



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2019) 3832 final*

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Országgyűlés for its Opinion concerning the Commission Work Programme for 2019 {COM(2018) 800 final}.

The Commission welcomes the references made by the Országgyűlés to several key priority areas identified in the Commission Work Programme such as Brexit preparedness, migration, the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Single Market.

The Commission welcomes as well the position of the Országgyűlés on Brexit and in particular the support expressed for the various legislative and other proposals presented by the Commission in the context of its Brexit preparations. Further to the decision of the European Council to extend further the period provided for in article 50(3) of the Treaty on European Union until 31 October 2019, the Commission will continue to closely monitor the situation, while its primary objective remains to ensure an orderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union.

The Commission has from the outset carried out intensive preparations covering all possible scenarios and has made sure that after the United Kingdom's withdrawal the European Union rules will continue to work seamlessly within the European Union. In addition, the Commission has taken action to minimise the most serious disruptions that a no-deal withdrawal may cause. The Commission has been in constant dialogue with Member States and a wide range of stakeholders and has taken due account of the signals received when identifying key areas and key actions to be taken. Member States should also finalise their work on national contingency and preparedness measures, insofar as acts are not yet in place. They should also continue to inform, in cooperation with the Commission, our citizens and economic operators so that they are prepared to all possible outcomes.

The Commission agrees that a steady rise in migratory pressure and the risk of instability beyond the EU's borders mean that migration remains an important challenge for Europe and a key concern of European citizens, despite the fact that the number of irregular arrivals has been reduced in the last years. That is why it is essential that the EU

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has the tools it will need in the years to come: a deep partnership with countries of origin and transit, the financial resources needed and a legislative framework and operational capacity that properly reflects the balance of solidarity and responsibility, which must be at the heart of the EU's comprehensive approach. The recent agreement on upgrading the European Border and Coast Guard is a welcome step, but in the Commission's view, the adoption of its proposals to reform the Common European Asylum System is essential if the EU is to be equal to the challenge¹. The Commission has put all necessary proposals on the table to allow this to be achieved and it strongly supports a step-by-step approach to take each proposal forward. As stated by the Commission in December 2018², each of these proposals on its own provides a substantial benefit and there is no technical or legal impediment to adopting one or several of them separately.

As regards the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, the Commission has put forward a proposal for a modern long-term budget tightly geared towards European priorities, as agreed in Bratislava and in Rome. It is a fair and balanced package that combines strong support for new priorities with a major effort to make the budget more modern and efficient. Economic, social and territorial cohesion and the Common Agricultural Policy remain high priorities for the European Union. They will continue to deliver on their core objectives but need to be reformed in order to make them more efficient and to target support to where it is most needed. The December 2018 European Council agreed to the shared objective of reaching an agreement on the future long-term budget in the European Council in autumn 2019. At a time of change for the Union and in an increasingly turbulent world, a timely agreement would show that the Union is united and ready to act. Taking longer would delay the implementation of the future programmes, with real consequences for regions, small businesses, farmers, researchers and young people and everyone who benefits from the budget of the European Union, in Hungary and across the Union. The progress made so far constitutes a solid basis for the final stage of negotiations.

The Commission takes note of the concerns of the Országgyűlés on an extension of qualified majority voting at Union level. The Commission considers it crucial to have a debate on this issue to allow more efficient decision-making in key fields of taxation, energy and social policies, so that the Single Market legislation can keep pace with economic and societal development and help unlock progress towards the EU's energy and climate policy objectives, as well as in several targeted areas of our external relations to offer the right decision-making tools for our Common Foreign and Security Policy.

The Commission shares the view of the Országgyűlés that the unique character of the single market makes it key for stimulating growth. At the same time, the Commission takes good note of the concerns raised in relation to implementation of the mobility package and European Pillar of social rights.

¹ see Commission Communication of 6 March 2019 (COM (2019) 126 final)

² see Commission Communication of 4 December (COM (2018) 798 final)

On the mobility package, the Commission would like to underline that it covers important social reforms of the transport sector to improve working conditions and social protection of drivers and at the same time to ensure fairer business conditions for operators. The measures aim to improve clarity, enforceability and legal certainty in the interest of a well-functioning and fair Single Market, benefiting drivers, business and citizens throughout the whole European Union.

The European Pillar of Social Rights has been proclaimed in an overall context of rapidly evolving labour markets and societies as well as new challenges linked to developments such as globalisation and demographic ageing. As economic growth and social welfare are intertwined, the Pillar should be part of wider efforts aiming for more inclusive and sustainable economic growth by improving Europe's competitiveness. The Pillar seeks to promote renewed upward socio-economic convergence within Europe, which would help overcome divisions between Member States.

The Commission is pleased to see that its Communication on strengthening the role of subsidiarity and proportionality in the European Union's policymaking is welcomed by the Országgyűlés, and would like to inform the Országgyűlés that it intends to provide aggregated replies to reasoned opinions where a significant number of national Parliaments have raised subsidiarity concerns on a proposal.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Országgyűlés, and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*