



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 10.5.2019
C(2019) 3081 final*

*Mr Andreas Norlén
Speaker of the Riksdag
SE – 100 12 STOCKHOLM*

Dear Speaker,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its Opinion on the Communication on “The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality: Strengthening their role in the EU’s policymaking” {COM(2018) 703 final} and on the Annual Reports 2017 on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and of proportionality {COM(2018) 490 final} and on relations between the Commission and national Parliaments {COM(2018) 491 final}.

The Commission welcomes the support of the Riksdag for the commitments and recommendations contained in the Communication. The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality are core elements of the Commission’s better regulation agenda that underpin how it prepares its policy proposals.

The Commission has taken stock of how this better regulation policy is working and has elaborated on the recommendations of the Task Force Subsidiarity, Proportionality and “Doing less more efficiently” in a communication “Better regulation: taking stock and sustaining our commitment” adopted on 15 April 2019¹.

The Commission has reinforced its efforts to increase the level of detail and reliability of information on initiatives announced in its Work Programme to ensure that it covers all elements in line with the Interinstitutional Agreement for Better Law-Making. This includes, for specific initiatives, information on the intended timing for adoption (quarter of a year). More detailed information including on progress and timing of these initiatives is made public at later stages on the Commission’s ‘Have your say’, portal². The higher number of Commission proposals adopted during spring 2018 results from the Commission’s commitment, in its 2018 Work Programme, to deliver the announced initiatives at the latest by the end of the second quarter of 2018. This allows the European Parliament and Council sufficient time to complete the legislative work before the Parliamentary recess in view of the European elections of May 2019.

¹ COM(2019) 178 final.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say_en

As announced in its Communication on The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, the Commission has meanwhile proposed to the European Parliament and to the Council to discount the Christmas/New Year period from the 8-week deadline for issuing reasoned opinions, and welcomes the support of the Riksdag in this regard. It takes note of the Riksdag's suggestion to extend this deadline to 12 weeks, but would like to point out that this would require a change of the existing Treaties, which is not envisaged for the near future.

The Commission welcomes the Riksdag's support for the proposed common grid for the assessment of subsidiarity and proportionality. It also intends to provide aggregated responses to reasoned opinions where a significant number of national Parliaments have raised similar concerns, thus giving greater visibility to the views of these national Parliaments. Reasoned opinions and the Commission's replies are public documents and are thus available to the European Parliament and the Council in their negotiations as co-legislators.

The Commission agrees with the Riksdag on the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation. It considers that any reinforcement of this cooperation is welcome and, for its part, actively participates in forums such as COSAC.

The Commission considers that national Parliaments have an essential role to play for linking the institutions and the citizens of the European Union, and that the political dialogue with national Parliaments can be a very useful tool in this regard. It very much welcomes their views both on subsidiarity / proportionality and on the substance of its proposals, and always endeavours to provide detailed and accurate replies on the issues raised by national Parliaments. The Commission also acknowledges the Riksdag's reminder that these views are those of national Parliaments and as such are not to be considered as representing the positions of Member States, which are expressed in the Council.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*