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ΕΚΘΕΣΗ

σχετικά με τη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα για την ευρωζώνη
(2015/2344(INI))

Επιτροπή Προϋπολογισμών
Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής

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(Κοινές συνεδριάσεις επιτροπών – άρθρο 55 του Κανονισμού)

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σχετικά με τη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα για την ευρωζώνη
(2015/2344(INI))

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο,

- έχοντας υπόψη το άρθρο 52 του Κανονισμού του,
 - έχοντας υπόψη τις κοινές συνεδριάσεις της Επιτροπής Προϋπολογισμών και της Επιτροπής Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 55 του Κανονισμού,
 - έχοντας υπόψη την έκθεση της Επιτροπής Προϋπολογισμών και της Επιτροπής Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής, καθώς και τις γνωμοδοτήσεις της Επιτροπής Συνταγματικών Υποθέσεων και της Επιτροπής Ελέγχου του Προϋπολογισμού (A8-0038/2017),
- A. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι το σημερινό πολιτικό κλίμα και οι υφιστάμενες οικονομικές και πολιτικές προκλήσεις σε μια παγκοσμιοποιημένη υφήλιο απαιτούν από την ΕΕ συνέπεια και αποφασιστικότητα κατά τη λήψη αποφάσεων και την ανάληψη δράσεων σε ορισμένους τομείς, όπως η εσωτερική και εξωτερική ασφάλεια, η προστασία των συνόρων και η μεταναστευτική πολιτική, η σταθεροποίηση των γειτονικών μας χωρών, η ανάπτυξη και η απασχόληση, ιδίως για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας των νέων, και η εφαρμογή των συμφωνιών της Διάσκεψης των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για την αλλαγή του κλίματος του 2015·
- B. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι, μετά από την επιτυχή εκκίνηση του ευρώ, παρατηρήθηκε στη ζώνη του ευρώ έλλειψη σύγκλισης, πολιτικής συνεργασίας και ανάληψης ευθύνης·
- Γ. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι οι διάφορες κρίσεις και παγκόσμιες προκλήσεις απαιτούν από την ζώνη του ευρώ να πραγματοποιήσει, το συντομότερο δυνατόν, ένα ποιοτικό άλμα προς την ολοκλήρωση·
- Δ. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η συμμετοχή σε έναν κοινό νομισματικό χώρο απαιτεί κοινά εργαλεία και αλληλεγγύη σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, υποχρεώσεις και ανάληψη ευθυνών από όλα τα συμμετέχοντα κράτη μέλη·
- E. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι είναι αναγκαία η αποκατάσταση της εμπιστοσύνης στο εσωτερικό της ζώνης του ευρώ·
- ΣΤ. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι χρειάζεται ένας σαφώς καθορισμένος χάρτης πορείας που θα αντικατοπτρίζει μια σφαιρική προσέγγιση για να αξιοποιηθούν όλα τα οφέλη του κοινού νομίσματος και ταυτόχρονα να διασφαλιστούν η βιωσιμότητά του και οι στόχοι της σταθερότητας και της πλήρους απασχόλησης·
- Z. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι, για τον σκοπό αυτό, απαιτείται η συμφωνηθείσα ολοκλήρωση της Τραπεζικής Ένωσης, η ενίσχυση του δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου με μια ικανότητα απορρόφησης κλυδωνισμών και κίνητρα για ευνοϊκές για την ανάπτυξη διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις για να συμπληρωθούν τα σημερινά μέτρα νομισματικής πολιτικής·

- Η. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα και ο συναφής κώδικας σύγκλισης είναι στοιχεία ζωτικής σημασίας σε αυτό το εγχείρημα, το οποίο μπορεί να επιτύχει μόνο εάν υπάρχει στενή διασύνδεση μεταξύ αλληλεγγύης και ευθύνης·
- Θ. λαμβάνοντας υπόψη ότι η δημιουργία δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας για τη ζώνη του ευρώ είναι μόνο ένα κομμάτι του παζλ, δεδομένου ότι, παράλληλα, είναι απολύτως αναγκαίο τόσο τα σημερινά όσο και τα μελλοντικά μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ να διακατέχονται από σαφές ευρωπαϊκό πνεύμα επαναθεμελίωσης·
1. εγκρίνει τον ακόλουθο χάρτη πορείας:

i. Γενικές αρχές

Η μεταφορά της κυριαρχίας επί της νομισματικής πολιτικής απαιτεί, εναλλακτικούς μηχανισμούς προσαρμογής, όπως είναι η υλοποίηση διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων που να ενισχύουν την ανάπτυξη, η ενιαία αγορά, η Τραπεζική Ένωση και η Ένωση Κεφαλαιαγορών, ούτως ώστε να δημιουργηθεί ένας ασφαλέστερος χρηματοπιστωτικός τομέας, και μια δημοσιονομική ικανότητα με σκοπό την αντιμετώπιση των μακροοικονομικών κραδασμών και την αύξηση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της σταθερότητας των οικονομιών των κρατών μελών, προκειμένου η ευρωζώνη να εξελιχθεί σε ιδεώδη νομισματικό χώρο.

Η σύγκλιση, η χρηστή διακυβέρνηση και η υπαγωγή σε όρους που θα επιβάλλονται από δημοκρατικά ελεγχόμενα θεσμικά όργανα στη ζώνη του ευρώ και/ή σε εθνικό επίπεδο, έχουν καθοριστική σημασία, ιδίως για να αποτρέπονται οι μόνιμες μεταφορές, οι ηθικοί κίνδυνοι και ο επιμερισμός μη βιώσιμων δημόσιων κινδύνων.

Καθώς θα επεκτείνεται η εμβέλεια και θα μεγαλώνει η αξιοπιστία της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας, θα αποκαθίσταται συνεχώς και περισσότερο η εμπιστοσύνη της χρηματοπιστωτικής αγοράς στη βιωσιμότητα των δημόσιων οικονομικών της ευρωζώνης, καθιστώντας, κατ' αρχήν, δυνατή την καλύτερη προστασία των φορολογουμένων και τη μείωση του δημόσιου και του ιδιωτικού κινδύνου.

Η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα θα περιλαμβάνει τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ) και μια πρόσθετη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα για την ευρωζώνη. Η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα θα δημιουργηθεί επιπροσθέτως, και με κάθε επιφύλαξη, του ΕΜΣ.

Σε πρώτη φάση, η ειδική δημοσιονομική ικανότητα της ευρωζώνης θα πρέπει να αποτελεί μέρος του ενωσιακού προϋπολογισμού, πέρα και πάνω από τα ανώτατα όρια του ΠΔΠ, και θα πρέπει να χρηματοδοτείται από τη ζώνη του ευρώ και άλλα συμμετέχοντα μέλη μέσω μια πηγής εσόδων που θα συμφωνηθούν μεταξύ των συμμετεχόντων κρατών μελών και θα θεωρούνται νέα έσοδα για ειδικό προορισμό και εγγυήσεις· όταν θα υπάρξει σταθεροποίηση, η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα θα είναι δυνατό να χρηματοδοτηθεί μέσω ιδίων πόρων, σύμφωνα με τις συστάσεις της έκθεσης Monti σχετικά με τη μελλοντική χρηματοδότηση της ΕΕ.

Ο ΕΜΣ, παράλληλα με την εκπλήρωση των τρεχόντων καθηκόντων του, θα πρέπει να αναπτυχθεί περαιτέρω και να μετατραπεί σε ένα Ευρωπαϊκό Νομισματικό Ταμείο (ΕΝΤ), με επαρκή ικανότητα δανειοδοσίας και δανειοληψίας και μια σαφώς

καθορισμένη εντολή που θα έχει ως στόχο την απορρόφηση των ασύμμετρων και των συμμετρικών κλυδωνισμών.

ii. Τρεις πυλώνες της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας για τη σύγκλιση και τη σταθεροποίηση της ζώνης του ευρώ

Η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα πρέπει να πληροί τρεις διαφορετικές λειτουργίες:

- πρώτον, η οικονομική και κοινωνική σύγκλιση εντός της ζώνης του ευρώ, πρέπει να ενθαρρυνθεί για την προώθηση διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων, τον εκσυγχρονισμό των οικονομιών και τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας κάθε κράτους μέλους και της ανθεκτικότητας της ζώνης του ευρώ, πράγμα που θα συμβάλει επίσης στην ικανότητα των κρατών μελών να απορροφούν τους ασύμμετρους και τους συμμετρικούς κραδασμούς·
- δεύτερον, οι διαφορές μεταξύ των κύκλων οικονομικής δραστηριότητας των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ που απορρέουν από διαρθρωτικές διαφορές ή μια γενική οικονομική ευπάθεια καθιστούν αναγκαία την αντιμετώπιση ασύμμετρων κλυδωνισμών (περιπτώσεις στις οποίες ένα οικονομικό γεγονός επηρεάζει μια οικονομία περισσότερο από μια άλλη, λόγω χάριν όταν καταρρέει η ζήτηση σε ένα συγκεκριμένο κράτος μέλος αλλά όχι στα άλλα κράτη μετά από εξωτερικό κραδασμό εκτός της επιρροής του κράτους μέλους)·
- τρίτον, οι συμμετρικοί κραδασμοί (περιπτώσεις στις οποίες ένας οικονομικό γεγονός επηρεάζει όλες τις οικονομίες με τον ίδιο τρόπο, όπως για παράδειγμα η διακύμανση των τιμών του πετρελαίου για τις χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ) θα πρέπει να αντιμετωπίζονται για να ενισχυθεί η ανθεκτικότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ στο σύνολό της.

Λαμβανομένων υπόψη αυτών των στόχων, θα πρέπει να εξεταστεί ποιες λειτουργίες είναι δυνατόν να επιτευχθούν μέσα στο υφιστάμενο νομικό πλαίσιο της Ένωσης και για ποιες θα απαιτηθεί προσαρμογή ή αλλαγή της Συνθήκης.

Πυλώνας 1: ο κώδικας σύγκλισης

Η σημερινή οικονομική κατάσταση απαιτεί μια επενδυτική στρατηγική, παράλληλα με τη δημοσιονομική εξυγίανση και την ευθύνη μέσω της συμμόρφωσης με το πλαίσιο οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης.

Παράλληλα με το Σύμφωνο Σταθερότητας και Ανάπτυξης, ο κώδικας σύγκλισης, ο οποίος εγκρίνεται μέσω της συνήθους νομοθετικής διαδικασίας, και λαμβανομένων υπόψη των ειδικών ανά χώρα συστάσεων, θα πρέπει να είναι εστιασμένος για περίοδο πέντε ετών στα κριτήρια σύγκλισης που αφορούν τη φορολογία, την αγορά εργασίας, τις επενδύσεις, την παραγωγικότητα, την κοινωνική συνοχή, τις δημόσιες διοικητικές ικανότητες και τις ικανότητες χρηστής διακυβέρνησης στο πλαίσιο των υφιστάμενων Συνθηκών.

Στο πλαίσιο της οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης, η συμμόρφωση με τον κώδικα σύγκλισης θα πρέπει να αποτελεί προϋπόθεση για την πλήρη συμμετοχή στη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα και να απαιτείται από κάθε κράτος μέλος να υποβάλει προτάσεις σχετικά με

τους τρόπους με τους οποίους μπορούν να επιτευχθούν τα κριτήρια του κώδικα σύγκλισης.

