



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 6.12.2016  
C(2016) 7746 final*

*Ms. Regina BASTOS  
Chair of the European Affairs  
Committee  
Palácio de S. Bento  
1249-068 Lisbon  
PORTUGAL*

*cc: Mr. Eduardo FERRO  
RODRIGUES  
President of the Assembleia da  
República  
Palácio de S. Bento  
1249-068 Lisbon  
PORTUGAL*

*Dear Chair,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly skilled employment {COM(2016) 378 final}.*

*Through this proposal, the Commission is delivering on the commitment in President Juncker's Political Guidelines to address the shortcomings of the EU Blue Card Directive<sup>1</sup> and to increase its effectiveness in attracting more highly skilled workers to the EU. The proposed revision of the EU Blue Card is also one of the key actions envisaged in the European Agenda on Migration<sup>2</sup>.*

*The EU is competing with a growing number of destination countries for the same global pool of talent. Currently, the overall number of permits that Member States issue to highly skilled workers – be it national permits or EU Blue Cards – is low compared to other developed economies while the EU's attractiveness rates are high in surveys amongst potential highly skilled migrants.*

*Therefore, this proposal seeks to make the EU more competitive in attracting highly qualified workers from around the world by providing a single, transparent, flexible and streamlined scheme for them. It would thereby also contribute to addressing labour and skills shortages*

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 155, 18.6.2009, pp. 17–29.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2015) 240 final.

*within the EU as well as to strengthening the EU's overall competitiveness and economic growth.*

*The Commission welcomes the Assembleia da República's overall support for the aims of the proposal and the measures chosen to achieve them.*

*The points made above are based on the initial proposal presented by the Commission which is currently in the legislative process involving both the European Parliament and the Council.*

*The Commission remains hopeful that an agreement between the co-legislators will be reached soon and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Dimitris Avramopoulos  
Member of the Commission*