



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2016) 7747 final

Mr Călin POPESCU-TĂRICEANU  
President of the Senat  
Calea 13 Septembrie nr. 1-3, sector 5  
RO – 050711 BUCHAREST

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senat 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 within the EU as well as to strengthening the EU's overall competitiveness and economic growth.*

*The proposal is complementary to efforts related to upskilling the labour force already taking place in the Member States and contains safeguards for Member States to regulate the number of admitted third-country nationals coming from third countries to their territory.*

*The Commission welcomes the Senat's overall support for the aims of the proposal and the measures chosen for achieving them. The Commission also notes the Senat's recommendations relating to the need for a thorough examination of the proposal's possible consequences on national labour markets and on labour market opportunities for EU citizens.*

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

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

*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*