Question for oral answer O-000076/2015
to the Commission
Rule 128
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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Transparency of the application of the Stability and Growth Pact

1. Can the Commission describe every step of the methodology it uses for the economic assessments made in the framework of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP)? What criteria does it use for the analysis, and are there any lessons that have been learned and any concrete plans to reform this methodology?

2. Can the Commission indicate to what extent its assessments and recommendations are the result of an inclusive process and of a genuine dialogue with all interested parties, including the national parliaments, the European Parliament and social actors? Are there any concrete plans to reform the SGP framework in this direction? Regarding Commission communication COM(2015)0012, has the Commission implemented the next steps to ensure closer coordination and engagement with stakeholders at all levels, as referred to in the communication’s conclusions?

3. Will the Commission shift the focus away from microeconomic surveillance to total debt of all sectors (state, private households, corporate) without implementing austerity measures, given that the euro crisis in countries such as Spain and Ireland was primarily about private debt, and public debt may just reflect excess private saving or, in the event of indebtedness in the other sectors, high total debt, such as foreign debt, which is the result of unsustainable current account imbalances? Will the Commission reform the SGP in order to monitor current account surpluses as well, given that the macroeconomic imbalances procedure has failed to correct chronic surpluses in countries such as Germany?

4. Is the Commission considering a reform of the SGP that shifts the focus away from the 3 % deficit criteria, given that austerity in response to the sovereign debt crisis of Greece has shown that an aggressive reduction of public deficits may give rise to the debt paradox, where substantial deficit reduction leads to a higher public debt to GDP ratio when all economic sectors try to deleverage simultaneously? Does the Commission consider that the assumptions behind the 3 % criteria (5 % nominal growth, 2 % inflation) are being met?

5. Why has the Commission not exempted public investment from SGP rules, since investment creates assets?

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