

## **2024 WORK PROGRAMME**

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

#### **1. Introduction**

The 2024 Work Programme of the CIVEX commission was developed with the overarching priorities of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) for its current mandate<sup>1</sup>, the Strategic Guidelines for 2024 adopted by the Conference of Presidents (CoP)<sup>2</sup>, as well as the European inter-institutional context and in particular the *European Commission's Work Programme for 2024*<sup>3</sup> in mind. The Work Programme sets out the milestones for the work to be carried out by the CIVEX commission in 2024, ensuring continuity and coherence in delivering the CoR's political priorities.

2024 will be a crucial year for the European Union and its local and regional authorities. It will be time for new European elections, to be held in June, with more than 400 million people eligible to vote for the new members of the European Parliament. At the same time, the year to come will be marked by the continuous massive efforts required in the face of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, unstable energy prices and the knock-on effects on the economy, while defending Europe's democratic values and pursuing its long-term goals and interests, such as successfully achieving climate neutrality by 2050, shaping Europe's digital future, boosting resilience of Europe's territories, strengthening its unique social market economy, building a Union of prosperity, and making Europe stronger in the world. The current situation in the Middle East makes these challenges even harder.

Facing the end of its mandate, the European Commission has announced only a limited number of new initiatives that deliver on existing commitments or respond to emerging challenges. However, the European Commission also announced policy reviews that will assess the impact of a possible EU enlargement and which might imply subsequent reforms in policy areas, including the Common Agricultural Policy, Cohesion Policies and the internal market.

Against this background, and in the context of a transition year towards a new policy cycle, the CoR will focus on the development and implementation of result-oriented planning, with a clear objective to increase the relevance and visibility of the CoR's political action in the interinstitutional context, on behalf of local and regional authorities. For this reason, the work programmes of the CoR commissions set out the specific objectives in each policy area and put forward a strategy to channel the CoR's political messages to the other EU institutions.

With a view to demonstrating and further consolidating the added value of the CoR as an advisory body, the CoR has been developing new and innovative tools to gather evidence and expertise in

---

<sup>1</sup> In June 2020, shortly after its Constitutive Plenary Session of February 2020 and during a time of major disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CoR defined its priorities for the current mandate in the Resolution *The European Committee of the Regions' priorities for 2020-2025 - Europe closer to the people through its villages, cities and regions*. (RESOL-VII/004 - 2020-01392-00-00-RES-TRA).

<sup>2</sup> On 28 November, following a joint discussion with the Commission chairs, the CoP adopted the Strategic Guidelines for the CoR's political activities in 2024.

<sup>3</sup> COM(2023) 638 final and annexes, available [here](#).

support of the CoR's strategic activities. It is essential that the CoR effectively tap into the wealth of experience of its members and the local and regional authorities they represent in implementing its priorities and strategic orientations. In this regard, the CoR's Territorial Impact Assessments and studies programme will be designed to support the main objectives in the thematic planning of the commissions, as well as to address the horizontal research needs of the CoR. Wherever possible, studies will include a clear outreach and foresight dimension, with outcomes that can provide added value in institutional and public communication.

In terms of policy-making, in the context of implementing the "active subsidiarity" approach, the CoR toolbox will ensure coherence and synergies between the different strands of its Better Regulation activities throughout the policy making cycle. In this context, the CoR will continue to advocate for an enhanced cooperation with other EU institutions by focusing on the European added value of all initiatives, in line with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, and within the context of an improved EU better regulation agenda.

In the context of longer-term multi-annual planning, relations with the Council and the incoming EU presidencies will continue to progress in 2024 as well as with the European Parliament during the new 2024-2029 legislature, with a view to optimising cooperation and political dialogue, particularly as regards legislative planning and the transparency of the interinstitutional legislative process.

Based on the CoR Strategic Guidelines for 2024 adopted by the Conference of the Presidents, and considering all the challenges ahead, the 2024 Work Programme of the CIVEX commission will focus on the priorities set out below:

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

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

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

18. Development cooperation
19. International treaties and negotiations

Support bodies related to the CIVEX remit:

CORLEAP

ARLEM

Joint Consultative Committees<sup>4</sup> with Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

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

Nicosia Initiative (cooperation with Libyan municipalities)

Cities and Regions for Integration initiative

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

Subsidiarity Monitoring Network (supports all CoR commissions)

CoR-UK Contact Group

High-Level Group CoR - Congress

## 2.1 Priority policy areas<sup>5</sup>

The CIVEX commission will concentrate its efforts on the following priority policy areas with high relevance to the EU agenda and direct impact on local and regional authorities:

1. **Democracy and better regulation – from the Conference to the Future of Europe towards the next mandate of EU institutions**
2. **Enlargement of the European Union and support to Ukraine**
3. **Building inclusive and resilient cities and regions**
4. **The wider European Neighbourhood and international partnerships**

### 2.1.1 Democracy and better regulation – from the Conference to the Future of Europe towards the next mandate of EU institutions

CIVEX activities on democracy and better regulation refer to CoR policy priority No 1: "Bringing Europe closer to its people". Working towards the new mandate of EU institutions and in the context of European elections, CIVEX will continue to build on the Conference on the Future of Europe (COFE) proposals, which contain crucial advances for the CoR across many policy areas, notably in terms of acknowledging the principles of active subsidiarity and multilevel governance, a stronger involvement of local and regional authorities and of the CoR throughout the EU policy-making process, and new forms of citizen participation.

CIVEX activities in this area will be developed around two pillars:

---

<sup>4</sup> Bodies set up under Stabilisation and Association Agreements where the CoR represents the EU.

<sup>5</sup> An explanatory sheet for each proposed priority policy area is enclosed in Appendix III. These policy areas will also be the first to benefit from the Thematic Planning process.

