



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its opinion on the Communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration {COM(2017) 558 final} and for its support for the ongoing efforts made at European level to manage the migration crisis.

The Commission welcomes Romania's exemplary contribution to better managing migration in third countries and to restore and ensure effective control over the European Union's external borders. Indeed, Romania makes the second largest contribution among all Member States sending their experts to another Member State.

The protection of the European Union's external borders and the implementation of the its integrated border management also concern those Member States which are bound to join the Schengen area but for which the decision of lifting controls at their borders with other Member States has not yet been taken. While certain specificities still apply to those borders, the Commission appreciates Romania's efforts to protect the European Union's external borders.

The Commission is aware that illegal crossings of migrants in the European Union have occurred in summer 2017 in the Black Sea. The Commission together with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency is closely monitoring the opening of new migration routes. Cooperation between Romania, Bulgaria, the Commission, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Europol and Turkey is ongoing and is delivering results. Should a migration route develop through the Black Sea, the Commission and the European Union agencies stands ready to provide the financial and technical assistance Romania would need.

The Commission shares your assessment that we need to further engage with third-countries. Migration has already become a key priority in the framework of cooperation with neighbouring countries and dialogues established at senior level have gained greater importance. These dialogues complement the financial assistance provided by the European Union to support third countries in our neighbourhood and beyond to address a wide range of migration-related issues ranging from integrated border

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management and tackling irregular migration to protecting the rights of migrants/asylum-seekers/refugees. In addition, European Union programmes also provide structural support for the elaboration and/or implementation of national strategies on migration and to address long-term and structural drivers or root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. This implies support to a number of policies such as job creation, education, working conditions, good governance, and climate change.

Regional dialogues are also important. In this respect, the Prague Process is highly relevant as regards the migratory flows that could affect Romania as it seeks to promote migration partnerships among the Member States of the European Union, the Schengen Area, the countries of the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans, Central Asia, Russia and Turkey on all aspects of the migration policy.

To engage with third countries, the Commission also encourage Member States to open legal ways to come to Europe including legal labour migration. That is why the Commission is currently working with interested Member States on developing pilot projects on legal migration with a number of third-countries and has made the implementation of the Employer's sanctions Directive a priority.

We also agree that integration of third-country nationals in the labour market and social inclusion is crucial for the future of Europe and the cohesion of our societies. In May 2017, the Commission launched the initiative "Employers together for integration" to give visibility to employers active in the area of integration in Europe, and encourage others to follow the example. In December 2017, the Commission signed a "European Partnership for Integration" with the European social and economic partners. The objective of the partnership is to encourage a multi-stakeholder approach to promote integration, involving employers, trade unions, chambers of commerce and industry.

Finally on return, we all know that more can be achieved in the field of return if we manage to combine our strengths together. To this end, we primarily need to reinforce the convergence and the efficiency of Member States' return procedures so that the Return Directive is coherently implemented across Europe. The Commission, together with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, stands ready to support Romania.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Dimitris Avramopoulos
Member of the Commission*