



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 15.1.2019  
C(2018) 8897 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Commission proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument {COM (2018) 375 final}.*

*On 2 May 2018, the Commission adopted a proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2021-2027 {COM (2018) 322 final}. The Common Provisions Regulation proposal itself forms part of that broader package and offers ambitious measures designed to tackle inequalities between the different regions in Europe in terms of their economic, social and territorial cohesion.*

*The Commission welcomes the Senate's support for the aims of the proposal, which sets out common provisions for seven shared management funds. The new cohesion policy aims to address the main European Union priorities, such as combatting unemployment and steering economic and social development via competitiveness and convergence.*

*The Commission has taken due note of the views expressed by the Senát with regard to simplification of the basic conditions and of the demand for a higher degree of flexibility.*

*The conditions are indeed to be simplified for the programming period 2021-2027 in a number of ways. For example, amongst others, the Commission proposes a reduced reporting burden by using electronic transmission of data for all cohesion policy bodies and beneficiaries, and no longer making the ex-ante evaluation of programmes obligatory.*

*Mr Jaroslav KUBERA  
President of the Senát  
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4  
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE*

*The use of the proposed simplified cost options post-2020 alone could save up to 20-25% of administrative costs for programme managers, based on a recent study conducted by the Commission.*

*The Commission has produced a full list of all 80 proposed simplifications in its 'Simplification Handbook'<sup>1</sup>.*

*The Commission appreciates the Senát's support for the division of regions into three categories. It indeed secures funding for all categories of regions, despite the current difficult budgetary context, enabling all regions in a country like the Czech Republic to tackle their different development challenges via a priority menu better aligned to the current overall political agenda of the European Union.*

*The Commission has taken due note of the Opinion and values the Senát's early engagement at this stage of the policy-making process.*

*Discussions between the co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council, concerning the Common Provisions Regulation proposal are now underway and the Commission remains hopeful that an agreement on the legislative package concerning cohesion policy will be reached in the near future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Corina Crețu  
Member of the Commission*

---

<sup>1</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/information/publications/factsheets/2018/simplification-handbook-80-simplification-measures-in-cohesion-policy-2021-2027](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/factsheets/2018/simplification-handbook-80-simplification-measures-in-cohesion-policy-2021-2027)