



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 17.6.2020
C(2020) 4144 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 its 2020 Work Programme {COM(2020) 37 final} and for its support to the six overarching priorities and the proposed initiatives.

Since the adoption of this work programme, the spread of the coronavirus in Europe and across the globe presents an unprecedented challenge. Its effects on public health, the social fabric and the economy are vast and will continue to be felt throughout the European Union.

The Commission's current focus is thus on coordinating the common European response to the COVID-19 outbreak, in close cooperation with the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council, Member States and stakeholders. This joint response based on cooperation, flexibility and, above all, solidarity, is essential to reinforce the public health sectors and mitigate the socio-economic impacts. Through common efforts, Member States and the EU have slowed down the spread of the virus and saved thousands of lives. The European roadmap to lifting coronavirus containment measures provides a basis for the gradual and science-based lifting of the containment measures in the current recovery phase.

Our ambitious recovery plan¹ must guide and build a more sustainable, resilient and fairer Europe for the next generation. The recovery plan turns the immense challenge we face into an opportunity, not only by supporting the recovery but also by investing in our future: the European Green Deal and digitalisation will boost jobs and growth, the resilience of our societies and the health of our environment.

¹ Europe's moment – Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation, COM(2020) 456 final

While the Commission remains strongly committed to deliver on its priorities set at the start of the mandate, the EU's collective and resolute action to the COVID-19 crisis will affect the implementation of this year's work programme. Alongside the recovery plan, the Commission adjusted the Work Programme for 2020. The Commission is determined to deliver on the commitments made in its Work Programme. However, because of the nature and scope of the health crisis, the timing of some of the proposed actions needed to be reviewed. The adapted Work Programme², reflecting the new reality, shows that the Commission will focus all its actions on overcoming the crisis, jumpstarting our economy and putting the European Union firmly on a resilient, sustainable and fair recovery path.

The recovery will need strong policy direction as well as investment, which is outlined in the recovery plan. This will be further reflected with new proposals mentioned in the Commission's Letter of Intent to the European Parliament and Council on the occasion of the State of the Union address of the President in September 2020. These will then feature as part of the Commission Work Programme for 2021, to be adopted in October this year.

The Commission has taken note with interest of the points set out in the Riksdag's Opinion.

The Commission welcomes the support for its work on the respect for the rule of law and human rights as the foundation of democracy, and on gender equality and women's empowerment that are important for ensuring citizens' trust in the Union as a whole.

The Commission shares the position expressed by the Riksdag that the EU must fulfil its obligations in the areas where the European added value is evident. For all political sensitive and/or important initiatives the Commission puts forward, the EU added value is thoroughly assessed in the impact assessment. Furthermore, the Commission shares the position expressed by the Riksdag concerning the importance of the implementation of existing legislation and the work on better regulation. The Commission also welcomes the position of the Riksdag as regards strengthening the EU's competitiveness and the importance of education, entrepreneurship, innovation and research.

The Commission counts on the support of the Riksdag in our common efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

² Adjusted Commission Work Programme 2020, COM(2020) 440 final