



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 19 December 2019
(OR. en)

15268/19

INST 380
POLGEN 207
AG 72

COVER NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Legislative programming - Commission's Work Programme for 2020 and multiannual programming – Letter from the Presidency to the Commission

As a follow-up to the exchange of views on legislative programming held at the Council (General Affairs) on 10 December 2019, delegations will find in the annex the letter sent by the Presidency to the Commission summarising the debate.

18.12.2019

**PRESIDENCY LETTER TO THE COMMISSION PRESIDENT
AND VICE-PRESIDENT ON PROGRAMMING**

Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear Vice-President Šefčovič,

In 2016, the institutions agreed to reinforce the Union's annual and multiannual programming through the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (IIA-BLM). This time, the institutions are carrying out this exercise at a special juncture: the start of a new cycle.

The Strategic Agenda, agreed by the European Council in June, will guide the work of the institutions over the next five years. It underlines that institutions and Member States must work side by side and use their considerable resources in a joint endeavour. The Council wishes to ensure that the three institutions, each acting within their own powers and prerogatives, work effectively together to deliver on the Strategic Agenda.

Ministers exchanged views on legislative programming informally on 19 November and in a public session at the General Affairs Council meeting on 10 December. I thank the Commission for its contribution to these debates and for the information provided on the next steps.

In general, there was broad support for the Commission's headline ambitions, which were seen to largely reflect the priorities of the Strategic Agenda. I trust that the Commission has taken good note of the detailed views expressed by Member States. On behalf of the Council, I would like to provide you with a summary of the views expressed during these discussions, broken down into our four main priorities.

Protecting citizens and freedoms

In the Council discussions, the importance of the rule of law was underlined. Reference was made especially to the annual rule of law cycle, covering all Member States and all elements of rule of law, and the Commission's new rule of law report.

Tackling migration remains a priority among my colleagues, who are ready to contribute to new solutions that could help pave the way towards a future EU migration and asylum policy. It was also brought up that this question is linked to the proper functioning of the Schengen system.

In addition, the need to enhance efforts to counter terrorism and hybrid threats was raised.

Developing a strong and vibrant economic base

There was a call for the European economy to be strengthened through single market development, industrial and innovation policies and digitalisation. The Commission's Work Programme should address the still unresolved single market issues, in particular services and the digital economy. Reference was made to the European Council conclusions of March 2019, in which the Commission was asked to present a long-term action plan for better implementation and enforcement of single market rules, as well as a long-term vision for the EU's industrial future.

Mention was also made of the development of the EMU, which should take into account strengthening its resilience, as well as of actions against money laundering and tax fraud.

Building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe

The EU's global leadership in climate policy was considered a key priority for the next term. In this respect, concrete actions and legislative proposals will be crucial. The climate-neutrality goal, sustainable development and protection of biodiversity were highlighted in the discussions.

The importance of the social dimension to economic growth was raised, while note was made of the division of competences in the field of social affairs. Regarding an instrument to ensure that EU workers have a fair minimum wage, some of my colleagues underscored the importance of respecting the division of competences and the autonomy of social partners.

Furthermore, future skills, addressing inequalities and gender-mainstreaming were considered essential issues.

Promoting European interests and values on the global stage

During the discussions, several delegations reaffirmed the need for a stronger Europe in the world, in line with your Political Guidelines, in areas such as climate change, trade and security. It was underscored that better coherence has to be ensured among different EU external instruments and between external and internal action. In addition, the importance of enlargement policy was brought up.

To conclude, many interventions emphasised the importance of achieving concrete results for our citizens, as well as of institutional balance and better regulation. We are confident that the Commission's future initiatives, guided by the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, will benefit our citizens and promote the EU's interests.

The Council would greatly appreciate it if the Commission could take account of these views when preparing its Work Programme for 2020, as well as the draft joint conclusions on multiannual programming. The Council looks forward to continuing the dialogue with the Commission and the European Parliament in accordance with the IIA-BLM.

Yours sincerely,



Tytti Tuppurainen

Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering