



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 25.7.2020
C(2020) 5160 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senat for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission 'A strong Social Europe for Just Transitions' {COM(2020) 14 final}.

The Commission shares the view that action at EU level as envisaged in the Communication is relevant to ensure social equity. The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights should guide us in our response to the crisis and in the course of the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. In this context, work will continue on specific initiatives addressing socio-economic challenges. Examples are binding measures on pay transparency, a proposal for establishing adequate minimum wages in the EU, the reinforced Youth Guarantee, the new Skills Agenda, the Child Guarantee, the new Disability Strategy, the Action Plan on the social economy or a new initiative for Roma equality and inclusion. In the same vein, the Commission intends also to present an Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Commission values the Senat's support and its engagement in this debate.

The Commission takes seriously the concerns expressed by the Senat as regards the sources of funding to implement the measures presented in the Communication and to finance public health systems in the light of the COVID-19 crisis. The crisis will have a significant impact on national budgets. Complementing national efforts, the EU budget is uniquely placed to power a fair socio-economic recovery, repair and revitalise the Single Market, to guarantee a level playing field, and support the urgent investments, in particular in the green and digital transitions as well as job creation and social resilience.

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With regard to the EU's social funding programmes, the Commission has put forward the changes needed to tackle the main social and employment challenges that lie ahead, such as rising youth unemployment, the need to steer basic food and material aid to the most deprived, as well as the risk of child poverty.

We need to make sure that the impact of our policies and funding works towards mitigating job and income losses, creating quality employment, and reducing poverty and inequality.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Nicolas Schmit
Member of the Commission*