



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera dei Deputati for its Opinions on the Commission's 2014 annual reports on subsidiarity and proportionality {COM(2015) 315 final} and its relations with national Parliaments {COM(2015) 316 final}.

The Commission is pleased to note that the Camera dei Deputati values the efforts made by EU institutions to ensure that national Parliaments have the necessary means to carry out appropriate scrutiny of new proposals' compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

In that regard, the Commission would like to recall that the Better Regulation agenda from May 2015 is designed to ensure that policy is prepared, implemented and reviewed in an open, transparent manner, supported by the best available evidence and backed up by the comprehensive involvement of stakeholders. The aim of the publication of inception impact assessments is to provide authorities or other stakeholders with an opportunity to give input early in the Commission's policy preparations, including on the problems to be addressed, policy options and the expected impact of an initiative as well as on how the Commission intends to further consult them. In that regard the Commission has since 2013 established a practice of sending email alerts to all national Parliaments whenever a new public consultation is launched or a new roadmap is published. Since the adoption of the Better Regulation package in May 2015 this practice also covers inception impact assessments. This will enable national Parliaments to improve their scrutiny of EU issues and to submit opinions at a very early stage in the political dialogue with the Commission.

As regards the Camera dei Deputati's call on the Commission to provide qualitative and quantitative indicators to show the respect of the subsidiarity and proportionality principles, the Commission would like to stress that impact assessments always include a section dedicated to the analysis of subsidiarity and proportionality issues. Having established the existence of a problem, its scale and its causes, the impact assessment will verify whether Member States alone could resolve it sufficiently and whether the EU has the competence to act, and would be best placed to do so. The Better Regulation package adopted in May 2015 includes a specific tool (nr 3) dedicated to proportionality and subsidiarity.

*Ms Laura BOLDRINI
President of the Camera dei Deputati
Piazza Montecitorio
IT – 00100 ROMA*

The Commission is pleased that the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission have now signed the new interinstitutional agreement on better law-making, which also requires the European Parliament and the Council to assess the impact of substantive amendments they propose during the legislative process building on the Commission's impact assessment.

As regards the Commission's relations with national Parliaments, the Commission fully agrees with the Camera dei Deputati's observation on the importance of Commissioners' visits to national Parliaments and I am pleased to confirm that the Commission wishes to maintain the frequency of Commissioners' visits to national Parliaments as seen in 2015. The Commission notes the Camera dei Deputati' comments as regards the quality of the Commission's replies to national Parliaments' Opinions. The Commission endeavours to give clear and substantial replies to all Opinions from national Parliaments, both as regards the political questions and the more technical issues raised in the Opinions. In that regard I would like to confirm that both I and the relevant Vice-President or Commissioner are directly involved in the preparation of replies to national Parliaments and I invite the Camera dei Deputati to write back to me if it finds that we do not provide adequate replies to its Opinions. On the question of the response time, the Commission is committed to replying to the national Parliaments as soon as possible and within three months. In some cases that self-imposed deadline can be difficult to respect, but the Commission will work to ensure that delays remain exceptional.

As regards the Camera dei Deputati's suggestion that future annual reports should specify how the Commission and other EU institutions have taken the opinions of national Parliaments into account, the Commission notes that it is extremely difficult to measure what impact any given opinion has had on a legislative draft or the final outcome, given that the legislative process is complex and involves many actors. The Commission is however pleased to note that its efforts to relate, in the 2014 report on relations with national Parliaments, the content of national Parliaments' Opinions on key topics to the final legislation adopted have been well received.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Camera dei Deputati in its Opinions and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*