



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 10.1.2022
C(2022) 160 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion relating to the Communication on a long-term vision for the EU's rural areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040 {COM(2021) 345 final}.

This Communication forms part of the Commission's work on democracy and demography, while also contributing to the European Green Deal and the Conference on the Future of Europe. It aims to create a new momentum for rural areas, identify common challenges faced, opportunities to seize and shared goals to achieve by 2040.

It introduces the EU Rural action plan, which aims to connect existing instruments and funds within the multi-annual financial framework for 2021-2027 and ensure they fully benefit rural people, in all types of rural areas, including sparsely populated areas. It also introduces the "rural pact", which is a framework to promote a strengthened governance for rural areas by fostering engagement and cooperation of a wide range of authorities and stakeholders at the EU, national, regional and local levels.

The Commission welcomes the Senát's broad support for the aims of the Communication, in particular the importance of taking into account the diversity of various rural areas. The Commission also takes note of the Senát's recommendations to the government of the Czech Republic regarding the need to ensure sustainable living conditions in rural areas and the particular attention given to the delivery of public services, the provision of modern infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, and the essential role of local action groups. These are indeed important aspects highlighted in the Communication.

Discussions between the Commission and other EU institutions concerning the Communication are now underway and the Commission looks forward to receiving their opinions in the coming weeks and months. The Commission would also welcome the opinion of Member States, including the Czech Republic, on how to achieve the shared goals of the vision and what are their ideas regarding the future rural pact.

Miloš VYSTRČIL
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské naměstí 17/4
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1

The Commission believes that the political dialogue with national Parliaments is essential for linking the Institutions and the citizens of the European Union, and looks forward to continuing it with the Senát in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Janusz Wojciechowski
Member of the Commission*