- Future of Europe, democracy and citizens' participation, including by:
  - contributing to the implementation of the CoR roadmap for the preparation of European elections, and
  - contributing to the interinstitutional reflection on possible reform of the EU institutional framework and to the process of potential revision of the Treaties,
- Better regulation, including by:
  - interacting with BRASS-G in its coordinating role in steering the CoR agenda and policy on better regulation, including by improving and streamlining the CoR policy and toolbox on better regulation and considering possible new tools, taking into consideration the COFE recommendations and the proposals outlined in the European Commission 2024 Work Programme and building on the CIVEX-commissioned study on Charting the course to better EU law-making: optimisation of EU Treaties through interinstitutional cooperation with the European Committee of the Regions;
  - maintaining the level of engagement in the Fit for future platform;
  - holding the 11th Subsidiarity Conference in Warsaw, Poland.

This priority will be a CIVEX **key priority**, with 2024 being a crucial year because of the European elections in June. Both the preparation of the elections and their expected outcome will be key for charting the future of the Union. The legacy of COFE, both in terms of its recommendations and of its participatory working methods, should underpin efforts to inspire citizens to vote and the CoR contribution to the campaign of the EU institutions, as well as the political debate. The challenge is to ensure the implementation of the COFE proposals, especially in those areas which are key to the CoR, and to make them a core element of the political debate prior to and after the European elections.

### 2.1.2 **Enlargement of the European Union and support to Ukraine**

This priority will be a CIVEX **key priority** in 2024, given that the enlargement of the Union has received new impetus, taking a central position in the EU political debates and that it features in the European Commission's Work Programme for 2024, which envisages a communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews to study how each EU policy would be affected by a larger Union and how the EU institutions would adapt. The latter is notably relevant both for its horizontal scope, addressing the impact of enlargement on various policy areas including those outside the CIVEX remit, and for triggering a debate on potential reforms and eventual Treaty revisions (see also under 2.1.1).

CIVEX will continue to work on enlargement, producing two opinions on the Commission's 2023 enlargement package, i.e. one on the Western Balkans and Türkiye and another on the "trio" countries (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

CIVEX will continue the cooperation with the enlargement countries in the context of the Joint Consultative Committees (JCC) and the Working Groups (WGs). A new JCC with Albania may be established in 2024, once a Stabilisation and Association Council decision allows for it to be set up and agreement is reached with the partner country on membership criteria reflecting the CoR's requirements on political diversity. When legally feasible, a JCC with other candidate countries, including Ukraine, could also be established.

Overall, CIVEX will continue to focus attention on the enlargement process, including through its annual "Enlargement Day" event. In this context, the CoR's work will focus on political dialogue and capacity building, stressing the need to engage with LRAs from the early stages of the EU accession process, and preparing them for their future role in the EU.

In relation to Ukraine, CIVEX will further develop its support for the country's reconstruction and future EU accession through its political advocacy and implementation and development of the 10-point support package to Ukraine.

CIVEX will continue following the developments in relation to Ukraine and pursue the following main policy objectives:

- a) provide the main platform for discussing the necessary reforms with the EU institutions and key stakeholders, focusing on decentralisation, regional development, and the early implementation of EU regional policy principles and approaches;
- b) deliver the CoR's views and recommendations through its opinion on Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and discuss the messages to deliver ahead of the 2024 Ukraine Recovery Conference, due to take place on 11-12 June, in Berlin (Germany);
- c) follow up on the setting up and implementation of the Ukraine Facility; and
- d) support the work of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine, with the CIVEX secretariat to continue providing administrative support to the Alliance.

The WG Ukraine will continue facilitating the engagement of CoR members with their counterparts from Ukraine and provide input to the ongoing debate on the country's EU accession process, the setting up and implementation of the Ukraine Facility and decentralisation reforms.

### **2.1.3 Building inclusive and resilient cities and regions**

In its work in this area, the CIVEX commission shall be guided by strategic Priority 2 - Managing fundamental societal transformations: Building resilient regional and local communities.

Following up on its recommendations concerning the proposals under the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, the focus will be on promoting the instrumental role of local and regional authorities in the successful reception and integration of migrants and refugees while advocating for their greater involvement in all the decision-making processes and at all stages of policymaking within a multilevel governance approach. CIVEX will continue to advocate for more comprehensive financial support to local and regional authorities that would allow more direct and easy access to the funding of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) via the national funding attributed to Member States, both for addressing emergency situations, and putting in place solutions for the long-term integration of migrants and refugees.

Implementation of the Integration Partnership with the European Commission and the 2023-2024 Action Plan with UNICEF will be of particular importance.

Policy areas such as police cooperation and the fight against organised crime, including drug trafficking and migrant smuggling, will also be tackled in CIVEX's advisory and political work. Furthermore, emphasis will be placed on the role of cities and regions in developing policies aimed at empowering all citizens, while countering arising safety threats including violence and intimidation, also against elected politicians. Finally, efforts will be invested in building an open and regular dialogue between EU institutions, the experts in the field and local and regional authorities on migration, effective integration and social inclusion.

The CIVEX commission will continue to promote the visibility of the Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award (MPAA), including also by involving other institutions and organisations to actively contribute to nominations.

CIVEX external activities will also support the delivery of priorities in this policy area, through its external meeting and conference on *Integrating migrants: challenges and opportunities for cities and regions* to be held in Vilnius, Lithuania on 7-8 July; and the capacity-lab on *New paths for stronger inclusion of migrants in the labour market at local and regional level* to be held during the 10th European Summit in Mons, Belgium on 18-19 March, and a study visit to the *Dutch Language House* in Brussels, Belgium in February.

#### **2.1.4 The wider European Neighbourhood and international partnerships**

Under this priority, CIVEX will continue to promote the importance of local self-government in partner countries of the Eastern and the Mediterranean neighbourhoods, some of which also include enlargement counties (see under 2.1.2). The multilateral CoR bodies with LRAs from Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood – CORLEAP and ARLEM – have a key role to play in this respect.

In line with its priority areas for 2023-2025 (*inclusive cities, climate action in the Mediterranean and energy and food security*), ARLEM will prepare two reports in 2024 on water resilience and energy cooperation and continue its work on civil protection. It will also continue to bring a territorial dimension to the Union for the Mediterranean, including through its participation at UfM ministerial meetings Regional Forum. In these times of increased instability in the Middle East, ARLEM will also play a role in offering channels of dialogue at local level.

