



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Valeriu Ștefan ZGONEA
President of the Camera Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Commission Communication on the Annual Growth Survey 2015 {COM(2014) 902 final}.

The Commission shares the Camera Deputaților's concerns about the slow and weak economic recovery in the Union, the deflationary trends and the high unemployment rate. The Commission also welcomes the Camera Deputaților's endorsement of the three main pillars for the EU's economic and social policy in 2015: a coordinated boost to investment, a renewed commitment to structural reforms and the pursuit of fiscal responsibility.

The Commission would like to recall that the Annual Growth Survey aims at outlining the main features of its jobs and growth agenda. The Survey explains the choices made based on an analysis of the situation and its causes. The accompanying documents analyse the root causes of the situation in greater depth and have informed the Commission when designing its jobs and growth agenda.

The Annual Growth Survey is part of a wider package for jobs, growth and investment. The Investment Plan and in particular the factsheet 'Why does the EU need an investment plan'¹ provide a detailed analysis of the causes of Europe's current economic challenges. The Commission also produces and publishes economic forecasts three times a year, including an analysis of the economic situation and of its causes. The Spring Forecast for 2015 has just been published. All these documents are available on the Commission website.²

The Commission would like to underline the importance of the social dimension in its agenda, as confirmed by President Juncker in his Political Guidelines from July 2014. In that context, the Annual Growth Survey also recognises that unemployment rates and the social situation strongly vary across Member States and that in particular the high rate of

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/jobs-growth-investment/plan/docs/factsheet1-why_en.pdf.

² http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/index_en.htm .

unemployment among young people and the consistently high rate of long-term unemployment is of great concern. It also recalls that employment and social indicators are being introduced into the macroeconomic imbalances procedure and should be fully used to gain a better understanding of the labour market and social developments and risks.

Furthermore, the Commission in 2015 provided analyses of the follow-up of reforms in the Member States, including of their social impact, in the Country Reports which bring together the In-Depth Review of macroeconomic developments with the overall analysis previously contained in staff working documents, thus integrating employment and social analysis with macroeconomic and fiscal analysis.

Opening up the process and increasing engagement with other actors is also one of the key objectives of the streamlined European Semester. Awareness of the European Semester among national Parliaments has increased throughout the years, in particular thanks to the implementation of the Two-Pack legislation and the more direct involvement of the Commission through presentations and debates.

Vice-President Dombrovskis visited Bucharest in April 2015 where he discussed the European Semester and the Country Report for Romania with key national stakeholders, including members of the Romanian Government, the Camera Deputaţilor, the Senat and social partners. The Commission would like to reiterate its commitment to explain and discuss, in those national Parliaments that would request it, the country-specific recommendations, once endorsed by the European Council and adopted by the Council.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaţilor and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Valdis Dombrovskis
Vice-President*