Η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ θα πρέπει να συμπληρώνεται από μια μακροπρόθεσμη στρατηγική για τη βιωσιμότητα και τη μείωση του χρέους και να ενισχύει την ανάπτυξη και τις επενδύσεις των χωρών της ζώνης του ευρώ, πράγμα που θα ελάττωνε τα συνολικά έξοδα της εκ νέου χρηματοδότησης και τους λόγους χρέους/ΑΕγχΠ.

Πυλώνας 2: απορρόφηση ασύμμετρων κραδασμών

Λόγω του μεγάλου βαθμού ολοκλήρωσης των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ, δεν μπορεί να αποκλειστεί εντελώς η εμφάνιση ασύμμετρων κραδασμών με αντίκτυπο στη σταθερότητα της ζώνης του ευρώ στο σύνολό της, παρ' όλες τις προσπάθειες για συντονισμό των πολιτικών, σύγκλιση και βιώσιμες διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στα κράτη μέλη.

Η σταθεροποίηση που παρέχεται μέσω του ΕΜΣ/ΕΝΤ θα πρέπει να συμπληρώνεται με αυτόματους μηχανισμούς απορρόφησης κραδασμών.

Η σταθεροποίηση πρέπει να παρέχει κίνητρα για ορθές πρακτικές και να αποτρέπει τον ηθικό κίνδυνο.

Ένα τέτοιο σύστημα πρέπει να περιλαμβάνει σαφείς κανόνες σχετικά με χρονοδιάγραμμα των πιθανών πληρωμών και αποπληρωμών, πρέπει δε να είναι σαφώς καθορισμένο όσον αφορά το μέγεθος και τους μηχανισμούς χρηματοδότησης ενώ θα πρέπει επιπλέον να είναι ουδέτερο από δημοσιονομική άποψη σε κύκλο μεγαλύτερης διάρκειας.

Πυλώνας 3: Απορρόφηση συμμετρικών κραδασμών

Ενδεχόμενοι μελλοντικοί «συμμετρικοί κραδασμοί» θα μπορούσαν να αποσταθεροποιήσουν την ευρωζώνη στο σύνολό της, δεδομένου ότι η νομισματική ζώνη δεν διαθέτει ακόμη τα μέσα για την αντιμετώπιση νέας κρίσης, ανάλογης σε έκταση με την προηγούμενη.

Σε περίπτωση εκδήλωσης συμμετρικών κραδασμών εξαιτίας της έλλειψης εσωτερικής ζήτησης, η νομισματική πολιτική δεν μπορεί από μόνη της να αναζωογονήσει την ανάπτυξη, ιδίως σε ένα πλαίσιο σχεδόν μηδενικών επιτοκίων. Ο προϋπολογισμός της ζώνης του ευρώ θα πρέπει να έχει επαρκές μέγεθος για την αντιμετώπιση αυτών των συμμετρικών κραδασμών μέσω της χρηματοδότησης επενδύσεων με στόχο τη συνολική ζήτηση και την πλήρη απασχόληση, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 3 της ΣΕΕ.

iii. Διακυβέρνηση, δημοκρατική ευθύνη και έλεγχος

Η κοινοτική μέθοδος πρέπει να κυριαρχεί στην οικονομική διακυβέρνηση της ζώνης του ευρώ.

Το ΕΚ και τα εθνικά κοινοβούλια θα πρέπει να διαδραματίζουν μεγαλύτερο ρόλο στο ανανεωμένο πλαίσιο οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης, ούτως ώστε να ενισχυθεί η

δημοκρατική ευθύνη. Αυτό περιλαμβάνει αυξημένη εθνική ανάληψη ευθύνης για το Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο, μεταρρύθμιση της διακοινοβουλευτικής διάσκεψης που προβλέπεται στο άρθρο 13 του δημοσιονομικού συμφώνου ώστε να του δοθεί μεγαλύτερη βαρύτητα με σκοπό να αναπτυχθεί ισχυρότερη κοινοβουλευτική και κοινή γνώμη. Προκειμένου να βελτιωθεί η ανάληψη ευθύνης, τα εθνικά κοινοβούλια θα πρέπει να ελέγχουν τις εθνικές κυβερνήσεις, όπως το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο θα πρέπει να ελέγχει λεπτομερώς την ευρωπαϊκή εκτελεστική εξουσία.

Οι θέσεις του Προέδρου της Ευρωομάδας και του Επιτρόπου Οικονομικών και Νομισματικών Υποθέσεων μπορούν να συγχωνευθούν και στην περίπτωση αυτή ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής θα πρέπει να διορίζει αυτόν τον Επίτροπο ως Αντιπρόεδρο της Επιτροπής.

Αυτός ο πλήρως δημοκρατικά υπόλογος υπουργός οικονομίας και οικονομικών στο εσωτερικό της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής θα πρέπει να διαθέτει όλα τα αναγκαία μέσα και τις αναγκαίες ικανότητες για την εφαρμογή και την επιβολή του υφιστάμενου πλαισίου οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης και τη βελτιστοποίηση της ανάπτυξης της ζώνης του ευρώ σε συνεργασία με τους υπουργούς οικονομίας των κρατών μελών της ζώνης του ευρώ.

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο α πρέπει να αναθεωρήσει τους εσωτερικούς του κανόνες και την εσωτερική του οργάνωση με τρόπο ώστε να εξασφαλίζεται η πλήρης δημοκρατική ευθύνη για την δημοσιονομική ικανότητα έναντι των βουλευτών του Ε.Κ. Από πλευράς συμμετεχόντων κρατών μελών.

2. καλεί:

- το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο να ορίσει κατευθυντήριες γραμμές, όπως περιγράφεται ανωτέρω, το αργότερο κατά τη συνάντηση της ΕΕ στη Ρώμη (Μαρτίου 2017), στις οποίες θα περιλαμβάνεται πλαίσιο για τη μακροπρόθεσμη βιώσιμη σταθεροποίηση της ζώνης του ευρώ·
- την Επιτροπή να παρουσιάσει μια Λευκή Βίβλο που θα περιέχει ένα φιλόδοξο κεντρικό κεφάλαιο σχετικά με τη ζώνη του ευρώ και τις αντίστοιχες νομοθετικές προτάσεις το 2017, χρησιμοποιώντας όλα τα μέσα που υπάρχουν στις υφιστάμενες συνθήκες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων του κώδικα σύγκλισης, του προϋπολογισμού της ζώνης του ευρώ και των αυτόματων σταθεροποιητών και να καθορίσει ένα σαφές χρονοδιάγραμμα για την εφαρμογή αυτών των μέτρων·

3. δηλώνει πρόθυμο να ολοκληρώσει όλα τα νομοθετικά μέτρα που δεν απαιτούν τροποποίηση της Συνθήκης μέχρι το τέλος της τρέχουσας θητείας της Επιτροπής και του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και να δημιουργήσει το πλαίσιο για την πραγματοποίηση των αναγκαίων τροποποιήσεων της Συνθήκης που απαιτούνται μεσοπρόθεσμα και μακροπρόθεσμα ώστε να καταστεί δυνατή μια βιώσιμη ζώνη του ευρώ·

4. αναθέτει στον Πρόεδρό του να διαβιβάσει το παρόν ψήφισμα στον πρόεδρο του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου, στην Επιτροπή, στο Συμβούλιο, στην Ευρωομάδα, στην ΕΚΤ, στον Διευθύνοντα Σύμβουλο του ΕΜΣ και στα κοινοβούλια των κρατών μελών.

ΑΙΤΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΚΘΕΣΗ

Working document N°1 - 19.02.2016

I. BACKGROUND AND INSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL POSITIONS

In a single market, a common currency implies benefits such as lower transaction costs, better price transparency and absence of foreign-exchange risk. If strong enough, it can reduce the exposure of the area to the monetary policies of other major economic powers. On the other hand, a common currency eliminates well-tried policy options for counterbalancing asymmetric shocks such as exchange rate fluctuation. Giving up autonomy over monetary policy therefore requires alternative adjustment mechanisms for asymmetric macroeconomic shocks. The Optimum currency area (OCA) theory defines elements that can take on this adjustment function, such as mobility of labour, openness to trade, fiscal, economic and political integration.

In the financial, economic and sovereign debt crisis, it has become apparent that the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) lacks appropriate adjustment mechanisms to absorb asymmetric shocks. This results directly from constructional defects in the Maastricht Treaty that scholars have long pointed out. Finally, the mere coordination of national economic policies and the over-reliance on the corrective force of the markets have proven insufficient to prevent excess indebtedness of Member States. In the end, the systemic interdependencies in the common currency area forced the Euro Member States "bail out" their banks.

In spite of several measures to address the institutional and the legal gap, the EMU still has no genuine fiscal and economic policy. In addition, it suffers from a democratic deficit. Against this background, further integration is needed, both as regards the governance and the legal set-up of the EMU and the architecture of the EU as a whole. In the context of the current debate on how to deepen the EMU, the discussion on a fiscal capacity for the Eurozone has been revived.

This Working Document aims at giving an overview of the historical background, presenting the recent positions taken by the relevant EU institutions, available options and corresponding challenges put forward by politics and academia, and posing questions linked to key issues to be addressed in the upcoming own-initiative report. It will be followed up by a second Working Document presenting some conclusions based on the input received.

1. Historical background

In the 1970s, when the project of monetary integration was being contemplated, the consensus among European policymakers and experts was that if monetary union was to be pursued, it had to be accompanied by commensurate steps towards fiscal integration. Two important early contributions epitomize this thinking: the Werner Report (1970) and the McDougall Report (1977). The first highlighted that a monetary union would require all essential features of national public budgets to be decided at the Community level (including “the overall volume, the size of balances and the modes of financing as well as their use”). The second argued that the establishment of a monetary union would require a Community budget of around 5-7% of GDP in order to absorb economic shocks and provide a minimum degree of income convergence.

The McDougall report identified three criteria for an increase of public expenditure at Community level:

- The achievement of economies of scale, as for instance in external relations;
- Counterbalancing spill-over effects from one country to another or to the whole Community;
- A neutral fiscal stance via transfers of expenditure from national to Community level, especially where economies of scale can be achieved;

Structural/regional policy and a Community Unemployment Fund figured among the candidates for Community expenditure put forward and that was to be financed by a further tranche of VAT.

When discussions about the appropriate fiscal arrangements for EMU resurged again in the early 1990s, such far-reaching ideas were considered politically unrealistic and didn't fit in the mainstream of economic theory.

Instead of significantly increasing the EU budget, the Maastricht Treaty assigned the entire responsibility for stabilisation to national budgets, as suggested in the Delors Report that provided the blueprint for Economic and Monetary Union. The only remainder of the McDougall report can be seen in the set-up of the Cohesion Fund to support poorer countries in their efforts to qualify for EMU.

When it was finally created in 1999, the euro came into being without having been preceded by any increase in the size of the EU budget. It ran smoothly for around ten years and became a major international currency (second only to the US dollar). Interest rates on sovereign debt and inflation were low, with growth in most countries. However, when the global financial and economic crisis triggered a sovereign debt crisis, the euro area exposed its vulnerability to asymmetric shocks with government borrowing costs rocketing in some Member States. Besides, the institutional arrangements of the Treaty proved incapable of effectively solving the fundamental issues.

The Member States and EU institutions have taken many measures in attempts to address these issues and to strengthen the economic and monetary union (EMU), including the European Semester, the Fiscal Compact and the related Two-Pack/Six-Pack legislation, the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the European Fiscal Stability Mechanism (EFSM), with the latter having been replaced by the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) in 2013. In this context, the compliance of some of these measures with the Treaty arrangements (most prominently, the “No-Bail-Out-Clause” in Art. 125 TEU) have been challenged.

