



***Minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Task Force:  
Brussels, 21 June 2018, 10.00-12.30.***

**Participants:**

*Members of the Task Force*

Mr. Frans TIMMERMANS, Chairman and First Vice-President of the European Commission;  
Mr. Karl-Heinz LAMBERTZ, President of the European Committee of the Regions;  
Dr. Michael SCHNEIDER, Member of the European Committee of the Regions;  
Mr. François DECOSTER, Member of the European Committee of the Regions;  
Mr. Toomas VITSUT, Member of the (Estonian) Riigikogu;  
Dr. Reinhold LOPATKA, Member of the Austrian National Council;  
Mr Kristian VIGENIN, Member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria.

*Assistants and secretariat*

Mr. Thomas Wobben, European Committee of the Regions;  
Mr. Michael Collins, European Committee of the Regions;  
Mr. Christian Gsodam, European Committee of the Regions;  
Ms. Kristi Sober, Deputy Representative of the Riigikogu to the European Parliament –  
(accompanying Mr. Toomas Vitsut);  
Ms. Lidiya Simova, Representative of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria at the  
European Parliament (assistant of Mr Kristian Vigenin, Member of the Task Force);  
Ms. Sandra Kusmierczy (accompanying Dr. Lopatka);  
Mr. Maarten Smit, Cabinet of the First Vice President;  
Mr. John Watson, European Commission, Secretariat;  
Mr. Duncan Johnstone, European Commission, Secretariat;  
Mr. Detlev Clemens, European Commission Secretariat;  
Mr. Matthias Reute, European Commission (Principal adviser).

### **Opening of the Meeting by the First Vice-President Frans Timmermans**

The Chairman welcomed the members to the sixth meeting of the Task Force that would focus on the Task Force's report including Task (b) of the President' Juncker's decision: "doing less more efficiently". The Chairman also announced an A.O.B. item covering the arrangements and communication activities associated with the delivery of the Task Force's report.

The Chairman also drew attention to the feedback which had been received by the Secretariat or via the Task Force's website.

The Chairman confirmed that the position of the European Parliament about its participation had not changed since the first meeting and so the Task Force would continue in its current format.

### **Approval of minutes of the 5th meeting on 28 May 2018**

The minutes were approved with minor modifications from Dr Lopatka and the members from the Committee of the Regions.

### **Exchange of views on Task (b): identifying policy areas where responsibility can be re-delegated and/or delivered more efficiently.**

The Chairman introduced the draft report which had been prepared by the Secretariat with the help of the support teams of the Task Force's members.

The Chairman presented the approach taken in the section of the report dealing with Task (b) of President's Juncker's decision. The Chair explained that he had reflected carefully on the merits of the Task Force endorsing a list of legislation and proposals for review and repeal. He explained that many of the suggestions were sensitive and the Task Force was not in a position to assess in-depth the substance behind these suggestions particularly given their wide-ranging nature. The Chair wanted to avoid that the important conclusions from other parts of the report were not overshadowed by intense scrutiny and criticism of the list.

The chairman proposed an alternative approach where the report would highlight the various suggestions received by the Task Force (via web links) but ownership of these would remain with those who had prepared and transmitted them. The Task Force would call upon the Commission to review the suggestions using the new working method advocated by the Task Force based on the common assessment of subsidiarity and proportionality and the greater participation of stakeholders. This was agreed by the Task Force members who asked for a dedicated annex highlighting the suggestions received in addition to the weblinks.

### **Preparation of the Task Force's report**

The Chairman invited comments on the remainder of the report. The members highlighted the following issues where the text should be revised:

- The Task Force does not support any particular scenario of the White Paper on the Future of Europe including Scenario 4 "Doing Less More Efficiently".
- Cohesion policy could be used as an example of a policy area with a pronounced legislative density together with the proposals submitted by the members from the Committee of the Regions.

- The balance of the report was skewed towards the concerns of local and regional authorities and should be re-balanced particularly in connection with the positive role that national Parliaments wanted to play on the substance of EU policies. For example, the “green card”, early consultation of national Parliaments, etc.).
- Capacity building would be important if local and regional authorities were to engage more actively in policymaking.
- The starting point of the Task Force's work is that current system of assessing subsidiarity and policymaking has deficiencies which can be improved.
- Delegated acts and implementing acts are outside of the formal subsidiarity control mechanism with national Parliaments which is an issue likely to be of increasing importance as the number of delegated acts and implementing acts grows.
- The value of policy communications where the competence of the Union/Commission is limited.
- A schematic diagram might be useful to explain the new way of working to improve policymaking from the perspectives of subsidiarity, proportionality, legislative density and the role of local and regional authorities.
- The explanatory memorandum had an important role in communicating the EU added value of new proposals and so more elements of the impact assessment should appear including the assessment of subsidiarity and proportionality. This includes proposals where subsidiarity concerns had been raised previously by national Parliaments.
- All citizens' dialogues undertaken by all institutions should be mentioned in Annex 3.
- There needed to be some minor language adjustments in the annex containing the common assessment of subsidiarity and proportionality.

The Chairman asked members to send their specific drafting suggestions to the Secretariat so that a new draft could be prepared amongst the support teams with a view to its agreement at the meeting on 10 July.

### **A.O.B. Arrangements for handing over the Task Force’s report to President Juncker**

The Task Force would need to have a joint press release and short video involving the Chair, a member from the Committee of the Regions and a member from the national Parliaments. These can be finalised and agreed at the meeting on 10 July but will have to be prepared by the support teams in advance.

The Chair also stated that he would see whether the formal handing over of the report could be made at the Task Force meeting on 10 July as this would be more efficient for the members.

### **Next Meeting (s): Topics for discussion.**

The next meeting would be on the 10 July from 12.30 until 2.30pm and would focus on the finalization of the Task Force’s report