practices, and calls on the Commission to analyse these issues in the context of the Fitness check of EU consumer law on digital fairness;
6. Highlights that the Customs Union is a cornerstone of the Single Market and to bring it to the next level, several challenges would need to be better addressed and tackled by the Commission, such as imbalances in customs controls in the Member States, illicit and unsafe goods entering the single market, e-commerce management, effects of Brexit and the war in Ukraine; welcomes the work carried out on the EU Single Window Environment for Customs and the benefits this will bring to businesses and customs authorities; calls on the Commission to adopt the initiatives as foreseen in the Customs Action Plan and to urge Member States to avoid further delays of implementation of electronic systems under the Union Customs Code (UCC); welcomes the legislative proposals for the customs reform, in particular to revise the UCC, but notes that the repeated delays of adoption by the Commission have led to difficulties to make progress and finalise the legislative procedure under the current mandate.

POSITION
of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

The Committee on Transport and Tourism,

1. Urges the Commission to propose further measures to support the recovery of the tourism and travel sector, while ensuring the proper working of the internal market; Calls on the Commission to start making full use of the Treaties to develop a comprehensive European tourism policy, ensuring the sector's sustainability, inter alia by evaluating the possibility of setting up an European Agency for Tourism, supporting the tourism ecosystem;
2. Urges the Commission to swiftly come up with a new revision of the Slot Regulation, in order to optimise the use of airport capacity while ensuring the competitive allocation of slots and to allow for the appropriate flexibility in times of crisis; Looks also forward to the announced revision of Regulation 1008/2008 (Air Services), that is of high importance to EU airlines and their workforces; Calls on the Commission to sustain the aviation sector's efforts to decarbonize, including through measures to optimise the aromatic content in aviation fuels.
3. Stresses that increasing transport by rail and waterway is a key element of EU policy to reduce transport CO2 emissions; Believes, however, that in order to optimise modal shift and reach the related targets, more measures should be taken to speed up the process of improvements of infrastructure and of harmonization, standardization and interoperability, removing in particular the remaining serious obstacles to cross-border traffic; Reiterates that the 4th railway package has to be implemented in full; Requests in this regard a report on the advancement of the implementation of the market and technical pillars of the 4th railway package; Furthermore, encourages the Commission to come forward with all necessary legislative proposals to support and increase modal shift and to increase the efficiency of rail, including the announced proposal on Rail capacity and the revision of the Train drivers Directive; Looks forward to the upcoming EU framework for harmonised measurement of transport and logistic emissions and calls on the Commission to present proposals for improved emissions testing in roadworthiness checks; Stresses its concerns regarding the increasing number of road congestions in large cities, particularly during rush hours; Calls on the Commission to sustain its efforts, in cooperation with Member States and local authorities, to encourage citizens to change to other modes of transport;
4. Calls for advancing the work on the revision of the ITS Directive and supports the Commission's intention to accelerate the deployment of safer, smarter, more inclusive, more efficient, more competitive and more sustainable mobility; Believes that fostering multimodality will also improve the functioning and sustainability of road transport, including its connection with other modes; Points out that concrete initiatives on EU-wide multimodal travel information, ticketing and payment are urgently needed to support passengers in making informed and sustainable choices in an integrated transport system; Therefore, calls on the Commission to swiftly put forward a legislative proposal on through-ticketing, in particular in the rail sector and including multimodal aspects;

5. Highlights that inland waterway transport (IWT) can make a substantial contribution to the decarbonisation of transport; Calls on the Commission to further harmonise the technical and navigation rules governing the inland waterways, in particular with regard to the River Information Services, promoting the efficiency of IWT and its links to other modes of transport; Reiterates the importance of facilitating the further digitalisation of the sector and points out the potential of including waterborne deliveries in city freight logistics; Points out that the Union and its Member States should remain at the forefront of improving maritime safety legislation and promote high-quality standards in maritime transport; Welcomes, in this regard, the forthcoming revision of the maritime safety framework (Directives on Flag State Responsibilities, Port State Control and Accident Investigation) and the revision of the mandate of the European Maritime Safety Agency;
6. Reminds of the importance to ensure that passengers have better rights to information, assistance and re-routing, better assistance and effective protection for passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility and more effective complaint procedures and enforcement measures; Highlights the need to clarify grey zones and gaps in existing legislation and for passengers to be protected by easily understandable rights across modes and to be more aware of those rights; Calls therefore for a revision of the passenger rights Regulations in the areas of air, sea and inland waterway, and bus and coach transport;
7. Calls on the Commission to revise the EU rules on postal services, in order to finally realise a true internal market for postal services without obstacles to the benefit of consumers and businesses across the continent, instead of the current dysfunctional patchwork of national services;
8. In light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the subsequently deteriorated security situation in Europe, stresses the need to put more ambition and to accelerate the EU's project for military mobility; Calls on the Commission to find and present solutions to increase its budget line under the CEF programme; Emphasises the importance of ensuring that military mobility aspects are thoroughly assessed and addressed both in terms of infrastructure and funding, with a view to ensure optimal cross-border cooperation and mobility within the Union; In this respect, welcomes the Commission's proposed revision of the TEN-T that will support infrastructure projects, particularly in cross-border sections, to better connect all Member States and to increase transport infrastructure connections with the Western Balkans, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine; Believes that EU based and owned transport operators with links into the Russian market should be supported for the reorientation of their transport operations away from Russia; Calls on the Commission to review all existing and proposed transport legislation and their aggregated impact, taking into account the revised geo-political situation, as well as the increased energy and fuel prices and the shortage of raw materials; Invites the Commission to assess the overall regulatory burden for transport and the extent to which EU transport legislation in force has impacted the competitiveness of the respective transport sectors and to identify possible measures to address this. Calls on the Commission to analyse the impact of the increased fuel prices on mobility and to propose measures to address transport poverty;

9. Believes that more coordinated action is needed in the area of road safety, in order to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2030 and to attain the Vision Zero goal for 2050; Welcomes in this regard the recent publication of the Road Safety package and the foreseen proposal to revise Council Directive 96/53/EC on the maximum weights and dimensions of heavy-duty vehicles, needed to ensure the proper functioning of the single market, road safety and environmental performance;
10. Points out that digitalisation and innovation for all modes of transport is of utmost importance, as well as access to raw materials; Therefore, urges the Commission to come forwards with an investment programme for the transport industry, including investments in infrastructure, digitalisation, innovation, and sustainability in aviation, maritime, rail and road, that will also improve and accelerate the EU strategic autonomy; Believes that particular attention should be paid to autonomous driving, linked to innovation in all modes of transport; Calls in particular for legislative proposals to regulate the hyperloop technology transport as well as for the delivery of goods via drones. Welcomes the intention of the Commission to rapidly come forward with a revision of the Combined Transport Directive; Highlights the importance of training programmes for all workers along the value chain to upskill and reskill them for the new type of jobs that could be created due to digitalisation and innovation; Urges the Commission to offer concrete ideas and guidance as to how artificial intelligence can be used to enhance transport links, which areas deserve particular attention, as well as the possible risks that it may present, also to ensure that public transport is future-proofed against possible crises similar to COVID-19;

