



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 8.8.2014  
C(2014) 5839 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission thanks the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion concerning the Commission Work Programme 2014 {COM (2013) 739 final}. It has taken due note of all the comments made.*

*The Commission shares the views of the Senato della Repubblica on the need to promote growth and jobs, to foster investment and to pursue simplification at all levels. The fourth exercise of the European Semester has come to a close with the country-specific recommendations covering, in the case of Italy, the areas of: public finances; taxation; efficiency of the public administration; financial sector; labour market and social inclusion; education and training; competition in services; network industries. The Commission adopted on 27 March 2014 a Communication on the long-term financing of the economy {COM (2014) 168 final}, which outlines work in different areas, including towards more diversified sources of financing. The REFIT Communication of 18 June 2014 {COM (2014) 368 final} took stock of progress on, as well as gave new impetus to, the smart regulation agenda. All these issues require joint efforts at EU and national level, as the Opinion also points out, namely in relation to enhancing the administrative capacity to manage the European Structural and Investment Funds.*

*In response to the view of the Senato della Repubblica that the symptoms of recession in many Member States were made more acute by austerity policies and fiscal rigour, the Commission would like to recall that over the last years and at the height of the crisis, the Commission has constantly highlighted the importance of pursuing the mutually reinforcing objectives of fiscal consolidation and growth, as evidenced in the priorities of the Annual Growth Survey. Fiscal consolidation has never been an end in itself, but rather an imperative and a prerequisite for building solid foundations for growth and restoring confidence. Consistent with this approach, the European Council of 26-27 June 2014 underlined the importance of using the possibilities and the flexibility offered by the European Union's fiscal framework to balance fiscal discipline and the promotion of growth.*

*Mr Pietro GRASSO  
President of the  
Senato della Repubblica  
Piazza Madama, 1  
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*A significant number of the proposals prioritised in Annex I of the Commission Work Programme 2014 for adoption by the legislator have already been agreed. These include the proposals on a Single Resolution Mechanism, on a Framework for bank recovery and resolution and on Deposit Guarantee Schemes adopted in April 2014. In addition, the Commission has already brought forward a number of key new initiatives listed in Annex II of the Commission Work Programme 2014, including a proposal on a climate and energy framework for 2030 {COM (2014) 015 final}, with a forthcoming energy efficiency strategy, and with recent geopolitical developments also bringing energy security considerations to the forefront. The Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union will play a key role in driving these issues forward during the second half of 2014. Finally, the Commission also welcomes the support from the Senato della Repubblica on other issues, such as the proposal for a European Public Prosecutor and the EU external agenda.*

*The Opinion of the Senato della Repubblica also touches on a number of issues that are the subject of longer-term work, for instance concerning the Europe 2020 strategy, where a public consultation is currently under way<sup>1</sup>, feeding into the mid-term review of the strategy and preparing the ground for policy proposals by the new Commission. The various comments made by the Senato della Repubblica will also feed into the preparation of the next Commission Work Programme.*

*The Commission hopes that these comments address the key issues raised by the Senato della Repubblica and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Martine REICHERTS  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>1</sup>

See [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index_en.htm) .