



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 21.3.2019  
C(2019) 2190 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion on the Action Plan on Military Mobility {JOIN (2018) 5 final}.*

*As pointed out by the Senato della Repubblica, this Action Plan is part of the European Union's recent initiatives to strengthen European cooperation in the field of defence, as it sets out a series of actions at both the European and the Member State level, with the purpose of improving military mobility.*

*The Commission welcomes the support of the Senato della Repubblica to the Action Plan and agrees that the European Union will need to set aside sufficient funds in the budget, particularly for the construction and adaptation of dual-use transport infrastructure projects, which will be jointly identified by the Commission and the Member States. The Commission has proposed an envelope of 6.5 billion euro for transport infrastructure projects with dual-use in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework of the European Union.*

*Identifying the gap between the current network capacity and the requirements for improving military mobility by the national ministries for Transport and Defence is indeed necessary for the Action Plan to progress effectively. The Commission takes note of the Senate's opinion that the mapping of the territory, of the transportation network, as well as of any critical interconnections in intermodal transport, also in relation to the presence of critical infrastructure and critical European infrastructure in Italy must be ensured.*

*The completion of all the nine Core Network Corridors of the Trans-European Transport Network is highly prioritised. The Commission takes note of the opinion of the Senate that the four Core Network Corridors passing through Italy (i.e. the Mediterranean Corridor, the Rhine-Alpine Corridor, the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and the Scandinavian-Mediterranean Corridor) are fundamental in confirming the Mediterranean as a geostrategic priority, also in relation to concurrent initiatives concerning the North-*

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*Eastern strategic area, but considers that it is too early to compare the geostrategic priorities of the European Union at this point.*

*As regards the Senate's request that expenditure incurred by the Member States for works on the Trans-European Transport Networks should be deducted from the amount calculated under the Stability and Growth Pact, the Commission would like to point out that it addressed this issue in 2015. Protocol 12 to the Treaty prevents deducting any kind of expenditure (investment included) from the government deficit assessed in the context of the Excessive Deficit Procedure. The Commission has, however, resorted to other provisions of the Stability and Growth Pact to incentivise investments related to European Union's priorities. More specifically, the Communication on guidance on the use of flexibility within the existing rules of the Stability and Growth Pact issued by the Commission in 2015<sup>1</sup> includes the possibility to foster investments in relation to national expenditure on projects co-funded by the European Union under the Trans-European Networks and Connecting Europe Facility, as well as under the European Structural and Investment Funds, and the European Fund for Strategic Investments. The Communication has been discussed with Member States, resulting in a commonly agreed position endorsed by the ECOFIN Council<sup>2</sup>.*

*The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply 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*

*Violeta Bulc  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2015) 12 final

<sup>2</sup> <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14345-2015-INIT/en/pdf>