POSITION

of the Committee on Regional Development

The Committee on Regional Development,

1. Welcomes the timely response by the Commission to unprecedented emergencies the Union has faced in recent years and stresses the REGI committee's preparedness to tackle them, e.g. Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of the Russian war against Ukraine resulting in massive number of refugees as well as in huge increase of energy bills; emphasises that cohesion policy was mobilised to respond to these challenges with new instruments, such as CRII and CRII+, REACT EU, RePowerEU, CARE, CARE+ and FAST-CARE regulations; stresses, however, that the rationale and strategic core of EU cohesion policy, namely quality job creation and long term public investment assuring solidarity among the regions should not be undermined by its mobilisation to react to these new challenges; furthermore, these challenges should not exert undue pressure on current funding of EU cohesion policy, or be treated as precedent in reference to future allocations; recalls, in this regard, that reducing regional disparities and promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion among all EU regions is a Treaty objective and must remain a key part of the Union's constitutional fabric and budget;
2. Expresses its concern regarding the closure of ESI programmes for the 2014 - 2020 period; draws attention to the difficulties that a number of regions and Member States have been facing for the programmes' closure, submission of payment applications and in complying with the so-called N+3 rule; asks the Commission to adapt the closing schedule of the 2014-2020 ESI funds; postponing the deadlines by one year seems to be an appropriate and simple solution to the benefit of all the regions and final beneficiaries; calls therefore for a close monitoring, coordination and support for these programmes, so that the current operational programmes are not negatively affected;
3. Regrets the delay in the implementation of cohesion policy for the 2021-2027 period and welcomes the adoption of the partnership agreements for all 27 Member-States; calls for the speedy implementation of the legislation required for the 2021-2027 cohesion policy, bearing in mind the crucial role of cohesion policy for the EU's economy and society;
4. Considers the implementation of the Just Transition Fund, the long-term vision on rural areas, the Urban Agenda and Bauhaus project, as well as the EU Strategy for Outermost Regions strong priorities; highlights, in addition, that regional development traps, acute demographic transformations, and "brain drain" go beyond cohesion and are a threat for the future of the EU; also expresses its concern with regard to intra-regional inequalities;
5. Reminds the European Commission of the priorities set by the European Parliament for this legislature through its initiative reports on cohesion, and in particular regarding the publication of a strategy for European islands, the achievement of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean macro-regions, the reinforcement of cross-border cooperation and programmes, the strengthening of the urban, rural and territorial agendas;

6. Recalls the importance of relaunching the legislative process on the proposal for a regulation on a mechanism to resolve legal and administrative obstacles in a cross-border context; calls therefore on the Commission to ensure its timely response to the Parliament's legislative own-initiative report on this issue when voted in Plenary later this year;
7. Deems it necessary to strengthen EU solidarity instruments within the MFF review to address the growing number of natural disasters; highlights that the EU Solidarity Fund was mobilised in a number of natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, forest fires and floods, and regrets its limited resources, underlining the need to reinforce the funds allocations and consider its revision to ensure an adequate crisis response envisaging also higher advance payments and introducing the 'building back better' principle; considers that synergies with the ERDF climate-change adaptation component and Rural Development Programmes are essential in the prevention and mitigation of hydrogeological risks; reminds the necessity of building a comprehensive Union strategy for the adaptation to climate change;
8. Firmly supports the need to strive for cohesion, promote convergence and redress regional imbalances, while not widening territorial divides and distorting the single market in favour of the financially strongest Member States and regions; calls on the Commission to fully implement provisions in Articles 174 and 175 TFEU, and to define a "do no harm to cohesion" principle and apply it to all policies;
9. Asks for the incorporation of territorial consideration in state aid rules, aimed at redressing regional imbalances, while avoiding widening territorial divides and distortion of the Single market by favouring the Member States and regions with the best fiscal positions, with additional provisions for outermost regions, northernmost sparsely populated regions, islands, transition regions and least favoured regions, asks also for differentiated de Minimis ceilings and rules reflecting articles 174, 175 and 349 of the TFEU;
10. Is determined to continue to defend EU cohesion policy principles and financial allocation now and under the future revision of the related legislative framework; is convinced that the Union needs a solid cohesion policy to address the challenges ahead to the benefit of our citizens; believes that cohesion needs to evolve, but the regional development and territorial cohesion should always remain at the centre of attention; stresses, in this regard, the contribution of cohesion policy to the implementation of the Union's overall political objectives, including sound and sustainable economic development, quality job creation, digital agenda, energy union, addressing the climate emergency, a high level of protection of the environment, gender equality, social pillar and promoting culture and sustainable tourism.

POSITION
of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development,

1. Is concerned over price increases for energy, fertilisers and food, inter alia as a result of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, which is adding pressure on farmers and consumers, and stresses that both the Covid pandemic and the Russian attack on Ukraine have exposed structural problems affecting the Union's agriculture sector, in particular the EU's dependence on third-countries to satisfy its demand for energy, fertilisers and animal feed; urges the Commission to present a holistic plan to ensure food security and the long-term resilience of EU agriculture, including the use of strategic food stocks, and considers that a protein and animal feed strategy should form part of this plan; underlines the need to decrease the EU's dependence on fertilisers imported from third countries, by increasing the EU production of fertilisers as well as by developing alternatives, such as the use of animal manure and leguminous crop rotations, as well as a long awaited EU Protein Strategy;
2. Draws attention to the growing concern among farming communities, especially in the Member States that are close to the armed conflict in Ukraine, regarding the high volumes of Ukrainian grains entering the EU, which is leaving local EU farmers unable to sell their goods, with considerable amounts of those grains being sold in the EU market, destabilising prices; given that, unfortunately, the war in Ukraine seems far from over, calls on the Commission to propose, in its work programme for next year, appropriate legislative measures to help farmers in the EU, and especially farmers near the borders with Ukraine;
3. Stresses the need to ensure the sustainability of farming across the EU and points out that farmers are directly affected by a number of Commission proposals implementing the European Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy objectives, such as the proposed regulation on the sustainable use of pesticides, the industrial emissions directive and the nature restoration law; considers that the impact assessments for these proposals do not address sufficiently the consequences for EU food security and for farmers' livelihoods, and a joint impact assessment of all the Green Deal proposals on the EU agriculture is lacking; draws attention to the fact that European farmers are unjustifiably often held responsible for human health decline and environmental pollution, and notes that many farmers are protesting against EU proposals, while young farmers are reluctant to take over farms from their predecessors; urges the Commission to provide a cumulative impact assessment of the impact on food production and farmers' income of all combined actions under the Green Deal and the strategies deriving from it; calls on the Commission to extend by one more year the derogation from certain obligations under the CAP conditionality regime, notably GAECs 7 and 8, so as to allow more land to be used for productive purposes to tackle potential shortages; is concerned about all trade agreements between the EU and third countries in view of the lower standards of products to be imported into the EU and the resulting unfair competition for EU farmers;