CIVEX will also contribute to the localisation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by advocating for the role of LRAs in EU Development Cooperation, and promoting direct cooperation between LRAs of the EU and partner countries on shared challenges and priorities. This will be guided by the recommendations and conclusions stemming from the 8th edition of the Forum "Cities and Regions for International Partnerships". As the Forum was focused on localising the EU Global Gateway strategy, CIVEX will engage in the Global Gateway governance structure, aiming to make Global Gateway inclusive and supportive of local and regional authorities, and work with DG INTPA to communicate the conclusion of the forum to the Global Gateway board. CIVEX will represent the CoR in the newly established Global Gateway Local Authorities and Civil Society Dialogue Platform. CIVEX will engage in similar development cooperation policy bodies (Council Working Party on Sustainable Development, European Parliament, EU-UN Policy Dialogue on SDG Localisation and UN Habitat role on SDG localisation), fora (Policy Forum for Development), and in the follow up to the EU-LAC 2023 Summit and the preparation of the upcoming 2024 EU-African Union Summit.

With the 13th CORLEAP annual meeting scheduled to take place in the second half of September 2024, one of the key focus areas in this respect will be to implement the new, dual role of CORLEAP; supporting the cooperation among LRAs from all Eastern Partnership countries and with their EU counterparts, and supporting the EU aspirations of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, underpinned by a reflection on the future working methods of CORLEAP.

Engaging with partners in the UK will be another strand of work for CIVEX.

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

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

### **4. Interinstitutional cooperation**

The CIVEX commission will continue developing its relations with the relevant interinstitutional counterparts, including the European Parliament, and in particular the AFCO, AFET, DEVE, JURI and LIBE committees, and the Joint Parliamentary Committees with candidate and pre-candidate countries. It will further the exchanges with the European Commission's Directorates-General NEAR, REGIO, COMM, HOME, ECHO, JUST, INTPA, JRC and its secretariat-general, and with the EEAS, as well as with the Council.

In particular, the CIVEX commission will engage with the new actors at the European Parliament following the June 2024 European elections. As the Commission with responsibility for governance issues and providing support to the BRASS-G, CIVEX will continue to build its cooperation with the better regulation services of the EU institutions.

Following the set objectives laid out by the 2023-2024 Action Plan, signed between the CoR and UNICEF, the CIVEX commission will continue to develop structured cooperation aimed at capacity-building, and the exchange of best practices among cities and regions in the field of the protection and integration of refugee and migrant children. It will also engage further on the implementation of the partnership agreement on integration matters between the CoR and DG HOME.

The CIVEX commission will explore opportunities to substantiate its opinions by commissioning additional analyses from the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), as provided for in the cooperation agreement between the CoR and European Parliament.

Where appropriate, the CIVEX commission will invite relevant interlocutors to its meetings, including but not limited to representatives from the rotating EU Presidency, MEPs, in particular EP rapporteurs, high-level representatives of the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee.

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

The CIVEX commission will continue to work closely with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, and will seek to maintain the annual dialogue on the multilevel protection and promotion of fundamental rights, as well as with other EU agencies and bodies active in areas falling within its remit. CIVEX will continue to foster the mutually beneficial cooperation with the OECD.

CIVEX will continue its cooperation with the European associations of local and regional authorities, including CPMR, CEMR and Platforma, NALAS, AER and Eurocities.

CIVEX will continue to work with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on the basis of the common priorities and methods of cooperation set out in the Cooperation Agreement between the two institutions.

The CIVEX commission will also seek to develop its relations with the Stabilisation and Association Councils of the countries with which the CoR has established JCCs, as well as with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). Finally, the CIVEX commission will continue to work closely with all the associations and stakeholders active in the areas of development cooperation from a local/regional angle, including the United Nations and UN-Habitat which has been mandated as the lead UN Agency on SDG localisation.

## **6. Complementary activities**

### **Organisation of Conferences and Seminars**

As outlined in the thematic section, the CIVEX Commission intends to organise or cooperate with other institutional players in organising events linked to the priorities of its consultative agenda.

The following external events will be organised in 2024:

- External meeting and conference on Integrating migrants: challenges and opportunities for cities and regions – in Vilnius, Lithuania;
- A study visit – Visit to the Dutch Language House Brussels – in Brussels, Belgium;
- A study visit – Addressing benefits and challenges of enlargement for EU and candidate countries' regions – in Szeged, Hungary.

### **Studies**

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

- Update of the Division of Powers for enlargement countries
- How the EU should prepare for the enlargement in terms of governance, policies and investments: options and choices made from a territorial perspective (title tbc, study linked to the 30th anniversary of the CoR)



- Study on legal and political dimensions of (re-)decentralisation of the state authorities in Ukraine
- Mapping and further developing partnerships between regions and cities from Ukraine and the European Union
- Capacity building for LRAs in the light of the Ukraine Facility (Pillar III)
- Feasibility study for a possible Eastern Partnership Academy for public administration at local and regional level
- Water scarcity in the Mediterranean

\*

\* \*

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

## APPENDIX I

### List of documents already attributed to the CIVEX commission to be dealt with in 2024

Reference of European Commission document	Title of European Commission document	Procedure	Scheduled adoption by the CoR
COM(2023) 641 final	<b>EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime</b>	CIVEX VII-026  Rapporteur: <b>Matteo Bianchi</b> (IT/ECR)  Article 307(1) TFEU  Rule 41b) i)	10 April (CIVEX)  18-19 June (Plenary)
COM(2023) 690 final  COM(2023) 691 final  SWD(2023) 690 final; SWD(2023) 691 final; SWD(2023) 692 final; SWD(2023) 693 final; SWD(2023) 694 final; SWD(2023) 695 final; SWD(2023) 696 final	<b>Enlargement package 2023 - Western Balkans and Türkiye</b>	CIVEX VII-027  Rapporteur: <b>Nikola Dobroslavić</b> (HR/EPP)  Article 307(1) TFEU Rule 41b) i)	6 February (CIVEX)  17-18 April (Plenary)
COM(2023) 690 final  SWD(2023) 697 final; SWD(2023) 698 final; SWD(2023) 699 final	<b>Enlargement package 2023 – Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia</b>	CIVEX VII-028  Rapporteur: <b>Antje Grotheer</b> (DE/PES)  Article 307(1) TFEU Rule 41b) i)	6 February (CIVEX)  17-18 April (Plenary)
N/A	<b>Active subsidiarity: a fundamental principle in the EU Better regulation agenda</b>	CIVEX VII-029  Rapporteur: <b>Mark Speich</b> (DE/EPP)  Art. 307(4) TFEU Rule 41b) ii)  Own-initiative opinion	10 April (CIVEX)  18-19 June (Plenary)

