



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a Programme for the Union's action in the field of health for the period 2021-2027 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 ("EU4Health Programme") {COM(2020) 405 final}.

The Commission appreciates that the Assembleia da República decided to analyse this proposal and welcomes the conclusion that it complies with the principle of subsidiarity. It also shares the view that the EU4Health programme will be an important tool to better equip the Union to respond to the current health crisis and to possible future ones.

Experience gained from the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak until now shows that coordinated actions at EU level are vital to protect public health during a pandemic. The EU and its Member States have introduced measures to mitigate social and economic impacts, such as maintaining the functioning of the internal market, supporting medical care services, protecting employment and supporting the transport and tourism sector. Coordinated action has also enabled the procurement of vital medical countermeasures. Public health measures have helped stabilise the situation and bring the number of new infections to a level manageable by health systems. This has allowed the progressive lifting of restrictions imposed over the last months and the resumption of many activities. National and EU financial instruments will continue to support, with all means possible, concrete actions fighting the pandemic.

On 21 July, the European Council reached an agreement on the future Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery Plan, which will have an important role in sustaining those actions.

The Commission is confident that the EU4Health programme, despite its initially proposed budget being substantially reduced, will nonetheless strengthen the resilience

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of the Union as a whole and of health systems in Member States to better withstand health crises in the future.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Assembleia da República and looks forward to continuing and further enhancing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Stella Kyriakides
Member of the Commission*

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*