Another problematic issue concerns the shift away from the Community method towards intergovernmental coordination. The European Council and the Eurogroup have played a dominant role throughout the process and has often interfered in the prerogatives of the European Parliament, e.g. when it unilaterally decided that the EU budget would guarantee for the EFSM loans with the margin between the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ceiling and the own-resources ceiling. In the newly created institutional setting, the European Parliament and its national counterparts only play a marginal role and have thus been largely deprived of their constitutionally granted powers as regards budgetary autonomy respectively oversight.

2. Recent institutional and political positions

Reports of the four Presidents

In 2012, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy worked on a roadmap for a genuine EMU, in cooperation with the Presidents of the European Commission (EC), the ECB and the Eurogroup. To consolidate EMU over the next decade, the June report identified four building blocks, including an integrated budgetary framework. Under this heading, possible steps towards a fiscal union were envisaged by coupling budgetary discipline with solidarity tools. In addition to the possible creation of a treasury office for the euro area, the document underlined the need to define the appropriate role and functions of a central budget.

The December report of the four Presidents further explored these ideas. While reaffirming that sound national budgetary policies are EMU's cornerstone, the text noted that all other currency unions have a central fiscal capacity. Imagining the gradual creation of a fiscal capacity for the euro area, the report identified two complementary functions for this fiscal capacity: 1) promoting structural reforms (2013-2014); and 2) mitigating asymmetric shocks (post 2014). The fiscal capacity would be kept separate from the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) which does not cover these objectives. Financing could be ensured through "own resources", national contributions or a combination of both. The possibility to provide the scheme with the ability to borrow would be investigated in the longer term. As regards the shock absorption function, a series of principles were outlined, suggesting that the scheme could work as an insurance-type system between euro area Member States. Each country would in turn contribute to and benefit from the scheme on the basis of its position over the economic cycle. Unidirectional or permanent transfers should be avoided. Appropriate mechanisms should be established so as to limit policy-induced moral hazard.

European Commission

The report of the four Presidents set the basis for a debate on the future of the EMU. The European Commission's contribution, "A blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU, envisaged three phases":

Short term (2013-2014). A "convergence and competitiveness instrument" (CCI) would be created within the EU budget (but outside the MFF) to provide financial support to structural reforms in Member States.¹

Medium term (2014-2017). Building on the CCI, a dedicated fiscal capacity for the euro area would be established, using own resources only.

Long term (post 2017). A euro area budget with stabilisation objectives could be put in place by developing the fiscal capacity.

The Commission indicated that medium- and long-term actions may require Treaty changes, such as provisions for a dedicated budgetary and own resources procedure. If the fiscal capacity were to be able to borrow or to raise taxes, amendments would also be needed as this is currently forbidden (Articles 310 and 311 TFEU) and might further touch some national

¹ The Commission published a communication on the introduction of a CCI in March 2013. However, it has not been followed up by a concrete legislative proposal until this day and has not been a basis for a consensus approach.

primary law.

Report of the five Presidents

Options and guiding principles for a euro area stabilisation function

A prospective stabilisation function could, for example, build on the European Fund for Strategic Investments as a first step, by identifying a pool of financing sources and investment projects specific to the euro area, to be tapped into according to the business cycle. Various additional sources of financing should be considered.

It will be important to ensure that the design of such a stabilisation function rests on the following guiding principles:

- It should not lead to permanent transfers between countries or to transfers in one direction only, which is why converging towards Economic Union is a precondition for participation. It should also not be conceived as a way to equalise incomes between Member States.
- It should neither undermine the incentives for sound fiscal policy-making at the national level, nor the incentives to address national structural weaknesses. Accordingly, and to prevent moral hazard, it should be tightly linked to compliance with the broad EU governance framework and to progress in converging towards the common standards described in Section 2.
- It should be developed within the framework of the European Union. This would guarantee that it is consistent with the existing EU fiscal framework and with procedures for the coordination of economic policies. It should be open and transparent vis-à-vis all EU Member States.
- It should not be an instrument for crisis management. The European Stability Mechanism (ESM) already performs that function. Instead, its role should be to improve the overall economic resilience of EMU and individual euro area countries. It would thus help to prevent crises and actually make future interventions by the ESM less likely.

The Presidents of the EU institutions will follow up on the implementation of the recommendations in this report. To prepare the transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2, the Commission will present a White Paper in spring 2017 assessing progress made in Stage 1 and outlining the next steps needed, including measures of a legal nature to complete EMU in Stage 2. The White Paper will draw on analytical input from an expert consultation group, which will further explore the legal, economic and political preconditions of the more long-term proposals contained in this report. It will be prepared in consultation with the Presidents of the other EU institutions.

3. The European Parliament's position

As early as 2010, in [the CRIS mid-report](#) the European Parliament already "*urged the Union to better equip itself with countercyclical economic policy management instruments*".

Besides, the CRIS final report of 2011:

- *"concludes that, in order to achieve political union and economic integration commensurate with monetary union, in line with the priorities agreed by the European Council, the EU needs a budget of sufficient size to accommodate the euro in a sustainable way, providing the currency with a relevant budget space on the level of political organisation at which it is issued",*

- *"recalls that reports preceding the realisation of monetary union [...] affirmed that the volume of such a budget would have to be between 2,5 and 10 percent of Union GNI, depending on whether and which re-allocation functions would be assumed by the Union budget, that the budget would need to be financed on the basis of own resources, and that it should be used to finance policies and measures in the fields of foreign, security and defence policy, the energy and transport sectors, development cooperation and R&D, and that national budgets would be reduced correspondingly in order to achieve tax neutrality for citizens and businesses",*

- and *"takes the view that deepening European economic integration is necessary in order to ensure the stability of the Eurozone and of the Union as a whole, and that this will require further developments regarding the external representation of the Eurozone, qualified majority voting on a corporate tax base, measures to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance,[...] possible mutual issuance of sovereign debt and Eurobonds to stimulate fiscal discipline, the EU's borrowing capacity, a better balance between economic and social policies [...], own resources for the EU budget and the roles of national parliaments and the European Parliament".*

The European Parliament has expressed strong criticism of the intergovernmental nature of the instruments developed in recent years to tackle the crisis and deplored their lack of democratic oversight, notably the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which it many times asked to be integrated into the Community acquis so that it can be managed in accordance with the Community method and be made accountable to the European Parliament.¹

In the Dehaene/Kalfin report of 2014 on "negotiations on the MFF 2014-2020: lessons to be learned and the way forward" the Parliament "expresses its firm conviction that any new fiscal capacity or budget developed specifically for Eurozone Member States whose fiscal functions are not covered by the MFF must be developed within the Union framework and must be subject to proper democratic scrutiny and accountability through the existing institutions". It has furthermore clarified in the 2015 Arthuis opinion on the European Semester for economic policy coordination that such as a solidarity mechanism "should be financed over and above the MFF ceiling for 2014-2020".

In its 2015 Berès report "Review of the economic governance framework: stocktaking and challenges", the European Parliament called for two separate type of instruments: 1/ "a euro area fiscal capacity based on specific own-resources which should, in the framework of the Union budget with European parliamentary control, assist Member States in the

¹ Cited from [European Parliament resolution of 20 November 2012 with recommendations to the Commission on the report of the Presidents of the European Council, the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the Eurogroup 'Towards a genuine Economic and Monetary Union'](#), [European Parliament resolution of 12 June 2013 on strengthening European democracy in the future EMU](#), [European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika \(ECB, Commission and IMF\) with regard to the euro area programme countries\)](#)

implementation of the agreed structural reforms based on certain conditions, including the effective implementation of the National Reform Programmes", and 2/ a shock absorbing mechanism "connected to the monetary union while avoiding any form of permanent fiscal transfers".

Previous reports had also made the distinction between a European Monetary Fund (EMF) geared to supporting countries experiencing balance of payments problems or facing state insolvency on the one hand, and solidarity instruments/a fiscal capacity geared towards conditional support for structural reforms, with the aim of enhancing competitiveness, growth and social cohesion, ensuring closer coordination of economic policies and sustained convergence of the economic performance of the Member States, and addressing imbalances and structural divergences.

Finally, a pilot project on the "feasibility and added value of a European unemployment benefit scheme" has been launched at the initiative of the European Parliament, for which Commitment appropriations were voted for the first year under the 2014 Budget.

II. FUNCTIONS AND MODALITIES OF A BUDGETARY CAPACITY FOR THE EUROZONE

1. Designs of a budgetary capacity for the Eurozone

The European policy debate so far has focused on several functions for a budgetary capacity for the euro area: (a) fiscal stabilisation linked to macroeconomic aggregates, (b) a micro approach of unemployment insurance, (c) joint resources for a fiscal backstop in systemic financial crises, (d) the lender of last resort function for illiquid sovereigns more broadly, (e) pooled resources to finance added-value projects/common public goods and f) support for convergence.

(a) *Fiscal stabilisation linked to macroeconomic aggregates*

Two forms of this fiscal stabilisation capacity can be identified:

- An **'insurance mechanism'** that would work as a **'rainy day fund'**, where member states' contributions and disbursements would be calculated on the basis of some cyclically-sensitive economic indicator, such as the output gap or unemployment levels. Such a mechanism, directly related to contributions by Member States, could be relatively easily established via an intergovernmental treaty and would not require complex management structures. It would avoid long-term redistribution effects but would only serve as a 'smoothing' tool for economic downturns. Given its character, it might be challenging to agree on the parameters of intervention.
- A **fully-fledged euro-area budget** with counter-cyclical would be more ambitious than the previous approach. It would have major stabilisation effects and could also serve other important purposes such as helping to stabilize the euro-area economy over the course of the cycle. Given the risk that the common euro area budget might give rise to durable transfers, risks of moral hazard will need to be compensated for through greater mutual surveillance and stronger governance. This will entail far-reaching sovereign transfers from the national to the central level, including a strong euro-area executive with discretionary powers. Furthermore, the transfer burden can hardly be estimated. The creation of a euro area budget, reflecting greater solidarity between Member States, could ultimately justify a further strengthening of European

economic governance, subject to the democratic legitimacy of the arrangement.

(b) *A micro approach of unemployment insurance*

Here again, different approaches could be considered:

- An **EMU-wide basic unemployment benefit scheme (UBS)** to directly stabilise household income. Under such a system, a certain share of contributions to the unemployment insurance would be paid to a European fund which would provide basic unemployment insurance to the short-term unemployed. Thereby, a direct link between the European institutions and the citizens could be established. Furthermore, the scheme could enhance the macro-economic convergence of the euro area and accelerate the integration of the labour-market which would again have incentivized labour and wage mobility – an adjustment mechanism of its own as presented above. Yet, the implementation would require a high degree policy harmonisation regarding the labour market.
- A **re-insurance system for national unemployment schemes**. Inspired by the US's 'extended benefits scheme', this system would be funded by regular contributions from national schemes and would support them in cases where the unemployment rate reaches a certain level. This option would not require a lot of harmonisation and thus be easier to implement than the aforementioned option. However, the stabilisation effect of such a scheme would be rather limited and it would require a debate among Member States around the calculation of the output that would recreate a space for intergovernmental bargaining.