## APPENDIX II

### List of the principal legislative and non-legislative proposals corresponding to the political priorities of the CIVEX commission for 2024<sup>6</sup>

<b>Reference of European Commission document</b>	<b>Title of European Commission document</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Scheduled adoption by the CoR</b>
COM (2023) 630 final	Defence of democracy package (legislative and non-legislative)	Q4 2023  Own-initiative opinion (Rule 41(b)(i))	17-18 April (Plenary)
Reference tbc	Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews	27 February 2024  Own-initiative opinion (Rule 41(b)(i))	Tbc

---

<sup>6</sup> The list is indicative and subject to change.

## APPENDIX III

### Explanatory sheet for each Priority Policy Area

Policy area	<b>Democracy and better regulation – from the Conference to the Future of Europe towards the next mandate of EU institutions</b>
<i>CoR commission</i>	<b>CIVEX</b>
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CoR policy priority No 1: "Bringing Europe closer to its people".</li> <li>• Working towards the new mandate of EU institutions, CIVEX will continue to build on the Conference on the Future of Europe (COFE) proposals, which contain crucial advances for the CoR across many policy areas, notably in terms of acknowledging the principles of active subsidiarity and multilevel governance, a stronger involvement of local and regional authorities and of the CoR throughout the EU policy-making process, and new forms of citizen participation.</li> <li>• CIVEX activities in this area will be developed around two pillars: democracy and citizen participation on the one hand, and better regulation on the other.</li> </ul> <p><u>Key challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2024 is a crucial year because of the European elections in June; both the preparation of the elections and their expected outcome will be key for charting the future of the Union.</li> <li>• The legacy of COFE, both in terms of its recommendations and of its participatory working methods<sup>7</sup>, should underpin efforts to inspire citizens to vote and the CoR contribution to the campaign of the EU institutions, as well as the political debate.</li> <li>• The challenge remains for the CoR to encourage voters' participation in the European elections through its representatives at local and regional level.</li> <li>• A further challenge is to ensure the implementation of the COFE proposals, especially in those areas which are key to the CoR, and to make them a core element of the political debate prior to and after the European elections.</li> </ul> <p><u>Impact indicators</u></p>

<sup>7</sup> Conference on the Future of Europe, [Report on the final outcome](#), May 2022.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CoR involvement in the interinstitutional negotiation process (trilogue) on the European Media Freedom Act and other relevant legislative acts;</li> <li>• Number of press coverage mentions and number of speakers at the Subsidiarity Conference in Warsaw, Poland (2024, date tbd);</li> <li>• Maintaining the rapporteurship for the Fit for Future platform (F4F) opinions at the current level of engagement – 2-3 opinions per year, representing 20-25% of all Platform opinions;</li> <li>• Number of events with the European Youth Forum towards increasing youth engagement at the local and regional level, building on the Charter on Youth and Democracy and the established cooperation with the SEDEC Commission.</li> </ul>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives <b>in 2023</b></p>	<p><u>Democracy and citizens' participation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opinion on Media Freedom Act (rapporteur Mark Speich, DE/EPP), March;</li> <li>• opinion on The role of local and regional authorities in countering disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (rapporteur Gustaw Marek Brzezina, PL/EPP), July;</li> <li>• external seminar on "Disinformation: regional and local dimension of a global challenge", Elblag (PL), 11 May;</li> <li>• external conference on "Implementing the proposals of the Conference on the Future of Europe: strengthening European citizenship through promoting European identity and democratic values", Timișoara (RO), 19 September;</li> <li>• follow-up to the Charter on Youth and Democracy and the cooperation with the European Youth Forum: workshop on "Galvanising the democratic participation of youth – towards European elections" on 11 October, during the European Week of cities and regions;</li> <li>• contribution to the EP proposals concerning the revisions of the Treaties, through exchanges and debates and channelling the CoR proposals through a letter to the AFCO Chair and political coordinators in the framework of the preparation of the relevant EP report<sup>8</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><u>Better regulation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opinion on Strategic foresight as an instrument of EU governance and better regulation (rapporteur Giorgio Magliocca, IT/EPP), October;</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> European Parliament, AFCO committee, draft report on the [Proposals of the European Parliament for the amendment of the Treaties](#), 2022/2051(INL).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CoR Better Regulation and Active Subsidiarity Steering Group (BRASS-G), established in 2022 and chaired by Karl-Heinz Lambertz (BE/PES), met on 20 June and 20 November 2023;</li> <li>• The CoR members in F4F delivered two out of eight opinions included in the F4F AWP2023: on the Public Procurement Directive 2014/24/EU and the Digital Europe Programme.</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2024 with timeline</p>	<p>CIVEX activities will focus on the follow-up of its works on pending files and on promoting meaningful exchanges to highlight the CoR proposals on democracy and better regulation in the preparation and follow-up of the elections. The CoR summit in Mons will be a key milestone in this regard, as well as the CoR Subsidiarity Conference.</p> <p><u>Democracy and citizen participation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opinion on the Defence of democracy package (published in December 2023);</li> <li>• The reaction to the potential Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews (announced for 27 February 2024) should be both horizontal throughout the various policy areas (see the fiche on Enlargement) and specific to, if applicable, the proposals on pre-enlargement reforms, through a dedicated opinion. The latter would also make it possible to promote and channel the CoR's contribution to potential reforms and eventual Treaty revisions, as well as to respond to the European Parliament report on Proposals for the amendment of the Treaties (see footnote No 2);</li> <li>• Contribution to the implementation of the CoR roadmap for the preparation of European elections;</li> <li>• Contribution to the CoR Summit in Mons on the future of Europe, European elections (in cooperation with Directorate D) and youth participation (in cooperation with SEDEC).</li> </ul> <p><u>Better regulation:</u></p> <p>2024 will be dedicated to consolidating the coordinating role of BRASS-G and its steering of the CoR agenda and policy on better regulation, paving the way for a more structured way of working in the next term of office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRASS-G will meet twice in 2024. It will finalise a set of recommendations on how to improve and streamline the CoR policy and toolbox on better regulation. It will also consider possible new tools, taking into consideration the COFE recommendations (e.g. youth checks, participatory tools) and the proposals on burden reductions and reporting requirements outlined in the European Commission Work Programme 2024. The second annual meeting of BRASS-G will take place alongside the 11th Subsidiarity Conference;</li> <li>• The CoR 11th Subsidiarity Conference in Warsaw, Poland (2024, date</li> </ul>

