

Ares(2016)
Brussels, **12 DEC. 2016**

Dear Mr Silva,

Thank you for your e-mail of 3 October 2016 and the attached Common Position of the Portuguese members of the European Economic and Social Committee regarding the possible suspension of the European Structural Funds, which you addressed to President Juncker. Please accept our apologies for the delay in replying to you.

The Commission recognised on several occasions the efforts made by Portuguese citizens to overcome the difficult economic situation that the country has been facing in recent years.

I would note, however, that the legal framework requires the Commission to make a proposal to the Council to suspend part of the ESI Funds in case of non-effective action by a Member State to correct its excessive deficit. This condition was met for Portugal following the Council Decision of 12 July 2016.

As you are aware, the legal framework also envisages that the Commission needs to take into account and give due consideration to the opinions expressed by the European Parliament in a structured dialogue. This started on 3 October and was still ongoing at the time of the assessment of the Draft Budgetary Plan and the report on action taken submitted by the Government of Portugal.

The Commission concluded on 16 November that Portugal has taken effective action and decided to keep its Excessive Deficit Procedures in abeyance.

As Portugal has taken effective action and its excessive deficit procedure is now in abeyance, there are no longer grounds to proceed with the suspension of ESI Funds. There will therefore be no proposal by the Commission.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Carlos SILVA
General Secretary
UGT

E-mail: secretario.geral@ugt.pt