



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Hrvatski sabor for its Opinion concerning the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in the European Union legislative procedure.

The Commission welcomes the Hrvatski sabor's first Opinion after the accession of Croatia to the European Union on 1 July 2013 and appreciates the confirmation of its willingness to actively participate in the policy-making process in the EU.

Concerning the Hrvatski sabor's comments on democratic accountability, the Commission notes that national Parliaments have an important role to play in this respect. The institutional architecture of the EU is based on a dual legitimacy on both national and European levels. At the European level, democratic accountability and scrutiny are ensured primarily by the European Parliament, but national Parliaments will always play a crucial role in ensuring the legitimacy of national governments' action in EU affairs as well as in the conduct of national fiscal and economic policies. While the direct institutional outlet for opinions of national Parliaments in a formal sense is through their respective governments in the Council, the Commission welcomes that national Parliaments are becoming more organised so as to make their voices heard and, where relevant, harmonise their approach. There has been a very important increase in inter-parliamentary cooperation and dialogue also involving the European Parliament. Further cooperation in this regard to exchange information and best practices would be of mutual benefit and in the general interest of the EU and its citizens.

Regarding the subsidiarity control mechanism, the Commission is following with interest the on-going exchange of ideas on the way to develop it further. The priority for the Commission is, however, to work with the existing Treaty-based mechanism and to show that the Commission takes national Parliaments' reasoned opinions adequately into account. It is very important that national Parliaments actively engage in EU affairs either by mandating and scrutinising their governments or by submitting their comments to the Commission in the framework of the political dialogue. In the view of the Commission, the informal possibility

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under the political dialogue and the formal right to issue reasoned opinions are efficient tools to contribute to EU affairs.

With regards to the Hrvatski sabor's comments on the Commission's review of reasoned opinions, the Commission would like to underline that it gives the utmost attention to the views expressed by national Parliaments through this mechanism. The Commission would like to assure the Hrvatski sabor that each individual opinion of a national Parliament is analysed very carefully by the Commission's services. In this context, reference is made to the Commission Communication¹, which was adopted in the framework of the second "yellow card" procedure, and which includes a detailed assessment of all national Parliament arguments related to subsidiarity. It should be stressed that the Commission keeps all arguments made by national Parliaments in mind during the further legislative process.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Hrvatski sabor and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

¹ Commission Communication on the review of the proposal for a Council Regulation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (COM(2013) 851 final).