	<p>tbd) will build on the relevant recommendations of the COFE, as well as on the conclusions of the 2022 Subsidiarity Conference in Valencia on "The Future of Europe: Daring more EU democracy - Creating EU added value". The conclusions of the conference will feed into the BRASS-G recommendations mentioned above;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study on "Charting the course to better EU law-making: optimisation of EU Treaties and strengthened interinstitutional cooperation with the European Committee of the Regions" (Q2 2024);</li> <li>• Redesign of the CoR material on the <a href="#">Division of Powers</a>;</li> <li>• Contribution to the work of the F4F Platform by putting forward proposals for topics for the AWP2024 and taking over the rapporteurship for F4F opinions;</li> <li>• Contribution to the revision of the cooperation agreements with the European Parliament and the European Commission.</li> </ul>
<p>Key interinstitutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key European Commission initiative on democracy and better regulation in 2024: Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews (announced for 27 February 2024);</li> <li>• Defence of democracy package;</li> <li>• When appropriate, debate on eventual Treaty revisions;</li> <li>• European elections, 6-9 June 2024;</li> <li>• Follow-up to EP elections: constitutive EP plenary and EP committee sittings, election of the President of the European Commission, hearings of Commissioners-designate.</li> </ul>

Policy area	Enlargement of the European Union and support to Ukraine
<i>CoR commission</i>	CIVEX
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Objectives</u>: Russia's invasion of Ukraine has rekindled the debate about EU enlargement, as well as its possible overall impact upon the EU budget, EU policies and EU governance. As there are challenges for all policies, including those with implications on local and regional authorities, such as cohesion policy, the CoR should ensure a message which clearly supports both enlargement and strengthening the efficiency of EU policies.</li> <li>• The Commission is expected to initiate the debate on pre-enlargement reforms and to conduct policy reviews to see how each EU policy would be affected by a larger Union, and how the European institutions would work. All EU institutions, including the CoR, will need to reflect on these issues.</li> <li>• By the end of 2023, the co-legislators are expected to reach an agreement on the targeted revision of the MFF and the Ukraine Facility - the new instrument for supporting Ukraine, which will provide up to EUR 50 billion in grants and loans for 2024-2027. The CoR will have to monitor the situation to ensure that Ukrainian local and regional authorities are duly consulted and involved in the preparation and the implementation of the Facility. The Ukraine Facility will also provide funds for capacity building of LRAs, which is essential for their empowerment in the context of the reconstruction process and on the way to EU accession. The CoR should play its part in the resumption and completion of the decentralisation reform in Ukraine.</li> <li>• Advocating and supporting LRA empowerment in view of the realities of eventual EU membership will be a key task for the CoR in respect of all enlargement countries.</li> </ul> <p><u>Key challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlargement will in the near future mean not only "enlargement policy", as with ten more countries aspiring to join the EU, it will now also have an impact on <i>all</i> "intra-EU" policy fields too.</li> <li>• Working methods and tools are required to mainstream intra-EU <i>enlargement preparations</i> (policy reviews in all fields) into the work of <u>all CoR commissions</u> (as distinct from <i>enlargement policy</i>, a specific branch of EU external policy, conducted within the CoR by CIVEX). This is a process similar to the one followed in the wake of the UK's decision to leave the EU.</li> <li>• <i>All</i> policy fields and political initiatives will need to be "enlargement-proofed", i.e. assessed for the implications of eventual enlargement. Enlargement work will thus now acquire an <i>internal</i> aspect (=inside the EU).</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In parallel, the CoR also needs to maintain and develop its statutory <i>external</i> work, targeting countries aspiring to join the EU, particularly through the policy dialogue and capacity-building conducted by the Joint Consultative Committees and Working Groups, as well as ARLEM and CORLEAP (to the extent relevant).</li> <li>• Putting the role of Ukrainian local and regional authorities' involvement in the country's reconstruction to the forefront of the political agenda of both the EU and Ukraine stakeholders;</li> <li>• Determining the role of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine in the implementation of the Ukraine Facility.</li> <li>• Providing input to the Ukraine Recovery Conference 2024 where the need to continue work on decentralisation reform will be central.</li> <li>• Continuing the implementation of the 10-point support package to Ukraine, while updating elements which may appear necessary.</li> <li>• Following involvement of local and regional authorities in both the EU and Ukraine in Ukraine's reconstruction process and working towards EU membership.</li> </ul> <p><u>Impact indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of opinions produced by the end of 2024 which include – where relevant – an assessment on whether and how enlargement would affect the policy or initiative in question;</li> <li>• Greater involvement of CoR commissions other than CIVEX in the Enlargement Day;</li> <li>• Number of enlargement related communication activities;</li> <li>• Number of new partnerships, peer to peer cooperation with Ukraine, and capacity building initiatives, also with a view to developing expertise in drafting the reconstruction programmes.</li> </ul>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives <b>in 2023</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Enlargement Package 2022 Opinion (rapporteur Anna Magyar, HU/ECR) adopted unanimously;</li> <li>• The Enlargement Day was extended to a cluster of seven events, now for the first time including the Working Group on Ukraine;</li> <li>• EPRS again supported the event by providing briefing materials;</li> <li>• The launch of the policy reviews by the Commission will add to the urgency of making the CoR's work on enlargement a cross-cutting priority, which deserves continued attention across all Commissions;</li> <li>• Putting enlargement co-operation with Moldova and its LRAs on a statutory basis (by the creation of a Working Group, or by allocating Moldova to one of the existing ones) remains a work in progress.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation of the CoR 10-point support package to Ukraine, specifically including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group on Ukraine meetings held in Gdańsk, Brussels and</li> </ul>