4. Highlights the fact that the CAP budget has decreased by 12% in real values at the start of its implementation in 2023, and is expected to further decrease by 30% by 2027 due to rising inflation; urges the Commission, in a possible MFF review, to revalue CAP funds in order to factor in inflation; underlines that, given the greater level of ambition and demands on agriculture, it must be ensured that any budgetary increase is targeted in such a way as to offset the costs of providing public goods;
5. Asks the Commission to provide more in-depth information on the CAP National Strategic Plans (NSPs) submitted and their results so far; is aware of complaints by Member States about the administrative burden stemming from the submission of applications for aid, which is related to new conditions such as landscape features, the new eco-schemes and agri-environmental and climate measures, and reiterates the need for a more simplified CAP; points out that NSPs should be adapted to the urgent situation caused by the war; calls for investments, through the NSPs, that reduce the dependency on chemical pesticides and synthetic and mineral fertilisers, particularly where their production involves gas and fossil fuel, and supports investments into precision farming where this can help to reduce this dependency;
6. Recalls that support for generational renewal in EU agriculture is one of the key objectives of the new CAP in view of the demographic challenge facing farming; highlights that, according to the 2020 agricultural census figures, 57,6% of farmers were at least 55 years old and only 11,9% were young farmers; underlines the crucial role of a rural strategy for the vitality of rural communities and economic viability of rural areas; stresses the need to facilitate access to land, financing, markets, healthcare, leisure activities and connectivity, as well as access to knowledge, including technical advisory services; underlines that generational renewal in agriculture is a priority for territorial cohesion in the EU and for ensuring EU food security and autonomy;
7. Stresses the need for policy measures to ensure EU production becomes more resilient to threats such as climate change, pandemics, war and price increases; considers it necessary, in this respect, to strengthen and accelerate scientific work dedicated to research on the use of innovative technologies and the application of new breeding techniques, plant materials and seeds, and underlines the pressing need for further acceleration of the authorisation procedure for alternatives to synthetic plant protection products;
8. Notes the Commission proposal on the revision of the sustainable use of pesticides legislation, but highlights that it does not provide farmers with sufficiently effective alternatives to chemical pesticides; calls on the Commission to advance its work in developing and shortening authorisation procedures for biological plant control or pest control agents on the market; underlines the need for a comprehensive scientific analysis and notes that, in view of ensuring food security in the present times of crisis, certain plant protection products should not be banned while no alternatives exist; insists that the Commission does not delay the presentation of a legislative proposal to create a new legal framework for New Breeding Techniques as their use will result in plants requiring less inputs such as pesticides, fertiliser and water, while stimulating research and investment in the EU;

9. Regrets the fact that the Commission has failed to submit a proposal to boost the promotion of EU agricultural products; expects to see this proposal tabled without further delay and insists that the EU's promotion policy should treat all agricultural sectors equally; notes the Commissions' decision to table ambitious proposals before the end of the Parliamentary term on animal welfare, plant reproductive material, forestry, soil health and sustainable food systems; believes that the Commission should assess whether the submission of these proposals should be deferred until the next term, given that legislative procedures on them will not conclude before the end of the current term;
10. Stresses that all legislative proposals should be underpinned by sound science and evidence-based assessments and that any new rules should be clear and easier to implement, whilst maintaining and improving standards; encourages the Commission to advocate for higher global sustainability criteria from the environmental, economic and social perspectives while engaging actively with non-EU trading partners in view of developing the benchmarks jointly, at bilateral and multilateral forums, to avoid a situation where European farmers face unfair competition from imports that do not meet EU production standards in the area of food safety and animal welfare; urges the Commission to intensify research into the prevention of animal diseases, including the development of vaccines or other forms of prevention, in particular for African Swine Fever.

POSITION

of the Committee on Fisheries

The Committee on Fisheries,

1. Reiterates the principle that the CFP must effectively and sustainably address the challenges faced by the EU fishing sector today, and calls on the Commission to propose policies that work for fishers, coastal communities and the marine environment alike, that strike a balance between social, economic and sustainability concerns, while respecting the specificities of the different sea basins, with a particular attention to the small-scale, coastal and artisanal fleets;
2. Stresses the need for larger EU investments in technological and scientific research in connection with the energy transition in the fisheries sector, and calls on the Commission to continue supporting the development of fishing gear that improves selectivity, reduces fuel consumption and ensures that negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystems are minimised; efforts to achieve the renewal of an ageing fleet that could be more safe and attractive to young generations, with gains in decarbonisation and with a particular focus on improvements to be achieved for the small-scale fleet;
3. Calls on the Commission to closely liaise with Member States to ensure that the EU funds available for the fishing sector are fully and efficiently used; for this purpose, guidelines should be developed on how to strengthen the interaction between EU funds and how to improve their effectiveness;
4. Insists on the need for systematic consultation with relevant stakeholders and for thorough impact assessments for any legislative proposal on the fisheries and aquaculture sector; emphasizes in particular the benefits of co-management models that imply greater involvement of all relevant stakeholders, such as the administration, the scientific community, NGOs and in particular the fishers themselves; calls on the Commission to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the definition, implementation and governance of the marine protected areas;
5. Express concern with the *Action Plan protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries* adopted by the Commission, its legal consequences and environmental, social and economic impact;
6. Calls on the Commission to conduct an in-depth assessment of the landing obligation, its efficiency, and impact in the sector, in particular small-scale fleets;
7. Reiterates its call on the Commission to ensure the full implementation of the fisheries chapter in the EU-UK TCA, reminding that the European Parliament must be fully and immediately informed of all fisheries-related developments under the TCA and particularly of debates taking place in the “Specialised Committee on Fisheries”;
8. Calls for a due recognition of fishers’ role as “guardians of the sea” and the contributions by the fisheries and aquaculture sector to the implementation of the “Biodiversity 2030”

and “Farm-to-fork” Strategies; underlines the role of fisheries and aquaculture in food security and that these sectors are valuable suppliers of healthy food proteins which would otherwise have to be imported;