(c) *Joint resources for a fiscal backstop in systemic financial crises*

- The pooling of sovereign issuance among the euro-area Member States and the sharing of associated revenue flows and debt-servicing costs to enhance financial stability in the euro area. This could take the form of the largely debated '**eurobonds**'. Depending on the degree of substitution of national issuance (full or partial) and the nature of the underlying guarantee (joint and several or several), different designs can be envisaged.¹ In order for 'eurobonds' to help preserve the integrity of the EMU, to underpin a return to economic stability and to reduce uncertainty, progress would need to be made regarding EU financial and budgetary integration and supervision.

(d) *A lender of last resort function for illiquid sovereigns more broadly*

- One option among others could concern the **further development of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM)** notably into a powerful European Monetary Fund (EMF) which would take over the role of 'lender of last resort' from the ECB. In case of sovereign default, it would have the right to intervene into national budgets and to grant temporary credits in case of unsustainable debt to allow for structured insolvency. An EMF would have a deterring effect before and a stabilising effect in

¹ The different approaches were discussed in a Commission Green Paper in 2011 (http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/governance/2011-11-23-green-paper-stability-bonds_en.htm) and in the European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2013 on the feasibility of introducing Stability Bonds (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0018&language=EN&ring=A7-2012-0402>)

the middle of a sovereign debt crisis.

(e) *Pooled resources to finance added-value projects/common public goods*

- A far-reaching approach would be to establish a fund similar to that of the recently created European Fund for Strategic Investments, which should act as a **lever for private financing** of pre-defined projects with particular added-value for the Eurozone.
- A less far-reaching approach would be to limit the role for the central level to the **provision of common essential public goods** (e.g. airport security) if a Member State is not able to shoulder its responsibility.

(f) *Support for convergence*

- Since its creation, the Eurozone has encountered growing divergences, creating a situation that may prove unsustainable in the long run. Based on the rationale behind the creation of the Cohesion Fund, a fiscal capacity could provide **targeted investments to avoid divergences** among Member States by facilitating economic and social cohesion of the Eurozone. The determination of the design of such a fiscal capacity will be somewhat sensitive as it needs to take into account the role played by the existing structural funds to avoid inconsistencies and double-spending.

All models entail a certain degree of fiscal risk-sharing, although the potential transfer burden differs strongly between them. In any case it is highly unlikely that a full neutralisation of transfers can be achieved.

2. Financing of a budgetary capacity for the Eurozone

In principle, four sources of financing could be envisaged for the budgetary capacity: national contributions, taxes, borrowing through the issuance of debt, (partial) use of the ESM or funds that already exist within the EU budget, or a combination thereof. All of them have pros and cons.

Direct contributions are an easy and straightforward way to finance a budget for the euro area. These contributions could be based on Member States' GNI which is considered a fair way of financing based on economic strength and have the advantage that this system is already being applied for the GNI contributions to the general EU budget. However, GNI contributions have the disadvantage of being too detached from European policies and tend to strengthen a 'juste retour' discourse. The European Parliament has considered this type of financing to be unsatisfactory and has been calling for a system of genuine own resources. Currently, an inter-institutional high-level group is working on proposals to be presented before the end of 2016.

Such own resources could be taxes, levies or ECB seigniorage. Various sources have already been discussed in the framework of a general reform of the Own Resources system. Depending on the functions to be fulfilled by the budgetary capacity, such own-resource(s) might have to generate substantial funding. Should a tax be considered, the design of both its tax base and rate would have to be determined, taking into account the need to 1) avoid tax competition and 2) allow for some flexibility in order to accommodate heterogeneity. Finally,

a tax-based instrument would mean volatile income levels. Levies on various transactions could also be considered, though their link to the supported policies might be weak.

Finally, financing could take the form of borrowings, provided that the euro area could issue debt. This would avoid potential distortionary effects related to the implementation of a tax at the euro area level, as well as politically challenging issues stemming from transfers from national budgets. If used for macroeconomic stabilisation, increase of resources would allow for a reimbursement of the debt issued.

3. Governance of the fiscal capacity

The move towards further integration would need to address both the institutional gap and the democratic deficit of the Eurozone governance.

The institutional gap could be overcome through the establishment of a powerful Economic Government whose responsibilities would differ depending on the design of the capacity (e.g. the negotiation of structural reform packages and the surveillance of their implementation). With regard to its design, several options have been put on the table, one example being the creation of an EU Treasury Administration similar to the US Congressional budget office (independent or linked to the Commission) to be headed by a permanent Eurogroup President who is also Vice-president of the Commission. For the Economic Government to have democratic legitimacy, it would have to be subjected to full parliamentary control. Irrespective of the legal limitations set by the current Treaty and national primary law, this could be ensured via three options: Members of the European Parliament coming from the Eurozone, a 'joint parliamentary assembly' composed of Members of the European Parliament coming from the Eurozone and national parliaments, or a 'third chamber' comprising national parliamentarians.

4. Legal considerations

While economic integration of the Eurozone is covered by Article 3 (4) TEU, the creation of a fiscal capacity for the Eurozone would go even further, that is towards fiscal union. The Treaty gives some leeway for further integration of the Eurozone towards fiscal union notably on the basis of Article 136. Most of the designs for a fiscal capacity mentioned above might require Treaty change. However, as has been done for the establishment of the ESM, the application of the simplified revision procedure foreseen in art. 48(6) TEU could be envisaged, even though it needs to be recalled that the EP has been very critical towards a procedure outside the community method.

One of the biggest legal challenges to be solved when setting up a fiscal capacity for the Eurozone is the involvement of national parliaments depending on the financing options chosen for a EMU fiscal capacity. Many aspects linked to a fiscal capacity would directly touch upon their constitutionally enshrined budgetary autonomy, in particular the decision on a tax-based revenue, for legally-enforceable intervention rights for the central level into the national budget (required by some of the proposed designs) and democratic scrutiny.

Non-exhaustive list of questions that could be discussed within the framework of this INI report:

- *Why is a fiscal capacity needed to achieve a genuine EMU?*
- *What functions should a budgetary capacity for the euro area fulfil?*
- *How could existing tools, notably the ESM and/or the Youth Guarantee, be mobilised as embryos of a budgetary capacity for the Eurozone?*
- *How to strike the right balance between solidarity and responsibility, by addressing issues including geographical redistribution effects, moral hazard and permanent fiscal transfers?*
- *How could a fiscal capacity address the challenges of spillover effects, divergences among Eurozone member states, the desirable fiscal stance or the need to support structural reforms? Should there be benchmarks, agreed reforms, implementation of the country-specific recommendations [...]?*
- *How differences in budgetary projection and execution would be dealt with?*
- *Should a fiscal capacity introducing automatic stabilizers at the European level also act as a carrot to induce structural reforms?*
- *How should a EMU fiscal capacity be financed? Resources could include, inter alia, vertical budgetary transfers, a tax type instrument, Eurobonds etc.*
 - *Should it be financed through stable (annual) revenue or via ad hoc decisions (in case of need)?*
 - *Should there be one or several sources of financing?*
 - *Fee-based instrument: How to effectively prevent the 'juste-retour' discussion?*
 - *Tax-instrument: should the tax be directly linked to the policies it supports? How to deal with the issue of tax volatility (limit spending activities or additional national contributions)?*
- *What size should the budgetary capacity have to be able to fulfil its functions?*
- *Should a EMU fiscal capacity expand or shift revenue? What, if any, consequences will the establishment of a fiscal capacity have for the size and the political priorities of the EU budget?*
- *Should the EMU fiscal capacity be established inside or outside the budgetary framework? In case of the first: how does the capacity have to be designed to ensure coherence with the existing funds of the EU budget such as the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)) as well as other funding mechanisms partially funded or guaranteed by the budget, namely the ESM (practically a preliminary step towards a European Monetary Fund), the Youth Guarantee and the EIB operations (especially*

EFSI)? Should it serve vertical (those who are more able shoulder more) and/or horizontal (sector/jurisdiction compensation) equity?

- *What is the appropriate institutional setting for the fiscal capacity?*
 - *Should there be an economic government for the Eurozone? Who should it be made of (Eurogroup president, one/more EU-Commissioners, ECB President, EMF/ESM Director)? Should it be independent or linked to one of the institutions (Commission/Council/EMF)?*
 - *Which will be the appropriate parliamentary decision-making structure to ensure democratic scrutiny of the decisions related to the fiscal capacity and economic governance of the Eurozone?*
- *What would be legal forms of the options suggested? Could they be implemented within the scope of the current Treaty or would they require a revision?*
- *Should the capacity be limited to Eurozone Member States or should it be open to other Member States (if so, under which conditions)?*

I. ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEBATE ON A BUDGETARY CAPACITY FOR THE EUROZONE

During an expert hearing involving academics as well as practitioners, extensive contributions were delivered on the debate on a budgetary capacity for the Eurozone. The current debate among experts can roughly be divided into five aspects: (1) reasons for creating a common capacity, (2) functions of the fiscal capacity, (3) possible resources for financing the capacity, (4) challenges, conditions and obstacles, (5) governance.

1. Reasons for creating a common fiscal capacity

The experts agreed that the subdued current recovery can only be temporarily supported by monetary policy measures and low energy prices, as the situation of public finances in euro area Member States is still fragile and cannot provide much stimulus to growth.

Experts stressed that EMU was built on the assumption that monetary policy would handle symmetric shocks, and rules would enforce budgetary discipline at Member States' level to provide margins in case of asymmetric shocks. The crisis has proved that this was insufficient and that improvement of economic governance in the euro area was needed. Many measures have been adopted to this end over the past years, but their implementation has been insufficient. Moreover, it was argued that monetary policy couldn't compensate all shortcomings of EMU, all the more so as the zero bound rate limits its effectiveness as macroeconomic tool. Therefore, there was broad consensus in the policy debate that the current situation can only be improved and future crises be avoided by completing the EMU. Enhancing the capacity of the euro area to deal with asymmetric shocks would therefore be key, and alleviate what was a severe deficiency in the previous crisis; a completed EMU would also restore the confidence of citizens and markets in the European project which was lost during the crisis.

There is ongoing discussion on possible designs for a fiscal capacity for the Eurozone. There are advocates for some form of a common budgetary capacity who share the view set out in the Four Presidents' Report coordinated by then President of the European Council Mr Herman van Rompuy, and reiterated in the more recent Five Presidents' Report on the EMU, that a shock absorption capacity at the euro area level is needed to complement automatic stabilisers at national level, whose functioning is limited as has been shown during the crisis. It is pointed out that coordination of national fiscal policies between Member States in case of economic downturns has proven to be difficult under the current setting. Therefore to some experts this proves that more stabilisation tools are necessary at the euro area level.

Some experts argue that a common budgetary capacity would improve risk sharing to the benefit of euro area countries, as it would smooth the impact of temporary income shocks such as national or regional consumption. It was argued that on the basis of existing academic literature, fiscal risk sharing manages to smooth between 15 and 30 per cent of regional shocks.¹ At the moment, risk sharing is almost non-existent in both the EU and the euro area,

¹ International Monetary Fund, *Toward a Fiscal Union for the Euro Area: Technical Background Notes* (September 2013), 7.

which should not come as a surprise given that the EU budget is small and not designed for risk sharing.

A common capacity could enhance risk sharing through common borrowing and common revenues.