	<p>Lviv;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine at the Political level focusing on strategic joint priorities and coordination of actions over the next year;</li> <li>• Bimonthly working-level meetings of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine facilitating peer to peer cooperation and showcasing best practice initiatives between Alliance partners;</li> <li>• Ukraine Summer Camp initiative;</li> <li>• Allocation of office space to Ukrainian LRAs;</li> <li>• Facilitation of Ukrainian trainee and study visit programmes.</li> </ul> <p>Engagement with Ukraine-related events 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CoR Workshop in view of the London Ukraine Recovery Conference on "Strengthening the role of Local and Regional Governments in Ukraine's Recovery and Reconstruction Process";</li> <li>• CoR participation in London Ukraine Recovery Conference dedicated discussion panel on the role of LRAs in the reconstruction of Ukraine;</li> <li>• Joint workshop organised between the CoR and Eurocities on 12 October, under the umbrella of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine on the Sustainable reconstruction of Ukrainian cities and regions;</li> <li>• 8-10 November, CoR with support of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the reconstruction of Ukraine co-hosting the Act Now Mayors Conference;</li> <li>• 16 November, CoR partnering with the Kyiv Investment Forum;</li> <li>• 14 November, CoR participation at German-Ukrainian Municipal Partnerships Conference "Together for Europe: solidarity, reconstruction, future prospects", held in Leipzig, Germany;</li> <li>• 10 October, Unanimous adoption of the CoR opinion on the Ukraine Facility (rapporteur Dario Nardella, IT/PES).</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2024 with timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2023 Enlargement Package to be addressed in two CoR opinions;</li> <li>• A CIVEX study visit on Addressing benefits and challenges of enlargement for EU and candidate countries' regions will take place in Szeged, Hungary in the second half of 2024;</li> <li>• Preparations for the launch of a new Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Albania will continue, with an inaugural meeting in 2024;</li> <li>• CIVEX will reinforce the link between the CoR consultative work and the activities of the JCCs and the Working Groups by following the work of these bodies and engaging more closely with them throughout the year;</li> <li>• A decision will be taken on whether enlargement-related work with Moldova is to be covered by one of the existing WGs, or if a dedicated body should be set up;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to support for local democracy development in Eastern Partnership countries, and fostering the exchange of good practice and cooperation between the LRAs from EaP countries among them and with their EU counterparts, the work of CORLEAP should support the EU integration of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova;</li> <li>• Dialogue and cooperation with Türkiye will continue, in particular in the context of the WG Türkiye. Particular attention should be brought to the fact that, although the accession negotiations remain at a standstill, the EC/HRVP Joint Communication of 29 November 2023 proposes to resume discussions in certain areas like the modernisation of the Customs Union or the visa facilitation, as well as the resumption of the meetings of the Association Council.</li> <li>• Ongoing commitment to the CoR 10 Point Support Package under various instruments including: Working Group on Ukraine; the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine at both political and working-level; Continuation of the support of office space for Ukrainian LRA's into 2024; Extension of the Ukrainian trainee and study visit programme;</li> <li>• Continued engagement with future Ukraine-related events including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OECD collaboration on strategic foresight initiatives including place-based policies for the future;</li> <li>• Ukrainian Recovery Conference (Germany 2024, date tbc);</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Event on LRA support to Ukraine in the Summit in Mons, Belgium 17-19 March 2024 (tbc);</li> <li>• CoR participation (CIVEX/Ukraine WG) in key national events linked to the reconstruction of Ukraine.</li> </ul>
<p>Key inter-institutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission's Enlargement Package launch is due on 8 November 2023;</li> <li>• A Growth Plan for the Western Balkans is expected to be launched as a separate Communication;</li> <li>• The Stabilisation and Association Council with Albania should create the legal base for the JCC in late 2023 or early 2024;</li> <li>• Exchanges with European Commission on the Ukraine Facility and the implications for the involvement of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for the Reconstruction of Ukraine in the implementation of the Facility;</li> <li>• Follow-up to possible upcoming policy and legislative initiatives related to support to Ukraine.</li> </ul>