9. Reiterates its request for a faster transposition of measures adopted by the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, in full conformity with the Treaties, and reminds the Commission of its duty to fully include Parliament in all phases of RFMO negotiations, in particular for GFCM, ICCAT and IOTC;
10. Supports the Commission’s endeavours for sustainably managed and plastic-free oceans, including the development of a circular economy in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, and encourages it to continue efforts to promote individual and collective responsibility in this regard;
11. Encourages the Commission to use its network of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA) as a means to export its high sustainability standards globally, to promote good oceans’ governance and to secure sustainably managed fishing opportunities for a relevant part of the EU fleet; underlines, however, the need to accurately monitor the destination of the financial means earmarked for the “sectoral support”, so as to ensure it indeed benefits the local fisheries sector in partner countries; also calls on the Commission to promptly and firmly react to safeguard the legitimate interests of EU fishing vessels should a SFPA partner country not honour the obligations it signed up to;
12. Recalls the importance for EU trade agreements to align with key CFP principles: countries identified as non-cooperating under the IUU Regulation, or responsible for serious human rights’ abuses, must not benefit from preferential market access or FTAs; calls on the Commission to promote a more effective traceability of all imported fisheries products.

POSITION
of the Committee on Culture and Education

The Committee on Culture and Education,

1. Calls on the Commission to take immediate action to address the problems and shortcomings in the implementation of the Erasmus+, Creative Europe and European Solidarity Corps programmes 2021-2027, including inflation adjustments and severe IT and accessibility issues, and requests a detailed Commission report on the measures taken to address these problems by the end of 2023; asks for continued efforts for these MFF programmes to become more inclusive, flexible and efficient, drawing the lessons from the crises the EU has been facing in recent years;
2. Requests the Commission and Member States to step up efforts to turn the European Education Area into reality by 2025 and as such to strengthen the European project, including by achieving tangible progress regarding the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas, qualifications and learning periods;
3. Expects the Commission to perform its role as honest broker during the upcoming negotiations on the European Media Freedom Act, reminds the Commission to serve Parliament and Council equally during these negotiations, in particular regarding the distribution of information and proposals; calls on the Commission to provide an in-depth assessment by the first quarter of 2024 on a) whether current EU media legislation in Poland and Hungary is correctly and fully implemented, and b) the contribution of the current EU media legislation to media pluralism in these countries;
4. Calls on the Commission to continue providing ambitious EU-level support to complement Member States' efforts in addressing the challenges resulting from Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including high-quality education and training for Ukrainian refugees; reiterates its wish for the Commission to actively support organisations and institutions aimed at fostering critical historical memory and remembrance both in the EU and beyond, particularly in order to denounce Russian historical and cultural revisionism, as well as to support Member States in fighting illicit trafficking of cultural goods and to complement measures already taken to protect cultural heritage in conflict zones, in particular in Ukraine;
5. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up efforts to strengthen a distinct European perspective in students' curricula and teachers' training across education systems in Europe, focusing on European history and culture, rights and values, the European integration process and European citizenship, and reiterates its requests for a corresponding framework strategy to be provided by the end of 2023; calls for the setting-up of an effective inter-institutional information service providing multilingual factual information on EU affairs in an easy-to-understand manner;

6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure a successful European Year of Skills 2023 and an ambitious follow-up to the European Year of Youth 2022, ensuring the long-term legacy of both;
7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to foster necessary reforms of the unique European Schools System (ESS), including in terms of governance and Member States' contributions to the system as well as concerning teacher recruitments;
8. Invites the Commission to consider the impact of its major horizontal digital legislation, such as the AI Act, on culture, including the definition and ownership of a cultural work, and to present, if necessary, initiatives in this area to safeguard and promote the European cultural and creative ecosystem;
9. Calls on the Commission to focus more on sport policy and to follow up on the recommendations on combating online piracy of sports and other live events.
10. Calls on the Commission to put a focus of its activities in the remainder of the current mandate on implementing already adopted legislation and bringing open dossiers to a successful close, reiterates the need for securing stable resources for successful initiatives such as the New European Bauhaus and urges the Commission to involve the European Parliament actively in the preparation of the annual work programmes of MFF funding programmes as an observer, including in the work of the dedicated expert groups.

POSITION
of the Committee on Legal Affairs

The Committee on Legal Affairs,

Ukraine

1. Praises the Commission for its actions in addressing the aggression of Ukraine by Russia and in particular for issuing sanctions and freezing assets belonging to natural and legal persons linked to the Russian regime, mainly through the commendable work of the Freeze and Seize Taskforce; fully support the work of the newly established International Centre for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, based in The Hague, embedded in the Joint Investigation Team supported by Eurojust and tasked with the collection and analysis of evidence pertaining to war crimes committed in Ukraine; stresses the relevance of the Commission proposal for a Directive on asset recovery and confiscation (COM/2022/245 final) to the Ukrainian reconstruction; Digital policies
2. Takes pride that the EU is the first jurisdiction worldwide to endeavour on setting a legal framework for AI (COM(2021)206 final), which aims to establish a global standard and offer to our economies the competitive advantage that always stems from legal certainty, and that it has first and significantly contributed to work in this area; holds that a balance must be attained between reaping the benefits of AI and building ethical European AI, especially considering its applications in sensitive fields; takes note of the proposals for a Directive on Liability for Defective Products (COM(2022) 495 final) and on a Directive on adapting non-contractual civil liability rules to artificial intelligence (COM(2022) 496 final), following up on some of the recommendations of the relevant Parliament legislative resolution (2020/2014(INL)) without however fully reflecting it, and will carefully assess them and the sufficiency of Commission's legislative response;; looks forward to the Commission Communication on virtual worlds and intends to contribute to the EU approach to this technological developments through its own-initiative report; Intellectual property
3. Notes that Commission put forward packages of proposals on designs, compulsory licensing of patents, SPCs (supplementary protection certificates) and SEPs (standard essential patents) and expects the Unitary Patent Protection to eventually enter into force on 1 June 2023; Company law
4. Is pleased that after a 10 year-long stall in the Council, the *directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures* has been adopted; intends to adopt during this mandate the *directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence* (COM(2022) 71 final) and notes that some of the recommendations of the *resolution on Corporate Due Diligence and Corporate Accountability* (2020/2129(INL)) and of the report on *Sustainable Corporate Governance* (2020/2137(INI)) have been incorporated in its text; notes the Commission proposal on harmonising certain aspects of insolvency law; Justice
5. Affirms that under Article 218 TFEU the Parliament is to be requested for its consent to the accession of third countries to international conventions to which the EU is a party,