According to one expert, arguing against common borrowing at this stage, increased public risk sharing would not be politically acceptable given the incompleteness of EMU and the lack of credibility of its instruments. Furthermore, it was widely disregarded that private risk sharing via integrated markets can smooth a much larger percentage of asymmetric shocks than public risk sharing via a federal budget (around 62 % v. 13 % in the United States ¹). Given that private risk sharing is less developed in the EMU than in most federal systems, leading to a situation in which private capital flows even exacerbate asymmetries, it was deemed important to develop private risk sharing via the development of the European Capital Markets Union.

Following this logic, some experts argue that the insufficient compliance with rules before and during the crisis has weakened the effectiveness of budgetary policy in performing its stabilizing function. This had led to a loss of trust, a necessary condition for the good functioning of any stabilisation fund for the euro area. Hence, before contemplating budgetary capacity, full and consistent implementation and enforcement of all existing fiscal tools at the European level, including in particular the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), and the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure, would rebuild trust.

Nonetheless it was commonly agreed that a fiscal capacity should go hand in hand with other fiscal stabilising measures. Multiple other measures were discussed, such as completing the banking union, increasing oversight over national fiscal policies, structural reforms at national level, strengthening labour mobility, convergence of taxation or creating a capital markets union. Above all, experts broadly agreed about the fact that the economic governance framework needs to be simplified, as the current framework was overly complicated and lacked predictability and ownership. This would improve credibility and confidence in the system as well as its resilience.

2. Functions of the fiscal capacity

Most experts agreed that the stabilisation function is the main and most feasible of the classical fiscal policy functions to be fulfilled by a specific budget for the euro area. A redistribution function and/or provision of public goods could be envisaged in a more integrated political and economic union.

In the opinion of the contributors that strongly advocated a fiscal capacity, the ability to function as a stabiliser of asymmetric shocks was mostly emphasized: fiscal stabilisation should be moved, at least partly, from the national to the federal level, accompanied by more social, taxation and political integration. Even the contributions that were more careful on a budgetary capacity for the euro area and that advocated the focus on national policies acknowledged that the stabilisation functioning at federal level is the function with the most added-value. At the same time, the preservation of incentives for sound fiscal policymaking

¹ Asdrubaldi, Sorensen and Yosha (1998), "Channels of interstate risk sharing. the United States 1963-1990," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 111 (4), 1081-110.

and for addressing structural weaknesses at national level was key. Consensus existed on the fact that permanent transfers and moral hazard have to be avoided.

For the designs of a fiscal capacity, multiple options were discussed in the academic debate, depending on the preferred function for a future capacity. There have been specific contributions on a 'rainy day fund', an unemployment insurance scheme, and a public investment strategy.

'Rainy day fund'

In this setting, the common budgetary capacity should be created as a '**rainy day fund**' that should accumulate financing through all countries on good times, to provide for funding in bad times. In a counterfactual experiment conducted by the IMF, a fund put in place in 1999, coincident with the introduction of the euro, could have increased the overall level of stabilisation to the level found in Germany, where 80 per cent of income shocks are smoothed through private and public channels combined, with annual contributions of about 1 ½ to 2 ½ per cent of GDP. Most of euro area countries would have been net contributors to the fund until 2007 and net recipients during the crisis. For the entire period, the average net contribution by each country would have been close to zero, showing that risk sharing of this type need not entail permanent transfers from one part of the euro area to the other.¹

Unemployment insurance schemes

Advocates of an **unemployment insurance scheme** as an important tool on the European level to stabilise asymmetric shocks suggested that such a scheme could help decrease the pro-cyclicality of national fiscal policies, particularly in downturns. It would also require labour market convergence. In their view there are two alternatives: a fully-fledged insurance scheme or a limited scheme based on reinsurance. With a limited scope, supplementing other insurance schemes, the reinsurance scheme would only act in bad times, to extend the duration of unemployment benefits and with co-financing. Limited payments would mitigate moral hazards.

Public investment strategy

To stabilise economic weaknesses it was stated by some experts that public investment should be stimulated via a **public investment strategy** addressing the economic weaknesses of the euro area, to which the fiscal capacity would be dedicated. The suggestion was made to impose a golden rule of public investment and to create European and national investment programs. In this view public net investment should be exempted from deficit rules.

Another proposal focused on the lack of private investment which it attributed to an excess of savings and a lack of structural reforms. Instead of focusing solely on labour markets, reforms should also target education systems and product markets since enhanced productivity and higher education levels would eventually trigger investments. Reforms should go hand in hand with better legislation.

Most argued that the choice for the design and shape of the facility needs to be a political one.

¹ International Monetary Fund, *Toward a Fiscal Union for the Euro Area: Technical Background Notes* (September 2013), 13.

There were many ways a fiscal capacity could be implemented, all having their technical and political difficulties.

3. Possible resources for financing the capacity

In the discussion on possible resources three possibilities were explicitly mentioned: borrowing ESM resources or issuing common bonds, using ECB dividends and introducing European taxes.

- **Borrowing resources from the ESM** as a means to finance a fiscal capacity was envisaged by some. As an alternative the issuance of **common bonds** was mentioned. When the same basis as ESM is chosen, rapid scaling when necessary is an advantage of this resource. Other experts suggested a slightly different design in the form of stability bonds, only dedicated to stabilisation.
- On the issue of taxes, it was made clear that tax bases have to be broad enough and marginal rates small to avoid economic distortions. European taxes limit the scope of national taxes, as the total amount of taxes should not be increased. The sort of taxes that should be imposed is a political question.
- ECB dividends that for the moment are transferred to the national central banks were also discussed as a possible resource. Whether that would require treaty change was challenged based on article 32.7 of the statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the ECB. Instead, being the final recipients of these dividends, Member States could decide to transfer them to a common fiscal capacity.

4. Challenges, conditions and obstacles

Depending on the view on the designs of a budgetary capacity for the euro area, a broad range of challenges and possible obstacles were addressed. Three challenges were discussed in multiple contributions: the probable limited size of a euro area capacity, lack of convergence resulting in a risk of permanent transfers, and the dangers of moral hazard.

Limited size

It was commented that a future common fiscal capacity would probably have a limited size given the political challenges at play. Another contribution emphasized that the capacity should be as big as is politically feasible. Multiple speakers commented that the limited size that a fiscal capacity for the euro area would probably have provided challenges.

Nonetheless, it was argued that a common budgetary capacity could have a limited size when endowed with limited functions. If the capacity was solely dedicated to macroeconomic stabilisation it has been shown by several studies that a small budget could produce significant temporary transfers. This was especially the case if it should concentrate on big shocks and would be balanced over the whole cycle. A facility with a size of approximately 1.5 to 3% of euro area GDP could make major contributions to stabilisation.

One expert also considered that a short term solution to address issues related to a possible limited size of a genuine euro area budget as well as legal constraints, while addressing

asymmetric shocks in the euro area, would be to build on a Commission *ex ante* assessment of the fiscal stance for the euro area for the next year, and to translate this at national level in a prescriptive way.

Lack of convergence

It was argued by some contributors that a lack of convergence created the risk of permanent transfers. As stated earlier, there was agreement that permanent transfers should be avoided. Nevertheless, it was recognized that the risk of permanent transfers would exist within a common fiscal capacity. It was discussed that this risk could be overcome with convergence and structural reforms as this would improve *ex ante* risk sharing and subsequently avoid permanent fiscal transfers. In the same vein, the American model of federal unemployment insurance system was considered compatible with the heterogeneous nature of labour markets in the euro area. A challenge to the scheme was, however, that it would require convergence on the labour market. Therefore an effort had to be made for "reconvergence" as it was named.

Moral hazard

The risk of moral hazard was broadly acknowledged in the academic debate. The prospect of fiscal support would possibly decrease the need for budgetary discipline. To avoid moral hazard it was noted that stronger governance structures and better enforcement mechanisms were important. Moral hazard was also explicitly discussed in the framework of an unemployment benefit scheme. In the context of a limited unemployment benefits scheme, moral hazard could thus be avoided by only extending the national insurance period rather than replacing national schemes.

5. Institutional framework for governance

To care for good implementation and execution of the budgetary capacity for the euro zone the importance of a stronger governance framework was explicitly mentioned. It was argued that ex-ante risk sharing would go hand in hand with stronger governance. Some experts especially stressed the requirement of joint decision making with strong common institutions. On this area multiple observations have been made: on a euro zone treasury, on an independent European Fiscal Board (EFB) and on how to deal with democratic legitimacy.

- Above all, it was stressed that the community method should prevail in the design of the capacity in respect of the rights of non-euro members.
- To deal with asymmetric and systematic shocks in the euro area, a euro zone treasury allowing temporary transfers over the cycle was suggested. This treasury should provide support based on well-defined criteria. Some argued that this institution should be accountable to the European Parliament. The ESM could be taken as basis for this EU treasury, with borrowing as background. With this base rapid scaling when necessary is an advantage.

- The already planned independent European Fiscal Board (EFB) was generally welcome by experts who attribute an important role to it. This independent board could define when a Member States is suffering from exceptional circumstances. Exceptional times would be situations in which the ECB is not able to stabilise the economy with monetary policy alone. The EFB should define this distinction based on transparent criteria. When the exceptional times are defined, support would be based on the independent analysis. After independent analysis by the EFB, scrutiny would have to be exercised by the European Parliament and it should be debated in national Parliaments.
- The role that should be played by the European Parliament and by national Parliaments was also emphasised when discussing democratic legitimacy of a budgetary capacity. It was argued that the structure would depend on the structure that is chosen for the fiscal capacity. As an option the creation of a euro area senate was suggested.

II. POLITICAL FEEDBACK ON THE FIRST WORKING DOCUMENT

To conclude the first working document an extensive, but non-exhaustive list of questions was inserted to trigger discussions on the follow-up of this document. The various answers received by the political groups within the EP to these questions reflect the diversity and sensitivity of the political debate.

1. Why is a fiscal capacity needed to achieve a genuine EMU?

In one of the contribution the flaws of EMU were acknowledged. It was stated that the euro crisis gave evidence that a common currency cannot work decently without common fiscal, economic and political integration, relying on controlling the money supply through a central bank alone.

One of the shadow rapporteurs argued that before commenting on the necessity of a euro area fiscal capacity, the goal of a genuine fiscal and economic policy would need to be defined.

2. What functions should a budgetary capacity for the euro area fulfil?

In addition to the discussion on functions in the first working document, some shadow rapporteurs argued that the document should elaborate more on certain functions, i.e. public investment, structural reforms and convergence.

Public investment

In one contribution it was mentioned that a fiscal capacity should not only be a responsive tool in case of country-specific shocks but also to actively prevent the development of macroeconomic imbalances within the euro zone and enable Member States to achieve full employment. Therefore a focus on public investment policies was needed. The responsibility for the avoidance and correction of macroeconomic imbalances should lie with Member States. The fiscal capacity could assist them in achieving these goals, without conditionality

linked to particular policy measures.

According to this contribution, to deal with imbalances, divergence of Current Account balances, at the heat of the recent crisis, needed to be avoided. The fiscal capacity should have an aim for a balanced Current Account to avoid unsustainable levels of external debt. A symmetric treatment to correct account surpluses and deficits would reduce the need of transfers between Member States, with regard to economic stability. It would also render adverse fiscal rules superfluous, as with low external debt, public deficits could be funded via corporate and private household savings at the discretion of Member States, without risking the need for bail-out via other Member States. To reduce the amount of excessive public debt in the Eurozone, debt above the Maastricht threshold of 60% of GDP could be transferred into a debt redemption fund, which would then pay down the debt over 25 years.