Policy area	Building inclusive and resilient cities and regions
<i>CoR commission</i>	CIVEX
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In its work in this area, the CIVEX commission shall be guided by strategic Priority 2 - Managing fundamental societal transformations: Building resilient regional and local communities, namely by specifications in points 41, 42 and 43 of the CoR Resolution on its political priorities 2020-2025.</li> <li>• With a view to the follow-up on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, the focus will be on promoting the instrumental role of local and regional authorities in the successful reception and integration of migrants and refugees, and the relevance of their involvement in all the decision-making processes and at all stages of the policy-making, including when it comes to addressing the root causes of migration, as well as migrant smuggling and instrumentalization.</li> <li>• Work will focus on the role of cities and regions in developing policies aimed at empowering all citizens (including the most vulnerable) while countering arising safety threats including violence and intimidation (also towards elected politicians), drug trafficking, terrorism and radicalisation.</li> <li>• The aim is to share experiences, take stock of best practices and engage key stakeholders in working together to develop concrete recommendations and to build a shared culture of inclusive and resilient cities and regions across the EU.</li> <li>• It also involves raising awareness of the dangers of hate speech and hate crime and upholding the rule of law in our societies.</li> </ul> <p><u>Key challenges:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the views and recommendations of CoR members contained in CoR opinions on this policy area are effectively recognised in the policy-making process at the EU level, in particular via close cooperation with the European Parliament and national authorities.</li> <li>• Ensuring the necessary support for regions and cities receiving migrants and refugees, and collective responsibility that respects fundamental human rights, including the right to protection for refugees.</li> <li>• Building an open and regular dialogue between EU institutions and local and regional authorities on migration, effective integration and social inclusion.</li> <li>• Involving other institutions and organisations to actively contribute to nominations for the Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award (MPAA).</li> <li>• Capacity-building of LRAs on safe urban spatial planning and integration policies;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the integration partnership between the European Commission and the CoR in line with the Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027, bringing the benefits of this partnership to the CoR members and the members of the CoR's Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants Network.</li> </ul> <p><u>Impact indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of nominations received for MPAA, including from the European Parliament ;</li> <li>• Number of communication initiatives on MPAA, including with the European Parliament;</li> <li>• Participation in events on migration and integration, including through the CoR Integration Network.</li> </ul>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives <b>in 2023</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of local and regional/territorial angles in the migration reform proposals and Schengen Code revision;</li> <li>• The CoR Network of <b>Cities and Regions for Integration of Migrants</b> scaled up the scope of outreach and capacity-building events that bring together local and regional authorities, policy-makers, practitioners and experts in the field, in particular:</li> <li>• 8 February, Award ceremony of Mayor Pawel Adamowicz Award with Michałowo as a laureate, a municipality that helped stranded migrants on the Belarus border; special recognition went to the abducted Ukrainian mayor Oleksandr Babic;</li> <li>• 28 March, conference on "Empowering regions and cities in migrant integration governance";</li> <li>• Various presentations by CoR rapporteur Antje Grotheer (DE/PES) of CoR positions on migration and integration policies, including on the Pact on Migration and Asylum at events organised throughout the year;</li> <li>• 22 November, seminar "World Children's Day: the role of local authorities in protecting and empowering migrant and refugee children" organised in cooperation with UNICEF;</li> <li>• Strengthened cooperation with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), including with a joint CoR - FRA workshop "Towards long-term solutions for displaced people from Ukraine"</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities <b>in 2024</b> with timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Territorial Impact Assessment workshop – Recognition of qualifications of third country nationals;</li> <li>• Cooperation with European Commission and OECD on talent mobility measures relevant for integration of third country nationals;</li> <li>• Follow-up to the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime, published by the EC on 18 October 2023;</li> <li>• Discussing examples of community safety dialogues as an interesting practice contributing to the strengthening of safety and security at the local/regional level;</li> <li>• The Mayor Pawel Adamowicz Award ceremony will take place at the</li> </ul>

	<p>Summit of European Regions and Cities in Mons, on 18 March 2024, thus maximising outreach;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the <a href="#">Security, Democracy &amp; Cities</a> Conference, to be held in Brussels from 20-22 March 2024, under the auspices of the European Forum on Urban Security and Safety, Brussels – participation of CIVEX administration;</li> <li>• Belgian EU Presidency events - the CoR will take part in two events on Integration and Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– High-Level Policy Forum and Ministerial Conference on the Integration of Newcomers by EU Member States on 8-9 February 2024, Mechelen;</li> <li>– Conference for Mayors on Local Government Approaches to Diversity on 19 April 2024, Mechelen.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A CIVEX study visit – Visit to the Dutch Language House Brussels – will take place in Brussels, Belgium in February 2024;</li> <li>• A CIVEX external meeting and conference on Integrating migrants: challenges and opportunities for cities and regions will take place in Vilnius, Lithuania in July 2024;</li> <li>• Strengthened cooperation with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights beyond the Annual Dialogue CoR-FRA;</li> <li>• Promotion of fundamental rights and freedom of displaced people fleeing the war in Ukraine and dissemination of best practices on effective inclusion of displaced people at the local level;</li> <li>• Implementation of CoR-UNICEF Action Plan;</li> <li>• Following up on the dangers for democracy posed by disinformation and the development of artificial intelligence.</li> </ul>
<p>Key interinstitutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusion of interinstitutional negotiations on the Migration and Asylum Pact reform;</li> <li>• Conclusion of interinstitutional negotiations on the review of the Schengen Borders Code;</li> <li>• Follow-up to the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime (published in October 2023);</li> <li>• Proposal by the European Commission of the Update of the legal framework and strengthen co-operation to fight the smuggling of migrants (Q4 2024);</li> <li>• Follow-up to the proposal on the sexual exploitation of children (expected by the end of 2023);</li> <li>• International conference on fighting people smuggling, organised by the European Commission (date tbc).</li> </ul>

Policy area	The wider European Neighbourhood and international partnerships
<i>CoR commission</i>	CIVEX
Policy objectives, key challenges and impact indicators	<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the importance of local self-government in the partner countries of the Eastern and Mediterranean neighbourhoods, which also include some candidate countries. The CoR bodies with LRAs from the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood – CORLEAP and ARLEM – have a key role to play in this respect.</li> <li>• Contribute to the localisation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by advocating for the role of LRAs in EU Development Cooperation, and promoting direct cooperation between LRAs of the EU and partner countries on shared challenges and priorities.</li> <li>• Continue to engage with partners in the wider European neighbourhood (e.g. the UK).</li> </ul> <p><u>Key challenges</u></p> <p>In the Eastern Neighbourhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to implement the conclusions and recommendations of the CoR opinion on the "Future of EaP from a local and regional perspective";</li> <li>• to implement the new, dual role of CORLEAP: support the cooperation of LRAs from all EaP countries among these countries and with their EU counterparts, and support the EU aspirations of Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, and Georgia;</li> <li>• to maintain and reinvigorate the interest and engagement of members from the EU and all EaP countries, whether they strive to become EU Member States or not;</li> <li>• to engage all stakeholders from the region despite regional tensions.</li> </ul> <p>In the Southern Neighbourhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to continue political dialogue and peer-to-peer cooperation in the framework of ARLEM, despite the dramatic deterioration of the Israeli-Palestinian relations following the Hamas terrorist attack of 7 October;</li> <li>• In 2024, ARLEM will continue to promote the LRAs at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) (e.g. through participation in UfM ministerial meetings) and reflect on the achievement and future perspectives of its cooperation with the UfM in the context of the 10th anniversary of their Declaration of intent.</li> </ul> <p>More broadly, making the case for direct support and inclusion of LRAs from the EU, its neighbourhood and the world in development cooperation.</p>