no matter whether this accession occurs through a declaration of assent by the EU or via a non-objection procedure; commends the Commission for the adoption of the European Democracy Action Plan (COM/2020/790 final) and looks forward to the adoption of the Defence of Democracy Package to set transparency and accountability standards, especially for the receipt of foreign funding, without putting the blame of recent scandals on entire sectors; urges the Commission to put forward proposals for the establishment of a EU Ethics Body with competence i.a. over side revenues, revolving doors, gifts and other matters relating to appropriate administrative conduct; welcomes the Commission proposal (COM/2022/177 final) for a Directive on protecting persons who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings (“Strategic lawsuits against public participation”) as it represents an important step forward in protecting journalists and other persons engaging in public participation from strategic lawsuits while ensuring the right to an effective remedy; urges the Council to act swiftly on the Commission Proposal for a Council regulation on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition of decisions and acceptance of authentic instruments in matters of parenthood and on the creation of a European Certificate of Parenthood (COM(2022) 695 final); Comitology reform / Articles 290 and 291 TFEU

6. Recalls that on 17 December 2020 the Parliament approved amendments to the *proposal on mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission’s exercise of implementing powers: implementing acts at appeal committee level* (2017/0035(COD)) which aims to reform Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 and on which there has been no progress in the Council since 2017; stresses that the Parliament aims *inter alia* at more transparency and a more cautious approach in the context of environment, health and consumer protection when it comes to the adoption of implementing acts; regrets that the Council is not showing any willingness to move forward with this file; encourages for the application of the *Non-binding criteria for the application of Articles 290 and 291 TFEU* of 18 June 2019;

Better Regulation, Better Law Making and COFEU

7. Stresses the need for the Commission to give the co-legislators sufficient time to work on the proposals before the next European elections; reminds the Commission of its report on *Better regulation: Joining forces to make better laws* (2021/2166(INI)) in which it replies to the Commission Communication *Better Regulation: Joining forces to make better laws* (COM/2021/219 final) and its intention to make better use of foresight, to mainstream the sustainable development goals and to better take into account the importance of digitalisation, long-term societal objectives and environmental protection; affirms that the reduction of unnecessary administrative burden might also be pursued through the one-in-one-out principle provided that the latter is applied on a sectoral basis and never mechanically as its objective is not to deregulate, but to avoid unnecessary burdens; believes that high-quality impact assessments and a constant attention towards SMEs, through the so-called SME Filter and the Network of SME envoys, are essential; looks forward to the results of the newly introduced Competitiveness Check on EU legislation; is convinced that the Regulatory Scrutiny Board can play a role in ensuring an unbiased and high-quality level of work from the Commission, but notes that its work should not ultimately affect the Commission’s capacity to propose legislation or unduly delay the adoption of legislative proposals and that the organisation and functioning of

the Regulatory Scrutiny Board deserves in this respect careful consideration; takes note of the Communication on the Long-Term Competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030 (COM(2023) 168 final) and appreciates the goal of reducing the burdens to competitiveness by 25%, provided that EU policy objectives are not undermined; congratulates the Commission for the increased translation of public consultations in all 24 EU official languages to enhance stakeholder participation; encourages the Commission to adopt the digital-by-default principle in all legislation, while taking all possible steps to avoid the widening of the digital divide; awaits the results of the 2023 Annual Burden Survey; states that the pace of technological innovation warrants a comprehensive rethinking of the legislative process given its current length while fully ensuring its democratic nature;

Article 225 TFEU resolutions and own-initiative reports

8. Appreciates that the Commission has stepped up its response to Article 225 TFEU resolutions by positively responding to twenty of them; is satisfied that the Commission has responded to Parliament's last term resolution on possible extension of geographical indication protection of the European Union to non-agricultural products (2015/2053(INL)) with the proposal for a regulation on geographical indication protection for craft and industrial products (COM(2022)0174); is pleased that the Commission is going to respond with the upcoming Recommendation on piracy of live content to the INL on *Challenges of sports events' organisers in the digital environment* (2020/2073(INL)) and looks forward to the details, noting that the Commission response will not be of a legislative nature; looks forward at the upcoming legislative initiatives on the protection of vulnerable adults and on the Statute for cross-border associations, paying particular attention to its consistency with the resolutions adopted in those regards by the Parliament ((2015/2085(INL) and (2020/2026(INL))); in this context, reiterates its deep regrets of the Commission's lack of responsiveness towards the 2013 and 2016 calls from the Parliament for a regulation on an open, efficient and independent European Union administration and encourages the Commission to fully cooperate with the Parliament towards the adoption of such an instrument; considers that a code of administrative procedure is the optimal instrument to fully implement both Article 298 TFEU and the right to good administration enshrined in Article 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; expects the Commission to sincerely engage with the Parliament on the upcoming own-initiative report on *Digitalisation and administrative law* (2021/2161(INL)), which is to follow-up on the Parliament's 2013 and 2016 calls, since the sectoral solutions currently in place lack the thoroughness needed for an EU administration that in its entirety and in a consistent way avails itself of the digital tools; expects the Commission to follow-up the Article 225 TFEU resolutions as regards the *Expedited settlement of commercial disputes in the EU* (2018/2079(INL)) and *Common minimum standards of civil procedure in the EU* (2015/2084(INL)) since these actions would strongly support the economic recovery from both the pandemic and the current economic difficulties stemming from the Ukrainian crisis;

Commission Human Resources Strategy and Staff Regulations and administrative conduct

9. Congratulates the Commission on the Communication *A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission* (C(2022) 2229 final); agrees with the priorities set by the Commission, namely an attracting working environment, faster and more agile selection

procedures, flexible and rewarding career for all staff and staff-focused HR services; affirms that the Strategy rightly aims also at guaranteeing well-being and mental support for staff; encourages the development of exchange programmes for EU officials to provide them with the opportunity of being seconded to national public authorities; notes with satisfaction the reduction of the length of competitions to access EU careers; urges the Commission to introduce allowances for married and unmarried couples to end discriminations against same-sex couples and civil partnerships; supports the Commission on its intention to implement a culture of trust-based HR management, on the clear setting of objectives, on flexibility and mobility to face sudden crises; considers geographical balance, gender balance and a diverse workforce to be key to the improvement of the HR management.