In another contribution on this same theme, guaranteeing aggregate demand at full employment level, without creating internal imbalances was seen as the main objective of the euro zone budgetary capacity. To solve the current lack of aggregate demand in Member States with positive externalities, it was necessary both to either recycle or avoid surpluses and to perform huge public investments at EU level.

In this view there should be more focus on current account surpluses than solely on deficits. Therefore, the MIP should be transformed in a “surplus avoidance mechanism” as soon as possible, allowing the fiscal union and its budgetary capacity debate to be focused on its main goal: to guarantee a full employment aggregated demand in the euro zone.

Structural reforms

Another contribution argued that the first working document failed to include the “promotion of structural reforms” as one possible design for a budgetary capacity. In this view a budgetary capacity which is integrated into the budgetary framework but clearly separated from the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) should support structural reforms that are not covered by the MFF. Its focus should be on the financing of policies stimulating growth and jobs and thereby increasing the overall competitiveness and stability of the EU. Necessary reforms were conducive to more investment, profitable projects and productivity enhancing.

Structural reforms were necessary to complement monetary policies according to this contribution, because past decades had shown that sole fiscal transfers do not guarantee Member States to catch up. Risk sharing would not lead to gains in competitiveness and would not fundamentally improve the basis for sustainable economic growth in the long-term. Member States could be offered conditional support solely for the implementation of agreed structural reforms to enhance competitiveness. Systematic, regular and independent evaluations would thus be necessary to ensure that all spending is achieving the desired outcome. Performance outcomes were more important than simply spending appropriations available.

Convergence

It was also proposed that a budgetary capacity could foster the convergence among Member States towards a common currency area. Further trade integration, the improvement of labour market mobility and flexibility could act as ex-ante shock absorbers. Thus, growth-enhancing

structural reforms that foster the improvement of the functioning of the EU Single Market would have to be promoted.

Until a complete implementation of the Banking Union is in place, further risk reduction was necessary until Member States see the risk of moral hazard sufficiently reduced to agree to some form of risk mutualisation. Meanwhile, the promotion of necessary structural reforms to increase convergence among Member States was an ex-ante shock absorber by itself.

Besides these functions that needed elaboration, there a comment was also made on unemployment insurance. It welcomed support to unemployed people but stressed the support scheme should also be able to boost growth and jobs. The focus of a scheme would have to lie at employing the unemployed by contracting them for well-designed investments.

3. How to strike the right balance between solidarity and responsibility, by addressing issues including geographical distribution effects, moral hazard and permanent transfers?

Comments were made on the role of solidarity tools envisaged in the Four Presidents' report (June 2012) within the framework of building a fiscal union. In this view the concept of solidarity tools would have to be elaborated as part of the report.

Another contribution focused on the risk of moral hazard within the different designs of a fiscal capacity. It was stressed that countries could become less concerned about reducing debt knowing that ultimately an insurance fund would bail them out. In this view even greater mutual surveillance and stronger governance will not be sufficient to avoid moral hazard, as implementation and enforcement of the European Semester or Country Specific Recommendations are often ignored. SGP rules are too often not adhered to by Member States and the Commission is not fully and coherently using sanction mechanisms.

The moral hazard problem was also stressed when discussing 'eurobonds' as part of the framework. Countries pursuing negligent budget policies would be able to borrow via 'eurobonds' without facing increasing government bond spreads. Thus, countries would build up unsustainable debt and risk default.

Another challenge to the fiscal capacity was addressed on the area of cyclically-sensitive economic indicators. Thus, the measurement of the cyclical component of the unemployment rate or growth rate was erratic. While a country with an economic downturn caused by exogenous circumstances should be entitled to solidarity and possible short-term transfers, economic downturns caused by bad policy should not. The distinction between exogenous and endogenous factors causing economic downturns was complex and subject to the perception of what is good or bad policy. In addition, poorer countries would pay for the unemployed in richer countries, according to this contribution.

4. How should the budgetary capacity be financed?

Several contributions were received on the topic of financing.

It was stated that funding should not be provided through regressive taxes, i.e. VAT, to avoid the adverse effect on domestic demand. Transfers between Member States under the fiscal capacity should take the form of investment rather than financing consumptive purposes,

which should be financed via taxes.

Member States contributions to the fiscal capacity could be financed by combatting corporate tax avoidance via a CCCTB, or by financial transaction taxes.

To address the problem of a persistent current account surplus, contributions by the Member States could (in part) be based on their excessive surplus; from these contributions, public investment projects in the corresponding Member States could be financed, to increase domestic demand. Further resources for the fiscal capacity and/or one off contributions to capitalize EIB and/or national promotional banks, in order to promote investment, could come in form of GNI based contributions from Member States, which should be exempted from the SGP rules.

The fiscal capacity should also have the ability to issue debt or refinance itself via the ECB, to respond to negative shocks; if own resources turned out to be insufficient to cover debt payments, Member States should be jointly liable.

5. What size should the budgetary capacity have to be able to fulfil its functions?

On the issue of the necessary size, it was argued by some that a limited size was insufficient to address the investment weakness in the euro zone and general economic problems in some Member states. One shadow rapporteur argued that the volume of any budgetary capacity would be too small to have anti-cyclical effects or to reduce macro-economic imbalances across Member States.

6. Should the EMU fiscal capacity be established inside or outside the budgetary framework? In case of the first: how does the capacity have to be designed to ensure coherence with the existing funds of the EU budget such as the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)) as well as other funding mechanisms partially funded or guaranteed by the budget, namely the ESM (practically a preliminary step towards a European Monetary Fund), the Youth Guarantee and the EIB operations (especially EFSI)? Should it serve vertical (those who are more able shoulder more) and/or horizontal (sector/jurisdiction compensation) equity?

It was argued that the ESM features as a shock absorbent in financial crises. A budgetary capacity should focus on incentivising and stimulating necessary reforms in good economic times. It should not absorb shocks of Member States with lax budget policy. Therefore a clear distinction between the functioning of a fiscal capacity and of the ESM should be made.

7. What would be legal forms of the options suggested? Could they be implemented within the scope of the current Treaty or would they require a revision?

One of the shadow rapporteurs argued that the suggested and preferred measures do not need Treaty change.

Another shadow rapporteur took the view that the recent deal agreed with the UK at the European Council of February 18th, 2016, recalled, following the amendment to the EFSM regulation during the summer of 2015, that differentiation within the current treaties was

possible and even desirable: "emergency and crisis measures designed to safeguard the financial stability of the euro area will not entail budgetary responsibility for Member States whose currency is not the euro". Furthermore, "appropriate mechanisms to ensure full reimbursement will be established where the general budget of the Union supports costs that derive from the emergency and crisis measures."

This paragraph called for a specific budgetary capacity and governance for the Eurozone.

8. Should the capacity be limited to Eurozone Member States or should it be open to other Member States, and if so, under which conditions?

One of the shadow rapporteurs emphasizes the importance of defining the scope: a capacity for the euro area or the EU as a whole. Another contribution endorsed the view of the Five Presidents' Report which underlines that any budgetary capacity should be open and transparent vis-à-vis all Member States. Non-Eurozone countries had to be given complete rights of participation, benefits and governance. In the view of this shadow rapporteur the role of a budgetary capacity should be to improve the overall economic resilience of the EMU and individual countries that will join the Eurozone eventually. It would thus help to prevent crises and ensure a sound and smooth integration into the EMU.

Finally, another shadow rapporteur underlined that the already existing solidarity within the Eurozone should be emphasised: when something goes wrong in the Eurozone, the national budgets of the Eurozone countries are put to contribution, not the EU budget at large or the budgets of non-Eurozone Member States. This called for specific and stronger governance structures (Treasury, full-time presidency, Eurozone chamber).

9. Budgetary framework

There is wide agreement that a fiscal capacity for the euro area should be anchored in the EU's budgetary framework as this presents advantages in terms of governance and accountability. It also derives from the Parliament's long standing insistence on unity of the budget. But it also presents legal and political constraints that were explained by the legal service.

Three scenarios have been sketched, the first one being more ambitious and in line with the Community method, the second more pragmatic and rapidly feasible, but more intergovernmental, and the third one strictly intergovernmental and outside the budgetary framework, which could consequently not be supported by the European Parliament:

- Any revenue of the Union must respect the own resources ceiling. Consequently, the creation of any significant new source of Union revenue might require an upwards revision of that ceiling. A revision of the own resources decision requires unanimity in the Council together with ratification by all 28 national parliaments. However, since it does not amount to treaty change, it would not be necessary to hold referenda in the Member States.

Under this scenario, the new revenue could then be assigned to specific Eurozone purposes as assigned revenue under Article 21(4) of the Financial Regulation. In this way, a new charge/tax could be created and, if necessary, the own resources ceiling could be raised as part of a single legislative package that would have to be adopted by

unanimity in the Council and then ratified by all the national parliaments.

- To avoid having to respect or amend the own resources ceiling would require to rely on direct contributions from the Member States as external assigned revenue, as was suggested by the Commission in its communication on the Convergence and Competitiveness Instrument in 2013. The contributions would be managed by the Commission and the European Parliament could grant discharge. However, this would amount to a more semi-intergovernmental budgetary solution, with the Member States being free to decide how much they each contribute and what their contributions are used for.
- Finally, if the budgetary capacity was to be established under enhanced cooperation, Article 332 TFEU would apply, meaning that 'expenditure resulting from implementation of enhanced cooperation, other than administrative costs entailed for the institutions, shall be borne by the participating Member States, unless all members of the Council, acting unanimously after consulting the European Parliament, decide otherwise'.

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ΑΠΟΨΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΕΙΟΨΗΦΙΑΣ

σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 52α παράγραφος 4 του Κανονισμού
εκ μέρους των βουλευτών της ECR Bernd Kölmel, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner και Sander
Loones

1. Σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια των υγιών δημοσίων οικονομικών της Συνθήκης του Μάαστριχτ, τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να οικοδομήσουν ίδια δημοσιονομική ικανότητα προκειμένου να αντιμετωπίσουν τους μακρο-οικονομικούς κραδασμούς. Για τη σταθεροποίηση της συνολικής ζήτησης, οι εθνικές δημοσιονομικές ικανότητες είναι εξίσου ισχυρές με την δημοσιονομική ικανότητα της ευρωζώνης. Συγχρόνως, δεν προϋποθέτουν παρατεταμένες καθαρές μεταφορές και εξαλείφουν τελείως τα ευρέως διαδεδομένα προβλήματα ηθικού κινδύνου. Η πρόταση για δημοσιονομική ικανότητα της ευρωζώνης αντικατοπτρίζει την υπεροχή της μακρο-οικονομικής διαχείρισης έναντι της επίλυσης διαρθρωτικών προβλημάτων.

2. Προκειμένου να είναι αποτελεσματική η πειθαρχία της αγοράς, ένα βασισμένο στους κανόνες δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο πρέπει να περιλαμβάνει αξιόπιστη ρήτρα μη διάσωσης και μηχανισμούς που επιτρέπουν την αποτελεσματική διαχείριση της χρεωκοπίας κρατών. Η ευρωπαϊκή δημοσιονομική διακυβέρνηση δεν απαλλάσσει τα κράτη μέλη από τις εθνικές τους ευθύνες και δεν μπορεί να υποκαταστήσει τις απαιτούμενες διαρθρωτικές αλλαγές.

