



Brussels, 1 December 2022  
(OR. en)

15477/22

LIMITE

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ONU 136  
ENV 1230  
DEVGEN 222  
AG 147

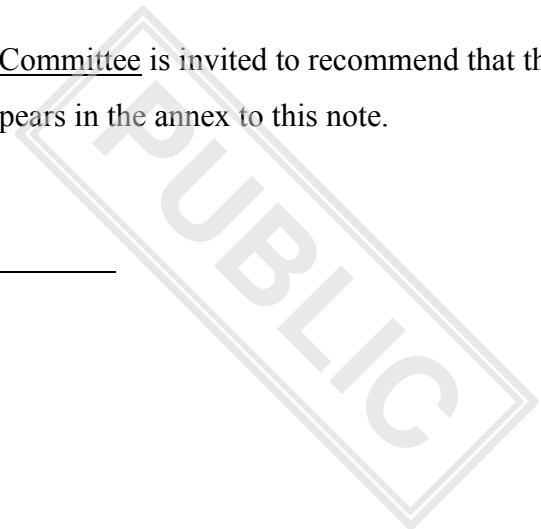
#### **'I/A' ITEM NOTE**

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)/Council
Subject:	Assessment of progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in the Commission Work Programme for 2023 - Presidency summary of the main elements highlighted by Member States

1. In its conclusions of 22 June 2021 on “A comprehensive approach to accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development – building back better from the COVID-19 crisis” the Council invited the Commission to engage in a regular structured dialogue with the Council, in the context of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making, to further promote an integrated, strategic, ambitious, and comprehensive approach to SDG implementation, address overarching cross-cutting issues related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, take stock of progress made in implementing the SDGs at EU level in an integrated and coherent manner, and discuss strategic orientations as appropriate.
2. For this purpose and in view of the joint declaration on the annual legislative priorities, the Council called for a summary of Member States' views on the Commission's assessment, in its annual work programme, of progress in implementing the SDGs.
3. On 17 November 2022, the Commission presented its work programme for 2023 “A Union firm and united” to the Working Party on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (WP 2030). The presentation was followed by an exchange of views.

4. The Czech Presidency prepared a summary of the main elements highlighted by Delegations.
5. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend that the Council take note of the Presidency summary as it appears in the annex to this note.

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**Working Party on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:  
Assessment of progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals  
in the Commission Work Programme for 2023**

**Presidency summary of the main elements highlighted by Member States**

- On 18 October 2022, the European Commission (hereinafter EC) adopted its Work Programme for 2023 "A Union standing firm and united" (hereinafter CWP). The CWP was presented to the Working Party on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (WP 2030 Agenda) on 17 November 2022. The presentation was followed by an exchange of views. Delegations were also invited to send their comments in written form. The present note provides a Presidency summary of the main elements highlighted by Delegations.
- Member States acknowledge the relevance of the 43 policy initiatives outlined in the Work programme and take note of 106 priority pending proposals. Member States welcome the Work Programme as comprehensive and ambitious and they are confident that it has a potential to contribute to the **transformation of our world towards sustainability, as required by the 2030 Agenda**.
- Member States stress that sustainability challenges are interdependent and can only be tackled effectively by addressing the interlinkages between the SDGs in a holistic and coherent manner, factoring in the three dimensions of sustainable development at all levels.
- The commitment to the **European Green Deal** is very important, especially in these challenging times. The transition towards a more sustainable world is not possible without ensuring a **just transition and energy security**. Boosting the **REPowerEU** with additional financing based on an assessment of needs, considering investment absorption capacities and the continuation of support to **Ukraine** are very timely and welcomed.

- Member States welcome the European Commission's **commitment to be guided by the 2030 Agenda** in all policy areas as mentioned explicitly in the CWP. Nevertheless, Member States regret that the State of the Union and the Letter of Intent by the President of the European Commission do not address this commitment. Therefore, Member States invite the Commission, in the context of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making, to turn commitments into actions through a comprehensive, integrated and coherent approach, placing the SDGs at the heart of strategic planning in the next CWP and **linking it to progress towards achieving specific SDGs.**
- Member States invite the Commission, in its next CWP, to focus on **SDGs with unfavourable performance** - i. e. SDG 2 and 3 (high obesity rate), SDG 4 (share of adults with at least basic digital skills), and SDG 1, 8 and 10 (in work at-risk-of-poverty rate; young people neither in employment nor in education and training) – and environmental SDGs, in particular SDG 15 (Life on Land), SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and SDG 13 (Climate action).
- From the sustainability point of view important initiatives include the revision of food waste and textile aspects of the EU waste framework Directive (SDG 2 and 12), Legislative framework for sustainable food system which should include sustainability labelling framework (SDG 12), and initiative on protecting, sustainably managing and restoring EU soils (SDG 15). Critical raw materials act should improve harnessing digitalisation, increasing strategic autonomy and making twin transition viable (SDG 12). Member States also welcome the Social economy package (SDG 1, 8, 10) and the Comprehensive approach to mental health (SDG 3).
- Member States highlight that the **twin transition** must consider the need of all EU citizens, be equitable and not worsen economic conditions for the most vulnerable regions or social groups. In addition, the impacts of the twin transition on all dimensions of the sustainable development need to be evaluated.

- Member States welcome the fact that the EC is conducting the **first EU voluntary review** (EU VR) in 2023 and that this is explicitly announced in the CWP 2023. Member States call for the EU VR to be an open and participatory process and underline that the Working Party on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development provides a platform for a transparent discussion and collaboration on the EU VR between the European Commission and Member States.
- Furthermore, Member States welcome that the CWP 2023 is largely inspired by the outcome of the **Conference on the Future of Europe**. The EU Citizens were involved in New Citizens' Panels that made recommendations for certain key policy proposals. The Member States take note of the intention to launch a **new generation of deliberative citizens' panels** and deploy them into three initiatives on food waste, learning mobility and virtual worlds. In this respect, the Member States invite the EC to further use and develop the Multi-lingual Digital Platform and properly evaluate strengths and weaknesses of deliberative approach in order to gradually improve it.
- Member States consider that the integration of the SDGs is an important part of the **European Semester**. Member States invite the EC to inform about how the information provided on SDGs is used and about further developments and changes in established procedures, in advance, as well as any foreseen further integration of SDGs into the European Semester.
- Member States welcome and encourage the EC to apply systematically the **Better Regulation Guidelines and Toolbox, with a particular emphasis on the tool 18 and the tool 19**, to propose policies informed by evidence and to mainstream the SDGs. This would send a significant signal to Member States to set new law-making standards in line with promoting the SDGs. In this regard, Member States underline the fundamental importance of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) to formulate and implement mutually reinforcing policies and invite the European Commission to fully use the **PC(S)D approach** and to map and decrease negative spill-overs and maximise the positive impacts of the EU's internal and external policies.