POSITION
of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,

Democracy, Rule of law and fundamental rights

1. Welcomes the 2022 Annual Rule of Law report and in particular the country-specific recommendations as requested by the Parliament; recommends to accompany the country-specific recommendations with deadlines for implementation, targets and concrete actions to be taken; reiterates its call for a comprehensive, permanent and evidence-based EU-wide mechanism for the protection of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights; calls on the Commission to immediately enter into negotiations with Parliament and Council on an interinstitutional agreement;
2. Calls on the Commission to make full use of all tools available to address the situation in the Member States under the Article 7(1) TEU procedure, in particular expedited infringement procedures and applications for interim measures before the Court of Justice of the EU, as well as the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation and other conditionality mechanisms in financial instruments; requests the Commission to monitor the situation in the Member States under the Article 7(1) TEU procedure and to support the Parliament in its call on the Council to address concrete recommendations to Poland and Hungary under Article 7(1) TEU as a follow-up to the hearings, and to indicate deadlines for the implementation of those recommendations; reiterates that the payments based on the Polish and Hungarian national plans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility should not be made until the ‘super milestones’ on the rule of law and relevant CJEU and ECHR judgments are fully implemented;
3. Emphasises the importance of continuing to swiftly implement the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation, and, with regard to Hungary, to monitor the implementation of the remedial measures to which Hungary committed after the Council implementing decision suspending cohesion funds under this mechanism; calls for further assessment and action from the Commission under the Regulation with regard to Poland;
4. Calls on the Commission to prioritise legislation to strengthen democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights, including by continuing efforts to unblock negotiations for legislation that is long overdue, such as on transparency, access to documents, or a horizontal framework on equal treatment;
5. Looks forward to receiving information on the enforcement of the Strategies for the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, for LGBTI Equality, and on Roma Equality and Inclusion, as well as of the EU anti-racism action plan. Looks forward also to the stepping up of infringement procedures of existing EU law and where possible, on the basis of thorough impact assessments, to the tabling of new legislation for the implementation of those strategic initiatives;

6. Recalls the importance of victims' rights in the EU and looks forward to the proposed revision of the related Directive; reminds Parliament's call to all relevant actors for a full and consistent implementation of the Directive on Trafficking in Human Beings which is key in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and vulnerable women and children fleeing the country; welcomes the proposed revision of the Directive on Trafficking in Human Beings in order to improve the measures for the prevention, tackling and prosecution of all forms of trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation; welcomes the proposed Directive on combatting violence against women and domestic violence, which is a first step towards a harmonised approach to gender-based violence in the EU, as well as the long-awaited accession by the EU to the Istanbul Convention;
7. Looks forward to the follow-up steps in the implementation of the European Democracy Action Plan to defend and promote media freedom and pluralism, including transparency of the media ownership via the proposed Media Freedom Act and to fight disinformation; looks forward also to proposals for increased protection and financial support to NGOs, independent media and investigative journalism, through an EU emergency fund, and welcomes the proposal on anti-SLAPP legislation;

Asylum and Migration

8. Welcomes the activation and prolongation of the Temporary Protection Directive, followed by the solidarity shown all over the EU in the efforts to provide protection and shelter for persons fleeing war-torn Ukraine; calls on the Commission to continue to ensure a successful implementation of the temporary protection regime, and to continue assisting Member States and affected countries in the EU neighbourhood with the reception and registration of refugees from Ukraine; considers that, given the nature of the conflict, it is also time to start reflecting on the next steps;
9. Calls on the Commission to further assist the co-legislators in finalising the reform of the CEAS, taking into account the recent developments, which have created a momentum for a holistic and balanced compromise between the co-legislators, based on solidarity, fair sharing of responsibility and cooperation between Member States; notes that, with its newly adopted mandates on the core elements of the EU Pact on Asylum and Migration, the Parliament stands ready to engage in interinstitutional negotiations;
10. Likewise, the Parliament stands ready to engage in interinstitutional negotiations on the two legislative proposals in the area of legal migration, which aim to improve procedures, rights and integration of third-country workers and their families; looks forward to finally starting work on further announced initiatives such as the Talent pool and the recognition of third-country nationals' qualifications, as well as to monitoring expected progress of talent partnerships, in order to facilitate the lawful arrival of needed third-country nationals in view of the demographic and economic trends and needs across the Union;
11. Reminds the Commission of its obligation, as Guardian of the Treaties, to monitor and ensure the implementation of the existing EU asylum and migration acquis including by starting infringement procedures where necessary;

Schengen and borders

12. Calls on the Commission to monitor properly Member States' actions in the Schengen Area, in particular the introduction of internal border controls and other restrictive measures at internal borders, and to take appropriate action against Member States that breach EU legislation in force. Further stresses the importance of a judicious reform of the rules on Schengen to help restore Schengen as an area without internal border control and to provide for truly European governance of the Schengen Area, and to pursue a high-level political debate on the state of Schengen with the European Parliament and the Council; calls on all relevant actors to continue in their efforts to implement, in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, the new EU large-scale IT systems and their interoperability, and the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation;

Data Protection

13. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the Union privacy and data protection acquis is effectively and consistently applied throughout the Union, by fully enforcing the GDPR Regulation (EU) 2016/679, Directive (EU) 2016/680 as well as Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 and ensuring that Member States fulfil their obligation to provide sufficient resources to national independent supervisory authorities, and where necessary by opening infringement procedures; calls also on the Commission to act in the interest of EU businesses and citizens by ensuring that the proposed EU-US Data Privacy Framework provides a solid, sufficient and future-oriented legal basis for EU-US data transfers; calls on the Commission not to adopt the adequacy finding until all the recommendations made in the EP resolution on the adequacy of the protection afforded by the EU-US Data Privacy Framework and the relevant EDPB opinion are fully implemented; calls on the Commission to further harmonise administrative procedures applied by national data protection authorities, in order to ensure efficient GDPR enforcement, in particular in cross-border cases; moreover, asks the Commission to facilitate the negotiations of the co-legislators to finally achieve progress on the reform of Directive (EU) 2002/58 ('ePrivacy');
14. Stresses the importance of encryption technology as an important tool for the protection of cybersecurity and confidentiality of communications and calls on the Commission to discontinue any approach to weaken encryption;

EU Internal Security - Fight against Terrorism and Money Laundering - EPPO

15. Stresses the importance of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, and calls for the allocation of appropriate financial resources to match its heavy workload and an extension of its competences to include all types of violations of Union restrictive measures to improve criminal prosecution and effective enforcement of criminal sanctions across the EU; highlights, with a view to strengthening the EU's fight against money-laundering and terrorist financing, the need to find a swift agreement in the interinstitutional negotiations on an ambitious money laundering package, including a strengthened anti-money laundering rulebook and the establishment of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority in line with the EP's mandate; welcomes the Commission's proposal for a Directive for Asset Recovery and Confiscation to enhance the capacity of the competent authorities within the EU to trace and ultimately confiscate the proceeds of criminal activity and takes note of the proposal for a Directive on the definition of criminal offences and

penalties for the violation of Union restrictive measures, with a view to harmonising the national systems; calls on the Commission to swiftly publish proposals on “residence and citizenship by investment schemes” based on the Parliament’s legislative own-initiative report adopted in March 2022;

16. Takes note of the Commission proposal for a Regulation laying down rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse and welcomes the fact that co-legislators have started their internal legislative processes with the aim of adopting their respective negotiating mandates as soon as possible, in light of the limited validity of Regulation (EU) 2021/1232 (‘ePrivacy derogation’);
17. Takes note of the two Commission proposals on Advance Passenger Information (API).