3. Καλούμε την Επιτροπή και το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο να πάντων να υποκρίνονται ότι η ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική και δημοσιονομική ένωση είναι προ των θυρών και να επιλέξουν τη λύση βάσει της οποίας η ρήτρα μη διάσωσης θα λαμβάνεται σοβαρά υπόψη. Όποια μορφή και αν λάβει η ζώνη του ευρώ, η δημοσιονομική πολιτική παραμένει στη σφαίρα της ευθύνης των κρατών μελών και μια αξιόπιστη ρήτρα μη διάσωσης θα είναι θεμελιώδους σημασίας. Κατά την γνώμη μας, πρέπει να είναι το πρώτο βήμα για την επίτευξη οιασδήποτε λύσης.

14.9.2016

ΓΝΩΜΟΔΟΤΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΣΥΝΤΑΓΜΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΥΠΟΘΕΣΕΩΝ(*)

προς την Επιτροπή Προϋπολογισμών και την Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής

σχετικά με τη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα για την ευρωζώνη
(2015/2344(INI))

Συντάκτης γνωμοδότησης (*): Paulo Rangel

(*) Διαδικασία συνδεδεμένων επιτροπών – Άρθρο 54 του Κανονισμού

ΠΡΟΤΑΣΕΙΣ

Η Επιτροπή Συνταγματικών Υποθέσεων καλεί την Επιτροπή Προϋπολογισμών, που είναι αρμόδια επί της ουσίας, να συμπεριλάβει στην πρόταση ψηφίσματός της τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις:

1. υπενθυμίζει ότι παρά το γεγονός ότι το ευρώ εξακολουθεί να είναι ένα νέο νόμισμα και ότι έχει αντιμετωπίσει μία σοβαρή κρίση κατά τα τελευταία έτη, έχει εδραιωθεί ως ένα παγκόσμιο αποθεματικό νόμισμα·
2. πιστεύει ότι η κρίση ενίσχυσε την ανάγκη για βελτίωση της οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης της ΕΕ και ότι η Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση (ΟΝΕ) πρέπει να ολοκληρωθεί σταδιακά, ακολουθώντας έναν σαφή και προβλέψιμο συνολικό χάρτη πορείας·
3. υπενθυμίζει ότι 26 κράτη μέλη έχουν δεσμευτεί να προσχωρήσουν στην ευρωζώνη και ότι στις Συνθήκες το ευρώ αναγνωρίζεται ως το νόμισμα της Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Ένωσης (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 4 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (ΣΕΕ))·
4. θεωρεί ότι η δημιουργία μιας δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας στη ζώνη του ευρώ είναι ένα αναγκαίο ορόσημο για την ολοκλήρωση της ΟΝΕ και ότι συνιστάται η δημιουργία δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας, έστω και περιορισμένης, στο πλαίσιο των ισχυουσών Συνθηκών·
5. λαμβάνει υπό σημείωση τις διάφορες προτάσεις για δημοσιονομική ικανότητα, με διαφορετικό σχεδιασμό και απόδοση διαφορετικών λειτουργιών η κάθε μία, που αποβλέπουν στην προώθηση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής σύγκλισης και των βιώσιμων διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων στη ζώνη του ευρώ, και στην ενίσχυση της

ανταγωνιστικότητας και της αντοχής της ζώνης του ευρώ και/ή στην απορρόφηση ασύμμετρων διαταραχών. Επισημαίνει ότι ορισμένες επιλογές μπορεί να είναι δυνατές με βάση τις τρέχουσες συνθήκες, και ιδίως μέσω των άρθρων 136, 175 και 352 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΣΛΕΕ).

6. υπενθυμίζει ότι η δυνατότητα αυτή θα πρέπει να αποτελέσει μέρος του προϋπολογισμού της ΕΕ, όπως ορίζεται στο άρθρο 310 παράγραφος 1 της ΣΛΕΕ και να χρηματοδοτείται από ιδίους πόρους, ενώ θα πρέπει να συμμορφώνεται με τις διατάξεις των άρθρων 310(4) και 312(1) της ΣΛΕΕ, αλλά με τη δυνατότητα εγγραφής αντίστοιχων πιστώσεων πέρα και πάνω από τα όρια του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου.
7. επισημαίνει ότι, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 311 της ΣΛΕΕ, είναι δυνατό να αυξηθούν τα ανώτατα όρια των ιδίων πόρων και να καθιερωθούν νέες κατηγορίες ιδίων πόρων (ακόμη και αν αυτοί συλλέγονται μόνο από περιορισμένο αριθμό κρατών μελών). Διαπιστώνει ότι η αξιοποίηση της δυνατότητας για διάθεση ορισμένων εσόδων σε συγκεκριμένες γραμμές δαπανών, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 21 του Δημοσιονομικού Κανονισμού¹, δεν συνιστά παραβίαση της αρχής της καθολικότητας του προϋπολογισμού.
8. υπογραμμίζει ότι ο προϋπολογισμός της ΕΕ παρέχει επίσης εγγυήσεις για συγκεκριμένες δανειοδοτικές πράξεις και ότι πολλά όργανα, όπως ο ΕΜΧΣ και το ΕΤΠ, παρέχουν τη δυνατότητα να κινητοποιηθούν πόροι πάνω από τα ανώτατα όρια δαπανών του ΠΔΠ.
9. επισημαίνει ότι εάν μία δημοσιονομική ικανότητα αποσκοπούσε να παράσχει κίνητρα για διαρθρωτικές αλλαγές, θα μπορούσε να θεσπιστεί στη βάση των σημερινών Συνθηκών, εάν ήταν αναγκαίο, μέσω της ενισχυμένης συνεργασίας. Σημειώνει ότι τα άρθρα 121 παράγραφος 6 και 136 της ΣΛΕΕ θα παρείχαν την κατάλληλη νομική βάση για έναν τέτοιο μηχανισμό. Παρατηρεί, ωστόσο, ότι, αν οι στόχοι της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας ήταν ευρύτεροι και πιο φιλόδοξοι, θα ήταν αναγκαίο να χρησιμοποιηθεί το άρθρο 352 της ΣΛΕΕ.
10. Θεωρεί ότι η συμπερίληψη της συνθήκης ίδρυσης του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ) στο νομικό πλαίσιο της ΕΕ, όπως έχει ζητήσει το Κοινοβούλιο σε προηγούμενες περιπτώσεις, θα επέτρεπε να αποκτήσει ο εν λόγω μηχανισμός δημοκρατική λογοδοσία και μεγαλύτερη νομιμοποίηση, ευνοώντας τη θεσμική εδραίωση της ΟΝΕ.
11. επαναλαμβάνει την ανάγκη για δημοκρατική νομιμοποίηση, σαφήνεια και λογοδοσία, κάτι που μπορεί να εξασφαλιστεί με την κοινοτική μέθοδο και συνεπάγεται την εφαρμογή της συνήθους νομοθετικής διαδικασίας, όπως καθορίζεται από το άρθρο 289 της ΣΛΕΕ, και την πλήρη συμμετοχή του Κοινοβουλίου στη διαμόρφωση, την εφαρμογή και την εποπτεία της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας. Προτείνει επίσης για το σκοπό αυτό ο Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής που είναι αρμόδιος για το ευρώ να προεδρεύει του Eurogroup και να διαθέτει εκτεταμένες αρμοδιότητες σε ό,τι αφορά την ΟΝΕ.
12. θεωρεί ότι, καθώς προχωρά η διαδικασία οικοδόμησης μιας γνήσιας ΟΝΕ, πρέπει να εξεταστεί το ενδεχόμενο της δημιουργίας ενός δημόσιου ταμείου της ζώνης του ευρώ,

¹ Κανονισμός (ΕΕ, Ευρατόμ) αριθ. 966/2012 του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου της 25ης Οκτωβρίου 2012 σχετικά με τους δημοσιονομικούς κανόνες που εφαρμόζονται στον γενικό προϋπολογισμό της Ένωσης και την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ, Ευρατόμ) αριθ. 1605/2002 του Συμβουλίου.

ιδίως για τη λήψη συλλογικών αποφάσεων, την εποπτεία και τη διαχείριση της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας της ζώνης του ευρώ και για πολιτικές που συνδέονται ειδικά με τη νομισματική ζώνη (ιδίως εκείνες που αφορούν την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας, της οικονομικής ολοκλήρωσης και της σύγκλισης).

13. υπενθυμίζει ότι τα πρωτόκολλα για την εφαρμογή των αρχών της επικουρικότητας και της αναλογικότητας καθώς και σχετικά με τον ρόλο των εθνικών κοινοβουλίων προσφέρουν ευρείες ευκαιρίες για συμμετοχή των εθνικών κοινοβουλίων στο θέμα αυτό, ενώ πρέπει επίσης να αξιοποιηθεί πλήρως το δυναμικό των μέσων που προβλέπονται από το άρθρο 13 της Συνθήκης για τη σταθερότητα, το συντονισμό και τη διακυβέρνηση στην Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση καθώς και από τον τίτλο II του πρωτοκόλλου (αριθ. 1): αναφέρει ότι οι ευθύνες θα πρέπει να αναλαμβάνονται στο επίπεδο όπου λαμβάνονται ή εφαρμόζονται οι αποφάσεις, με τα εθνικά κοινοβούλια να ελέγχουν τις εθνικές κυβερνήσεις και το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο να ελέγχει την ευρωπαϊκή εκτελεστική εξουσία· πιστεύει ότι αυτός είναι ο μόνος τρόπος να διασφαλισθεί η απαιτούμενη αυξημένη λογοδοσία και ο ενστερνισμός της διαδικασίας λήψης των αποφάσεων·
14. τονίζει ότι η χρήση των ιδίων πόρων αυτών που είναι ειδικά συνδεδεμένοι με την ευρωζώνη θα διασφαλίσει την αναγκαία σαφήνεια, διαφάνεια και δημοκρατική νομιμότητα σε ό,τι αφορά τον έλεγχο και τη λογοδοσία, επειδή οι εν λόγω πόροι θα δημιουργούνται και να ελέγχονται σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο·
15. ζητεί να ισχυροποιηθεί ο ρόλος του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και των εθνικών κοινοβουλίων στο νέο πλαίσιο οικονομικής διακυβέρνησης, προκειμένου να ενισχυθεί η δημοκρατική λογοδοσία·
16. πιστεύει ότι τα κράτη μέλη που δεν ανήκουν στη ζώνη του ευρώ θα πρέπει να συμμετέχουν, εφόσον το επιθυμούν, αν και με διαφοροποιημένο τρόπο και ανάλογα με τον σχεδιασμό της δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας.
17. θεωρεί ότι είναι σημαντικό να υπάρχει διάκριση μεταξύ συζήτησης σε ό,τι αφορά τις πολιτικές για την ευρωζώνη και σχετικής διαδικασίας λήψης αποφάσεων· θεωρεί ότι θα πρέπει να εξευρεθούν πρακτικοί όροι προκειμένου να δοθεί η δυνατότητα σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη που έχουν δεσμευθεί να προσχωρήσουν στην ζώνη του ευρώ να συμμετέχουν στις συζητήσεις που αφορούν τη ζώνη του ευρώ, εφόσον το επιθυμούν, με την ταυτόχρονη διασφάλιση, ωστόσο, ότι μόνο τα κράτη μέλη τα οποία είναι μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ και συνεισφέρουν σε ταμεία διάσωσης και στη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα θα είναι σε θέση να ψηφίζουν επί των εν λόγω αποφάσεων·
18. πιστεύει ότι ένα σαφώς καθορισμένος ρόλος για το Ευρωπαϊκό Δικαστήριο θα είναι κρίσιμος προκειμένου να υπάρξει εγγύηση αμεροληψίας και αποδοτικότητας κατά την εφαρμογή του νέου πλαισίου.

ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΤΕΛΙΚΗΣ ΨΗΦΟΦΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΗ ΓΝΩΜΟΔΟΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

Ημερομηνία έγκρισης	5.9.2016
Αποτέλεσμα της τελικής ψηφοφορίας	+: 16 -: 6 0: 0
Βουλευτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Mercedes Bresso, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Richard Corbett, Danuta Maria Hübner, Diane James, Ramón Jáuregui Atondo, Constance Le Grip, Jo Leinen, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Paulo Rangel, György Schöpflin, Pedro Silva Pereira, Barbara Spinelli, Josep-Maria Terricabras, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, Rainer Wieland
Αναπληρωτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Max Andersson, Gerolf Annemans, Pervenche Berès, Charles Goerens, Jérôme Lavrilleux, Viviane Reding, Helmut Scholz
Αναπληρωτές (άρθρο 200, παρ. 2) παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu

13.7.2016

ΓΝΩΜΟΔΟΤΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ ΕΛΕΓΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΫΠΟΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΥ

προς την Επιτροπή Προϋπολογισμών και την Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής

σχετικά με τη δημοσιονομική ικανότητα για την ευρωζώνη (2015/2344(INI))

Συντάκτης γνωμοδότησης: Zigmantas Balčytis

ΠΡΟΤΑΣΕΙΣ

Η Επιτροπή Ελέγχου του Προϋπολογισμού καλεί την Επιτροπή Προϋπολογισμών και την Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής, που είναι αρμόδιες επί της ουσίας, να συμπεριλάβουν στην πρόταση ψηφίσματός τους τις ακόλουθες προτάσεις:

1. παρατηρεί ότι η Οικονομική και Νομισματική Ένωση της Ευρώπης δεν διαθέτει τον απαιτούμενο φορολογικό ή δημοσιονομικό μηχανισμό προσαρμογής για την απορρόφηση ασύμμετρων κραδασμών, καθώς από μόνες τους οι αυτοδιορθωτικές δυνάμεις της αγοράς, όπως κατέδειξε η κρίση, δεν επαρκούν για την προστασία των κρατών μελών από το υπέρμετρο χρέος·
2. θεωρεί ότι δεν αρκεί απλά μια κεντρική τράπεζα για τον έλεγχο της προσφοράς χρήματος στην περίπτωση ενιαίου νομίσματος, όπως κατέδειξε η κρίση, αλλά απαιτείται περαιτέρω δημοσιονομική, οικονομική και πολιτική ολοκλήρωση·
3. υπενθυμίζει πως η θέση του Κοινοβουλίου είναι ότι χρειάζεται εμβάθυνση της ευρωπαϊκής οικονομικής ολοκλήρωσης για να διασφαλισθεί η σταθερότητα της ευρωζώνης και του συνόλου της Ένωσης·
4. εκφράζει ανησυχία για το γεγονός ότι οι μηχανισμοί που αναπτύχθηκαν τα τελευταία χρόνια για την αντιμετώπιση της κρίσης είναι διακυβερνητικής φύσης και δεν έχουν ενσωματωθεί στο κοινοτικό κεκτημένο, ενώ χαρακτηρίζονται από έλλειψη δημοκρατικής εποπτείας και δεν υπόκεινται στον έλεγχο του Κοινοβουλίου·
5. υπογραμμίζει ότι η δημιουργία μιας δημοσιονομικής και φορολογικής ικανότητας στην ευρωζώνη είναι απαραίτητη για την ολοκλήρωση της Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Ένωσης (ONE)· πιστεύει ότι η σταθεροποιητική λειτουργία μιας δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας είναι η πιο εφικτή εκ των λειτουργιών της δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής, ενώ η

αναδιανεμητική λειτουργία θα μπορούσε ενδεχομένως να επιτευχθεί στο πλαίσιο μιας πιο ολοκληρωμένης πολιτικής και οικονομικής ένωσης·

6. τονίζει πως χρειάζεται να δημιουργηθεί μια τέτοια ικανότητα ως μέρος του προϋπολογισμού της Ένωσης, εκτός του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου (ΠΔΠ), και να χρησιμοποιηθεί από την Επιτροπή· υπενθυμίζει τη θέση του ότι η ανάπτυξη οποιασδήποτε φορολογικής ή δημοσιονομικής ικανότητας ειδικά για την ευρωζώνη θα πρέπει να πραγματοποιηθεί εντός του πλαισίου της Ένωσης·
7. υπογραμμίζει ότι οποιαδήποτε δημοσιονομική ικανότητα χρειάζεται να επικεντρωθεί κατά κύριο λόγο στις δημόσιες επενδύσεις με κοινωνικές και οικονομικές στοχεύσεις, π.χ. πλήρης απασχόληση, κοινωνική και περιφερειακή σύγκλιση·
8. τονίζει πως από χρηματοδοτική άποψη, η δημοσιονομική ικανότητα χρειάζεται να περιληφθεί στον προϋπολογισμό της Ένωσης· φρονεί πως πιθανοί πόροι χρηματοδότησης μπορούν να είναι μέτρα κατά της φοροαποφυγής και φοροδιαφυγής·
9. υπογραμμίζει ότι η ικανότητα αυτή θα πρέπει να συμμορφώνεται προς τις διατάξεις των άρθρων 317, 318 και 319 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΣΛΕΕ) προκειμένου να διασφαλιστούν ο δημοκρατικός έλεγχος, η διαφάνεια και η λογοδοσία προς τους πολίτες της ΕΕ μέσω των υφιστάμενων θεσμικών οργάνων.

ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΤΕΛΙΚΗΣ ΨΗΦΟΦΟΡΙΑΣ ΣΤΗ ΓΝΩΜΟΔΟΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

Ημερομηνία έγκρισης	13.7.2016
Αποτέλεσμα της τελικής ψηφοφορίας	+: 16 -: 4 0: 0
Βουλευτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Louis Aliot, Inés Ayala Sender, Zigmantas Balčytis, Dennis de Jong, Martina Dlabajová, Luke Ming Flanagan, Jens Geier, Ingeborg Gräßle, Bogusław Liberadzki, Petri Sarvamaa, Claudia Schmidt, Igor Šoltes, Michael Theurer, Marco Valli, Derek Vaughan, Неджми Али, Георги Пирински
Αναπληρωτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Benedek Jávor, Julia Pitera, Miroslav Poche

**ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΤΕΛΙΚΗΣ ΨΗΦΟΦΟΡΙΑΣ
ΣΤΗΝ ΑΡΜΟΔΙΑ ΕΠΙ ΤΗΣ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ**

Ημερομηνία έγκρισης	13.2.2017
Αποτέλεσμα της τελικής ψηφοφορίας	+ : 54 - : 28 0 : 6
Βουλευτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Gerolf Annemans, Jean Arthuis, Burkhard Balz, Hugues Bayet, Pervenche Berès, Reimer Böge, Udo Bullmann, Enrique Calvet Chambon, Esther de Lange, Gérard Deprez, Anneliese Dodds, Manuel dos Santos, Markus Ferber, José Manuel Fernandes, Jonás Fernández, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Neena Gill CBE, Charles Goerens, Esteban González Pons, Ingeborg Gräßle, Roberto Gualtieri, Brian Hayes, Iris Hoffmann, Gunnar Hökmark, Danuta Maria Hübner, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Bernd Kölmel, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Alain Lamassoure, Philippe Lamberts, Sander Loones, Olle Ludvigsson, Ivana Maletić, Fulvio Martusciello, Marisa Matias, Gabriel Mato, Bernard Monot, Clare Moody, Siegfried Mureşan, Victor Negrescu, Luděk Niedermayer, Liadh Ní Riada, Jan Olbrycht, Stanisław Ożóg, Dariusz Rosati, Paul Rübig, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner, Alfred Sant, Petri Sarvamaa, Molly Scott Cato, Pedro Silva Pereira, Peter Simon, Jordi Solé, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan, Kay Swinburne, Paul Tang, Michael Theurer, Nils Torvalds, Inese Vaidere, Marco Valli, Monika Vana, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Cora van Nieuwenhuizen, Miguel Viegas, Jakob von Weizsäcker, Tiemo Wölken, Marco Zanni, Auke Zijlstra, Stanisław Żółtek, Γεώργιος Κύρτσος, Ελευθέριος Συναδινός, Λευτέρης Χριστοφόρου
Αναπληρωτές παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Xabier Benito Ziluaga, Nicola Caputo, Mady Delvaux, Bas Eickhout, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Thomas Mann, Eva Maydell, Andrey Novakov, Maria João Rodrigues, Renato Soru, Ivan Štefanec, Romana Tomc, Lieve Wierinck
Αναπληρωτές (άρθρο 200, παρ. 2) παρόντες κατά την τελική ψηφοφορία	Klaus Buchner, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Damiano Zoffoli

ΤΕΛΙΚΗ ΨΗΦΟΦΟΡΙΑ ΜΕ ΟΝΟΜΑΣΤΙΚΗ ΚΛΗΣΗ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΡΜΟΔΙΑ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

54	+
ALDE	Jean Arthuis, Enrique Calvet Chambon, Gérard Deprez, Charles Goerens, Nils Torvalds, Lieve Wierinck
NI	Renato Soru
PPE	Reimer Böge, Lefteris Christoforou, José Manuel Fernandes, Esteban González Pons, Ingeborg Gräßle, Danuta Maria Hübner, Georgios Kyrtzos, Alain Lamassoure, Thomas Mann, Fulvio Martusciello, Gabriel Mato, Siegfried Mureşan, Andrey Novakov, Petri Sarvamaa, Inese Vaidere, Tom Vandenkendelaere
S-D	Hugues Bayet, Pervenche Berès, Udo Bullmann, Nicola Caputo, Mady Delvaux, Anneliese Dodds, Jonás Fernández, Doru-Claudian Frunzulică, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Neena Gill CBE, Roberto Gualtieri, Iris Hoffmann, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Olle Ludvigsson, Clare Moody, Victor Negrescu, Maria João Rodrigues, Pedro Silva Pereira, Peter Simon, Paul Tang, Tiemo Wölken, Damiano Zoffoli, Manuel dos Santos, Jakob von Weizsäcker
Verts/ALE	Klaus Buchner, Bas Eickhout, Jean Lambert, Molly Scott Cato, Jordi Solé, Monika Vana

28	-
ALDE	Michael Theurer, Cora van Nieuwenhuizen
ECR	Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Bernd Kölmel, Sander Loones, Stanisław Ozóg, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner, Kay Swinburne
EFDD	Marco Valli
ENF	Gerolf Annemans, Bernard Monot, Marco Zanni, Auke Zijlstra, Stanisław Żółtek
GUE/NGL	Xabier Benito Ziluaga, Marisa Matias, Liadh Ní Riada, Miguel Viegas
NI	Eleftherios Synadinos
PPE	Markus Ferber, Gunnar Hökmark, Ivana Maletić, Luděk Niedermayer, Jan Olbrycht, Dariusz Rosati, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan, Romana Tomc, Esther de Lange

6	0
PPE	Burkhard Balz, Brian Hayes, Eva Maydell, Paul Rübig, Ivan Štefanec
S-D	Alfred Sant

Υπόμνημα των χρησιμοποιούμενων συμβόλων:

+ : υπέρ

- : κατά

0 : αποχή