

**Y Pwyllgor Materion Cyfansoddiadol a Deddfwriaethol  
Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee**

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National  
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Wales



27 February 2015

Dear Professor Hübner

**Effectively engaging sub-Member State parliaments/legislatures in  
discussions on EU governance**

I am writing to you as Chair of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee at the National Assembly for Wales in the context of the debate on improving EU governance launched under the Italian Presidency of the EU, and also as an opportunity to draw to your attention the work of the Committee and underline the importance we place on strong working relationships with the European Parliament.

I know you are very familiar with Wales from your previous role as EU Regional Policy Commissioner and also more recently as the Chair of the Regional Development Committee in the European Parliament.

We place a high level of importance in the National Assembly for Wales on positive engagement in the EU policy and legislative process. We undertook an inquiry into Wales' role in EU decision making during 2013-2014 and I attach a copy of the report for your information. It drew mainly positive conclusions about the way in which Wales engages with the EU decision-making process, whilst also recognising some of the challenges we face as a sub-Member State entity.

Therefore, we very much welcome this debate on how the EU can most effectively engage with citizens to address concerns over democratic deficit. These discussions are also timely given the internal discussions within the UK

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and Wales about the future of devolution, which has taken on an increased momentum following the recent Scottish Referendum.

One clearly important issue is how to engage effectively with parliaments and legislative assemblies across the EU, as the democratically elected bodies representing citizens. To date the EU level discussions have focused on national parliaments with no consideration of the role of sub-Member State parliaments.

As you will be aware sub-Member State parliaments and legislatures (in varying degrees) have key responsibilities in transposing EU legislation, in monitoring and scrutinising the compliance by their governments with EU obligations in those areas where it has competence. In Wales the Assembly plays an important role in engaging the people of Wales in EU policy and law-making. This includes drawing attention to and explaining the relevance of EU policy/legislative developments, as well as acting as forum where Welsh stakeholders can debate and share their views/concerns, which we feed into the EU policy cycle through the Welsh MEPs and other MEPs in a 'legislature to legislature' dialogue, as well as communicating directly with the European Commission, Committee of the Regions and other Brussels-based bodies. We also have responsibility for overseeing the transposition of relevant EU legislation in Wales, and scrutinising compliance by the Welsh Government in implementing EU legislation, which includes most EU environmental legislation, agriculture (including CAP), animal welfare, education, health, culture, as well as overseeing the management and implementation of EU Structural and Investment Funds in Wales.

We have a story to tell about how sub-Member State legislatures can engage positively and effectively in EU decision-making. We would, therefore, very much welcome the opportunity to explore ways in which we can contribute to hearings or discussions in the Constitutional Affairs Committee in the European Parliament in the future. We know that you have given evidence previously to Assembly Committees, and this is something we would hope to be able to explore with you as well in the future.

I am also writing to the Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs Edgars Rinkēvičs and to First Vice President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans to draw their attention to these issues.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Melding', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**David Melding AM**  
**Chair**

cc. Jose Luis Pacheco, Head of Unit, Secretariat of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs