



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion on the Commission Work Programme for 2015 {COM(2014) 910 final}, and in particular for its support for the general approach, the priorities and the main initiatives planned for 2015. The views of national Parliaments constitute valuable contributions to the debate on the political priorities of the European Union, and the Commission encourages national Parliaments to see the Work Programme as a strategic tool for an early exchange on priorities.

The Work Programme reflects a new start putting forth a limited number of new initiatives for 2015 with a focus on growth and jobs and a strong social dimension. The Commission fully shares the views of the Senato della Repubblica on the links between the objectives of boosting investment and pursuing fiscal responsibility, on the importance of social indicators, and on the need for good coordination at all levels for a better use of EU funds. The Commission already presented on 25 February 2015 its package on economic surveillance to give more time for exchanges with Member States in view of the draft country-specific recommendations presented in May 2015. In this context, the Commission has taken note of the suggestions made by the Senato della Repubblica on the interpretation of the concept of 'adverse economic cycle'.

The Commission agrees with the Senato della Repubblica on the important role of small businesses in the recovery of the EU economy and is pursuing a number of measures to help them, notably under its REFIT programme. A Better Regulation Package was presented on 19 May 2015, testifying to the Commission's commitment to drive the better regulation agenda forward and to work together with the other institutions and Member States to deliver better results.

On 13 May 2015 the Commission also presented its European Agenda on Migration, which the recent tragic events in the Mediterranean have rendered even more imperative, building on the ten-point plan and the European Council meeting of 23 April 2015.

*Mr Pietro GRASSO
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The Commission takes note of the Senato della Repubblica's intention to examine in detail some of the initiatives included in Annexes I and III to the Work Programme for 2015 and is looking forward to receiving opinions on these initiatives once adopted by the Commission.

As regards the withdrawal of the proposals announced in Annex II to the Work Programme, for which the Senato della Repubblica has expressed some reservations, the Commission on 25 February 2015 decided to withdraw 73 proposals (out of the 80 items in Annex II) including the proposals on waste, plant reproductive material and oil pollution compensation fund. The proposals on air pollution and on a Common European Sales Law are, on the other hand, to be modified and not withdrawn, while an evaluation is envisaged for the school fruit and milk scheme. Finally, the Commission continues to support the work of the legislator on the proposals on organic production and on maternity leave, for which the Work Programme foresees a six month period for the co-legislators to reach agreement. The Commission has taken good note of the comments made by the Senato della Repubblica in planning the next steps in the case of plant reproductive material and the school fruit and milk scheme.

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*