



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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President of the
Congreso de los Diputados
Floridablanca s/n
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*Mr Pío GARCÍA-ESCUDERO MÁRQUEZ
President of the Senado
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Dear Presidents,

The Commission would like to thank the Cortes Generales for their Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on strengthening the security of identity cards of Union citizens and of residence documents issued to Union citizens and their family members exercising their right of free movement {COM(2018) 212 final}.

In accordance with European Union law on free movement of persons¹, identity cards can be used by Union citizens as travel documents, both when travelling within the Union and when entering the European Union from non-European Union countries. Currently, security levels of national identity cards issued by Member States and of residence documents for European Union nationals residing in another Member State and their family members vary significantly, which increases the risk of falsification and document fraud or it could lead to practical difficulties for citizens when they seek to exercise their right of free movement.

To address these issues, the Commission 2018 Work Programme² included the presentation of a legislative initiative (REFIT) to improve the security of identity cards and residence documents issued to Union citizens and their family members who are not

¹ Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC (OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 77).

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-commission-work-programme-key-documents_en

nationals of a Member State. The proposal is part of a broader package of measures designed to deny terrorist and criminals the means and space to act³.

The Commission is pleased that the Cortes Generales share the view that action at the Union level as envisaged in the proposal is required to enhance European security and to facilitate the exercise of European Union free movement rights by mobile Union citizens and their family members. The Commission welcomes the assessment by the Cortes Generales that the proposal is in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as established by Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union.

The Commission's proposal is currently in the legislative process involving both the European Parliament and the Council. A number of meetings of the Council working party responsible for the proposal have already taken place under the Bulgarian and Austrian Presidencies.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Cortes Generales in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Věra Jourová
Member of the Commission*

³ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-3301_en.htm