POSITION
of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs,

1. Considers essential to ensure effectively the due follow-up of the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE), which showed the urgent need to reform the Union to make it more effective and democratic, including by means of treaty change; recalls that the three institutions have committed to such follow-up; points out that the Parliament, in its resolution of 9 June 2022, called for a Convention for the revision of the Treaties in line with its competence to initiate treaty changes provided for in article 48 of the TEU; calls on the Commission to actively support the Parliament's call for the Convention; calls on the Council to urgently submit Parliament's proposal to the European Council, with a view to convening a Convention; acknowledges the importance of engaging with citizens through permanent and innovative forms of consultation and participation, based on the experience of the Conference.
2. Calls on the Commission to evaluate and recommend the activation of "passerelle" clauses when drafting its work programme and when issuing legislative proposals in policy areas where unanimity or a special legislative procedure is required, in order to make the EU decision-making process more rapid and efficient, in particular to respond to current and future challenges.
3. Expects the Commission to be a true facilitator in giving new impetus to the inter-institutional talks between Parliament and Council on the much needed reform of the European Electoral Law, and recalls in this context the Parliament's proposal to create a European wide constituency, as well as on the right of inquiry of the European Parliament, in order to upgrade this right in line with the provisions and the spirit of the Treaties;
4. Regarding the Commission's draft proposal to amend Regulation 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, while reiterating its disagreement with the Commission's choice for the recast format which severely limits the Parliament's legislative prerogatives, calls on the Commission to do its utmost in order to help bypassing the current deadlock in the negotiations with the Council, including on the issue of the involvement of third country member parties;
5. Expects the Commission to continue to uphold the commitment made by its President to support the Parliament's indirect right of initiative by responding with a proposal for a legislative act, in full respect of the proportionality, subsidiarity and better law making principles, following each of the Parliament's requests under Article 225 TFEU; insists on the need for a continuous and fair dialogue and cooperation between Commission and Parliament in the phase leading to the Parliament's requests under Article 225 TFEU; expects that the Commission supports the proposals of the EP to introduce a genuine and direct right of legislative initiative in the treaties;

6. Notes the Commission's efforts to put forward a long awaited proposal for creation of an EU Ethics body based on an inter-institutional agreement, which takes due account of the Parliament's position expressed in its resolution of September 2021 on "Transparency and Integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body"; notes the Commission's efforts to introduce a regulation on NGOs with a view to increasing transparency and the accountability of interest representatives in their interactions with Members as expressed in the resolution of 16 February 2023 on following up on measures requested by Parliament to strengthen the integrity of the European institutions; insists on the need for the Commission to swiftly engage in the interinstitutional negotiations on the implementation of its proposals in view of its entry into force before the European elections;
7. Expects that the Commission continues honouring its commitment to ensure that the Parliament is immediately and fully informed in relation to the work and activities of the bodies established by the Agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the Union and the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, as well as in relation to any major development in the context of the implementation of those agreements including the Windsor Framework, in order for the Parliament to be in a position to exercise fully its institutional prerogatives; reminds that both parties to those Agreements are legally bound to fully implement their provisions, as this is key to protecting citizens' rights and the peace process and to avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland, as well as to protecting the integrity of the Internal Market;
8. Calls on the Commission to further improve the timeliness and quality of its answers to Parliament's written questions to the standards common in many national parliaments; insists on the need for the Commission to be represented by the Commissioner in charge during Parliament's plenary sessions or committee discussions on important files, so as to ensure a lively, informed and efficient dialogue between Commission and Parliament;
9. Encourages the Commission to constantly act as honest broker between the two branches of the legislative power during all steps of the legislative process, notably by sharing all available information on legislative procedures simultaneously to both branches of the legislative authority.

POSITION
of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality,

1. Stresses again that women's rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are fundamental rights; reiterates its call to include the right to safe and legal abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights; expresses its concern about the backlash against women's rights in many Member States and stresses that the Member States are obliged to respect, protect and comply with commitments related to reproductive and sexual health free from coercion, discrimination and violence, including access to safe and legal abortion; repeats its call for the EU4Health programme to make targeted and substantial investments in SRHR across the Union;
2. Welcomes the joint engagement of the EU institutions for an imminent EU accession to the Istanbul Convention, following a systematic approach and the support of the European Parliament, calls for swift progress of the work on the Commission proposal for a directive on combatting violence against women and domestic violence as a priority; reiterates in this regard that rape and sexual assault must be criminalised in the EU following a common consent-based definition of these crimes; stresses the importance of jointly combatting gender-based cyber violence, welcomes therefore the inclusion of related offences in the directive proposal; reiterates its call for the extension of the areas of crime to include gender based violence in the EU list of crimes within Art 83 (1) TFEU, in addition to the proposed extension to hate crime and hate speech; calls for a zero-tolerance approach to any sexual harassment in the world of work across the Union and expects the EU institutions to lead by example; reiterates its call for comprehensive updated data to be published on gender-based violence in the European Union, to be delivered by the Fundamental Rights Agency next year; underlines the role of gender sensitive education, including comprehensive sexuality and relationship education and the need for awareness-raising campaigns, in particular for boys and men, in preventing gender based violence by countering gender stereotypes in all fields; calls for the revisions of the Victims' Rights Directive to be presented as soon as possible, in order to allow for a possibility of progressing on the legislative work still during the current legislative period;
3. Reiterates its condemnation of the Russian Federation's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine and its impact on the life of people living in and fleeing from Ukraine, especially women and girls; strongly condemns the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war and stresses that this constitutes a war crime; welcomes the EU support with regard to collection of evidence and testimonies in view of prosecution in the International Criminal Court, including the need to establish the chain of command, and highlights the role of Eurojust; asks the Commission to ensure that women refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine fully benefit from the rights enshrined in the Temporary Protection Directive, especially regarding healthcare and sexual and reproductive health services including access to safe and legal

abortion, protection from gender-based violence and exploitation, support services for survivors of gender-based violence, childcare, education and access to the labour market;