	<p><u>Impact indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of high-level speakers at the 13th CORLEAP annual meeting (in the second half of September 2024);</li> <li>• ARLEM: increased attendance at statutory meetings in spring and autumn 2024, participation at UfM meetings, adoption of reports; continuation of the dialogue between all ARLEM partners despite the increased instability in the Middle East and polarised views on the conflict.</li> <li>• Activities on the ground in partner countries to promote CoR opinions;</li> <li>• Participation of the CoR or LRAs in EU Development Cooperation Policy Processes (PFD, Global Gateway, EU-UN Policy Dialogue on SDG Localisation) and Instruments (direct support for LRAs and guidance to EU Delegations).</li> </ul>
<p>Progress report summary on the fulfilment of the policy objectives <b>in 2023</b></p>	<p>Eastern Neighbourhood (CORLEAP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At its plenary session on 15-16 March, the CoR adopted the opinion on "The Future of the Eastern Partnership from a local and regional perspective" (rapporteur Alin-Adrian Nica, RO/EPP);</li> <li>• The CORLEAP Bureau met on 16 March in Brussels to discuss the reports for the annual meeting and preparations for the next annual meeting, It also decided to revise the CORLEAP Action Plan;</li> <li>• Preceded by the meeting of its Bureau, CORLEAP held its 12th annual meeting on 7 September in Batumi, Georgia, followed by a thematic conference on 8 September on the "Role of municipalities in the implementation of the EU Neighbourhood Policy";</li> <li>• Decisions of the annual meeting: Revised Action Plan 2023-2024 adopted, as well as the two reports (rapporteurs Ms Dulkiewicz, PL/EPP, and Mr Abashidze from Georgia); rotating co-chairmanship passes to Ukraine;</li> </ul> <p>Southern Neighbourhood (ARLEM):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARLEM participated in UfM ministerial meetings: regional Forum on 27 November (Ministers of Foreign Affairs) with an exceptionally high-level attendance by UfM Member States despite a very difficult context; Urban Development on 4 May and meeting of Director-Generals on Civil protection on 17 October;</li> <li>• reports adopted on Urban Development and on Civil protection;</li> <li>• statutory meetings - ARLEM commission in Morocco on 21 April and plenary in Italy on 23-24 October;</li> <li>• 5th edition of the ARLEM award under the annual celebrations of the Day of the Mediterranean.</li> <li>• Participation in the preparation of the 1st edition of the Mediterranean capitals of culture, with the UfM and Anna Lindh Foundation.</li> </ul>



	<p>Development Cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-organisation of the 2023 Forum on Cities and Regions for International Partnerships with INTPA, focused on "Building Global Gateway", opened at the CoR plenary and attended by hundreds of local authority representatives from third countries - consolidation of recommendations on the role of local authorities in localising the SDGs and the Global Gateway strategy;</li> <li>• (Re-)engagement of the CoR in key EU development cooperation platforms: Policy Forum for Development and Global Gateway platform;</li> <li>• Participation of a CoR delegation led by the CoR president in the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, joint letter of the CoR President with INTPA Commissioner on the role of local authorities in implementing SDGs, including SDG localisation outside the EU in the SDG resolution adopted in the CoR October Plenary; Presentation of the SDG resolution's external dimension to the Council Working Party on the localisation of SDGs.</li> <li>• Participation of six CoR members in the EU-LAC Forum on 13-14 July ahead of the EU-LAC Summit, participation of the CIVEX Chair in the Barcelona EU-CELAC Local Authorities Forum, participation of the CIVEX EPP coordinator in the Decentralised Cooperation event organised by Andalusian cooperation.</li> </ul>
<p>Proposed CoR measures and support activities in 2024 with timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing reflection on the reform of CORLEAP (content, working methods);</li> <li>• A feasibility study for a possible Eastern Partnership Academy for public administration at local and regional level (EPAPA) may be ordered;</li> <li>• On the EPAPA project, the CoR is to cooperate closely with DG NEAR, and possibly with other partners (among the EU bodies and institutions: DG EAC, ESA, EIPA; national schools of public administration of EU MS; non-EU international organisations, such as Congress of LRAs of the Council of Europe, CEMR-PLATFORMA, ALDA, GIZ etc.);</li> <li>• Memorandum of Understanding with ALDA to help implement COR policies and opinions on the ground in geographic areas where they have Local Democracy Agencies (mainly Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood);</li> <li>• Development Cooperation: follow-up on the 2023 Forum by disseminating, promoting and monitoring the recommendations of the Forum to other EU institutions, including the new Parliament and Commission, and through the upcoming EU-UN Policy Dialogue on SDG Localisation.</li> <li>• Active participation in relevant Development Cooperation Fora (Policy Forum for Development, Global Gateway Platform, New strategic</li> </ul>

	<p>approach to Africa and next EU-UA summit, and through the upcoming EU-UN Policy Dialogue on SDG Localisation);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up on the EU-LAC Summit and the implementation of the new agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (JOIN(2023)17).</li> </ul>
<p>Key interinstitutional developments for follow-up and indicative timeline for implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining links with the EEAS to ensure in particular ARLEM active participation in key UfM meetings, such as meetings of the Ambassadors (SOM) and of Ministers of Foreign Affairs;</li> <li>• Follow-up on the 2023 Forum organised jointly with INTPA;</li> <li>• New strategic approach towards Africa announced by the EC President in the SOTEU ahead of the next EU-AU Summit;</li> <li>• Governance structure being set up for the Global Gateway strategy including a Global Gateway Platform engaging civil society and local and regional authorities.</li> </ul>