



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 27.04.2015
C(2015) 2171 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion concerning the Commission's Communication on "the Sixth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion" {COM(2014) 473 final}.

The Commission notes that the Senato della Repubblica has requested its Government and regions to use the country-specific recommendations for Italy as adopted by the Council on 8 July 2014 as the political framework for the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). The Commission fully shares this request, which is enshrined in the legal framework of the ESIF for the programming period 2014-2020. In that regard, Articles 15 and 96 of Regulation (EC) 1303/2013 provide that the Partnership Agreements and programmes must take account of the relevant country-specific recommendations adopted on the basis of Articles 121 (2) and 148 (4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

As regards the Senato della Repubblica's call on the Commission to take account of the European Code of Conduct on partnership in the framework of the ESIF, the Commission would like to recall that all relevant levels of governance must be actively involved both in the design and the implementation of the ESIF programmes. In addition, those programmes must be implemented according to the principles of partnership, multi-level governance and shared management enshrined in the legal framework. This requires not only the full involvement of the various levels of governance, but also of other relevant stakeholders, such as the economic and social partners and relevant bodies representing the civil society.

The Commission also agrees with the Senato della Repubblica that the bulk of financial resources allocated to Italy should be concentrated on the less developed regions of the country, as required by Articles 92 and 93 of the aforementioned Regulation. The Commission would also like to recall that the indicative allocation for the less developed regions in the Partnership Agreement of Italy 2014-2020 amounts to EUR 22.2 billion out of

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a total of EUR 31.1 billion for the Investment for growth and jobs goal in Italy in the period 2014-2020. In that regard, more than 70 per cent of the total financial resources are concentrated on the less developed regions of the country.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Corina Crețu
Member of the Commission*