



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 10.10.2017*

*C(2017) 6815 final*

*Mr Andrej DANKO*

*President of the Národná rada*

*Mr László KÖVÉR*

*President of the Országgyűlés*

*Mr Milan ŠTĚCH*

*President of the Senát*

*Mr Jan HAMÁČEK*

*President of the Poslanecká sněmovna*

*Mr Marek KUCHCIŃSKI*

*Marshal of the Sejm*

*Mr Stanisław KARCZEWSKI*

*Marshal of the Senat*

*Dear Presidents,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Národná rada, the Országgyűlés, the Senát, the Poslanecká sněmovna, the Sejm and the Senat for their conclusions on the Future of the European Union and on dual quality of food, as adopted at the meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the V4 Parliaments in Bratislava on 22 May 2017.*

*The Commission agrees that the European Union is founded on values such as respect for human rights, freedom, liberal democracy, social justice, rule of law and equality. Making the European Union more democratic has been one of this Commission's ten priorities since taking office. The Commission has constantly supported the need for national Parliaments to be included and involved in the discussions and the policy-making process relating to the Future of the European Union.*

*The adoption of a White Paper on the Future of Europe marks the beginning of a process for the EU27 to decide on the future of their Union. The starting point for each of the scenarios in the White Paper is that the 27 Member States move forward together as a Union. As President Juncker has made clear, the current Treaties already allow for a multitude of forms of cooperation in groupings across all Member States, and therefore this possibility should not be presented or understood as something new undermining the EU's unity.*

*The decisions concerning the future course of European integration lie in the hands of Europeans. In the same vein, inclusion and equality of the Member States has always been a guiding principle for the Commission.*

*The White Paper on the Future of Europe has launched a wide-ranging debate with citizens. The Commission, together with the European Parliament and the Member States, is hosting a series of "Future of Europe Debates" across Europe's national Parliaments, cities and regions. In this regard the Commission very much welcomes that the Parliaments of the V4 countries are also becoming actively involved, and would wish to express its gratitude for the efforts made to promote the further development of the European Union.*

*As concerns the dual quality of foodstuffs, during the last AGRIFISH Council of 17 July 2017 Commissioner Jourová updated the Ministers of the Member States on the actions taken by the Commission to address this problem and emphasised our commitment to do all we can to restore people's confidence in the fair treatment in the EU's Single Market. There is no place for double standards or second-class consumers in the Single Market. EU legislation on consumer protection prohibits that consumers are misled through unfair commercial practices.*

*The Commission is implementing concrete initiatives to address this problem, which involve a close engagement of the industry and of national enforcers, as well as the financing of projects to develop a robust testing approach and the gathering of reliable and comparable evidence on dual food practices. As agreed between President Juncker and Prime Minister Fico in their meeting of 27 July 2017, the Commission will in particular:*

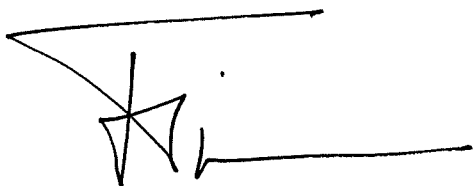
- present new specific guidance to consumer authorities on how to identify illegal practices under relevant Union consumer legislation ;*
- develop guidelines with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) for a robust harmonised methodology to test food quality across the EU and have comparable data;*
- continue the dialogue with producers and retailers, launched by Commissioner Jourová on 25 July, on how to concretely get support from the industry to solve this issue.*

*At the next Sherpa meeting of the High Level Forum for a better functioning of the food supply chain on 3 October the Commission will provide further updates on the progress achieved across the various ongoing work-strands.*

*It remains the Commission's priority to make sure that in the Single Market there is no place for double-standards towards consumers and that we deal with the matter urgently, on the basis of facts and evidence and with the involvement of all stakeholders.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Národná rada, the Országgyűlés, the Senát, the Poslanecká sněmovna, the Sejm and the Senat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with them in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

A stylized handwritten signature consisting of a large, bold 'F' and 'T' with a horizontal line extending to the right.

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

A cursive handwritten signature.

*Věra Jourová  
Member of the Commission*