4. Welcomes the progress made during this legislative period towards strengthening legislation aimed at promoting gender equality, particularly the adoption of files such as the Women on Boards Directive and the Pay Transparency Directive; stresses the importance of inclusion of women in decision-making at all levels and the importance of the promotion of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value; recalls that with the gender pay gap of 13%, much progress is still needed, and calls on the Commission to ensure and strictly monitor swift and thorough implementation of these directives by the Member States; where appropriate, the Commission may update Union-wide guidelines related to gender-neutral job evaluation and classification systems, in consultation with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE);
5. Welcomes the proposed revision of the Anti-Trafficking Directive and stresses the need for fast conclusion of the legislative work; calls on the Commission to fight trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation and other purposes; stresses that human trafficking for sexual exploitation disproportionately affects women and is a form of gender-based violence and a violation of human rights that remains one of the biggest risks for women and children fleeing Ukraine who are in a particularly vulnerable situation;
6. Welcomes the proposals for the Equality Bodies Directives; calls on the Commission to adequately monitor the implementation of EU directives prohibiting discrimination based on race, gender and sexual harassment in the workplace; reiterates its call for the adoption of the horizontal anti-discrimination directive that remains blocked in the Council, and asks to start works on standardisations of rights of women and LGBTIQ+ persons throughout the EU; calls for additional measures to protect women facing intersectional discrimination; calls on the Commission to highlight the connection between breaches of rule of law, the undermining of democratic values and the backlash against equal rights; urges the Commission to apply the rule of law conditionality with regards to governments allowing discriminatory targeting of LGBTIQ+ persons;
7. Calls on the Commission to address via the Digital Agenda and the Digital Single Market Strategy the serious gender gap within the ICT sector, and to foster the education and training of women and girls who are vital for the Union's future in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, as well as by fighting gender stereotypes and sexual harassment in all sectors; repeats its calls for the Commission to put forward measures to support women's entrepreneurial potential and to increase financing opportunities for women start-up entrepreneurs and innovators; stresses the need for further regulatory efforts to ensure that AI respects the principles and values of gender equality and non-discrimination and that conscious and unconscious biases are eliminated;
8. Welcomes the EU Care Strategy and reiterates the need for a holistic and life-long approach to care, taking into account the needs of carers, paid and unpaid, formal and informal who are disproportionately women; stresses that the provision of care is critical to cross generational family wellbeing and that the collection of quality data on the provision of care available for children, older persons, persons with disabilities and other

dependents should be further explored; calls for the efficient use and additional allocation of EU funds to invest in quality care services and jobs, thus fostering the care economy; calls to fully transpose the Work-Life Balance Directive for working parents and carers and for the European Commission to closely monitor its implementation;

9. Reiterates its call on the Commission to implement gender budgeting, as recommended, in all EU programmes, to monitor the EU budget's contribution to gender equality and to implement a gender-sensitive review of the programmes and spending to adjust them accordingly; stresses the need for the methodology to track gender-related expenditure as set out in the Interinstitutional Agreement and the Gender Equality Strategy to be extended to all MFF programmes; points out that crises situations disproportionately affect women and emphasises the gender aspects of the current costs of living and energy crisis; highlights, therefore, the importance of gender mainstreaming in all policy areas;
10. Stresses the need for implementation of the commitments and measures of the Gender Action Plan III, putting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at the heart of the EU's external action, considering youth as drivers and catalysts of change, promoting economic and social rights of girls and women, ensuring in particular freedom from gender-based violence, progresses on the level of schooling of girls, the number of women in decision-making, the number of women studying in the STEM sectors and their empowerment through digitalisation, the rate of women's entrepreneurship, the promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights and the involvement of women in peace and security processes and policies related to fighting the climate change; repeats its calls for special attention to be paid to the intersectionality principle and the access to funding open to all local civil society women's and LGBTIQ+ organisations.

POSITION

of the Committee on Petitions

The Committee on Petitions,

1. The Petitions committee emphasizes the need for better inter-institutional collaboration between the Commission and the Petitions committee and reiterates the importance of addressing individual petition issues in a well-timed manner. Considers the correct and timely enforcement of EU law and proactive dialogue by the Commission with national authorities crucial to tackle potential violations of EU law denounced by petitioners;
2. Calls on the Commission to raise awareness among its staff about the need to use plain, simple and empathic language, in order to convey clearly understandable responses to EU citizens' concerns and demands; moreover, encourages the Commission to delegate the role of presenting the Commission's positions in the meetings of the PETI committee to more senior and high-ranking staff;
3. Underlines the need to ensure legal certainty on the Commission's way to address issues raised in petitions, including legal clarification on concepts, such as "issue of wider principles" and "systematic failure to enforce EU law" enshrined in its strategic approach on the enforcement of EU law; calls on the Commission to include a thorough analysis on the contribution given by petitions on the monitoring of the application of EU law in its related annual Report;
4. Asks for increased transparency on the handling of ongoing infringement procedures by the European Commission and more rapid action, which would improve Commission efforts to put an end to breaches of EU law. Considers it a best practice the Commission's approach to set a target of 12 months to refer infringement cases to the CJEU if the failure by a Member State to transpose a legislative directive persists;
5. Stresses the importance of guaranteeing PETI access to relevant documents and information in the framework of the EU Pilot and infringement procedures linked to petitions and reiterates the issue of lack of regular feedback on on-going infringement procedures from the Commission; welcomes Commission's commitment to work on the inter-institutional IT tool with the Parliament with a view to the swift implementation of this key digital tool;
6. Is concerned about the lack of follow-up on successful ECIs; calls on the Commission to transmit valid ECIs to Parliament without delay to allow the full respect of the rules and the deadlines (art. 14 par. 2 Regulation (EU) 2019/788); urges the Commission to commit to submitting a legislative proposal following Parliament's adoption of an INL backing valid ECIs;
7. Welcomes the Commission's initiatives presented in the 2023 Work Program; asks for an improved action to help the challenges of citizens facing dramatic socio-economic conditions, in particular the rising costs of living and energy prices;

8. Welcomes the Commission's work to ensure the reality of the Union of equality; stresses that more needs to be done to fight discrimination in line with art.21 of CFREU and supports the Commission's initiatives to guarantee equal rights for same-sex couples and rainbow families, such as the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and the recent proposal for a Regulation aimed at harmonising at EU level the rules of private international law relating to parenthood;
9. Welcomes the Commission's initiatives and actions to support Ukraine following the start of Russia's illegal war of aggression; asks the EC for more cooperation with Ukraine's EU neighbouring countries and Moldova in this context;
10. Stresses that the Commission should continue its support for equal access to a wide range of services for persons with disabilities and therefore calls on the Commission to adopt the EU Disability Card as soon as possible.
