



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Poslanecká sněmovna for its Opinion concerning the debate on the strengthening of democratic legitimacy and accountability in a genuine Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) with a particular reference to Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (TSCG).

The Commission agrees that increasing integration, towards a deep and genuine EMU in particular, should be accompanied by commensurate steps to strengthen democratic legitimacy and accountability. Democratic accountability should be ensured at the level where the respective executive decision is taken while taking due account of the level where the decision has an impact. Given the interdependencies of the decisions of Parliaments in the EU, inter-parliamentary co-operation is extremely valuable as it builds up mutual understanding and common ownership for EMU as a multilevel governance system. The Commission also supports efforts to reinforce the involvement of national Parliaments in the European Semester.

The Commission welcomes concrete steps to further improve inter-parliamentary cooperation in accordance with Protocol No 1 of the EU Treaties and Article 13 of the TSCG. It is a matter ultimately pertaining to national Parliaments and the European Parliament to determine jointly the precise organisation and modalities of inter-parliamentary cooperation, and the Commission therefore welcomes the agreement that was reached at the last Speakers' Conference in April and the decision of the Lithuanian Presidency to organise the first meeting already in October this year (16-18).

In general terms, a deep and genuine EMU must be built on the following basic principles. First, the deepening of EMU should build on the institutional and legal framework of the Treaties. Second, the Euro Area must be able to follow a deeper and quicker integration path than the EU as a whole, while preserving the integrity of the policies conducted at 27, notably the Single Market. This means that, wherever appropriate, the Euro Area measures should be open to the participation of other Member States.

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The TSCG reflects these principles. First, it respects the primacy of Union law. Crucial elements are being integrated into the EU framework through secondary legislation which is reflected in the reinforced Stability and Growth Pact. The signatory parties have also committed to incorporate the substance of that TSCG into the Treaty legal framework of the European Union within five years from the TSCG entering into force (Article 16 TSCG). Second, the TSCG remains open to all Member States.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*