



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 15.10.2014
C(2014) 7493 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion concerning the Commission's communication "Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" {COM(2014) 130 final}.

The Commission appreciates the interest of the Senato della Repubblica in the stock-taking exercise of the Europe 2020 strategy. As highlighted since the outset of the Europe 2020 strategy, awareness and ownership by all relevant actors, among which national Parliaments, is a crucial prerequisite for the success of the strategy.

The Commission would like to emphasise that the Commission's communication underlines the importance of complementing any quantitative assessment of progress towards the targets with a qualitative analysis. This is notably done throughout the European Semester.

Regarding the observation by the Senato della Repubblica in relation to policies promoting growth and investment, 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. As a result of the efforts made over the last years and the subsequent improvement in the economic outlook of European economies, the emphasis has gradually shifted from addressing the emergencies from the crisis to strengthening the ground for sustainable growth and employment in a post-crisis economy.

The Commission agrees with the Senato della Repubblica that the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 is an important instrument for the delivery of the Europe 2020 objectives and an important catalyst for growth. The financial framework is closely aligned to the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy, including in terms of conditionality of EU aid.

*Mr Pietro GRASSO
President of the Senato della Repubblica
Piazza Madama I
IT - 00186 - Roma*

As mentioned by the Senato della Repubblica, the Commission has launched a public consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy, which will feed into the mid-term review. This public consultation aims at gathering the views of all of those involved in the implementation of the strategy, namely national governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities, social partners, stakeholders and the civil society. In this respect, the Commission welcomes the Italian Presidency of the Council's commitment in favour of the growth and jobs' agenda and the organisation of exchanges of views and discussions on the Europe 2020 strategy throughout the Italian Presidency.

Regarding the suggestion from the Senato della Repubblica to include a dimension of administrative and regulatory simplification in the review of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Commission would like to highlight that it is still in the consultation phase and that it is thus too early to anticipate the proposals that will be made by the Commission and discussed at the March 2015 European Council. Nevertheless, the Commission shares the importance of modernising public administrations and simplifying the administrative and regulatory environment, as evidenced in the Annual Growth Survey and in the country-specific recommendations addressed to the Member States.

The Commission hopes that these comments address the points raised by the Senato della Repubblica in its Opinion and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*