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DRAFT REPORT

on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: implementation of 2012 priorities
(2012/2150(INI))

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: implementation of 2012 priorities

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The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 136 in combination with Article 121(2) thereof,

– having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1466/97 on the strengthening of the surveillance of budgetary positions and the surveillance and coordination of economic policies[1],

– having regard to Council Directive 2011/85/EU of 8 November 2011 on requirements for budgetary frameworks of the Member States[2],

– having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1174/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on enforcement measures to correct excessive macroeconomic imbalances in the euro area[3],

– having regard to Council Regulation (EU) No 1177/2011 of 8 November 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 1467/97 on speeding up and clarifying the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure[4],

– having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances[5],

– having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 on the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area[6],

– having regard to Annex I to the European Council Conclusions of 24-25 March 2011 entitled 'The Euro Plus Pact: Stronger economic policy coordination for competitiveness and convergence'[7],

– having regard to the Communication from the Commission of 23 November 2011 on the Annual Growth Survey 2012 (COM(2011)0815),

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[1] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 12.
[2] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 41.
[3] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 8.
[4] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 33.
[5] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 25.
[6] OJ L 306, 23.11.2011, p. 1.
[7] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/120296.pdf

– having regard to its resolution of 15 February 2012 on the contribution to the Annual Growth Survey 2012[1],

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the implementation of the broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States whose currency is the euro (COM(2012)0301),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Austria's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Austria's stability programme for 2011-2016 (COM(2012)0306),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Belgium's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Belgium's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0314),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Bulgaria's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Bulgaria's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0302),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Cyprus's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Cyprus's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0308),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the Czech Republic's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on the Czech Republic's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0303),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Denmark's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Denmark's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0304),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Estonia's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Estonia's updated stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0311),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Finland's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Finland's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0312),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on France's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on France's stability programme for 2012-2016 (COM(2012)0313),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Germany's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Germany's stability programme for 2012-2016 (COM(2012)0305),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Greece's 2012

[1]Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0048.

national reform programme (COM(2012)0307),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Hungary's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Hungary's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0317),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Ireland's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Ireland's updated stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0316),

– having regard to the recommendation for a Council recommendation on Italy's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Italy's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0318),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Latvia's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Latvia's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0320),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Lithuania's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Lithuania's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0319),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Luxembourg's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Luxembourg's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0315),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Malta's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Malta's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0321),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the Netherlands' 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on the Netherlands' stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0322),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Poland's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Poland's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0323),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Portugal's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Portugal's stability programme for 2012-2016(COM(2012)0324),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Romania's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Romania's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0325),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Slovakia's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Slovakia's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0326),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Slovenia's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Slovenia's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0327),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Spain's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Spain's stability programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0310),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on Sweden's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Sweden's convergence programme for 2012-2015 (COM(2012)0328),

– having regard to the Recommendation for a Council Recommendation on the United Kingdom's 2012 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on the United Kingdom's convergence programme for 2012-2017 (COM(2012)0309),

– having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, the Committee on Regional Development, the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A7-0000/2012),

A. whereas the economic, social, financial and sovereign debt crises have not yet abated;

B. whereas the European Semester was codified in Regulation (EU) No 1175/2011 of 16 November 2011 (the Wortmann-Kool report);

1. Welcomes the Commission's country-specific recommendations for the euro area; expects these recommendations to form the basis of the Spring Council's recommendations;

2. Recalls that the European Semester allows for *ex ante* coordination in the euro area context, both via the transmission of draft budget plans and the discussion of major economic policy reform plans, in order to take into account of, and reduce, spill-over effects from national actions on other countries or on the euro area as a whole;

3. Is confident that the measures proposed are conducive to sustainable public finances, increased competitiveness, higher growth and improved employment;

4. Notes the Commission's insistence on conducting growth-enhancing structural reforms to allow the EU to get to grips with the crisis and regain its preeminent role in the world economy; supports the Commission's efforts to correct the macroeconomic imbalances within the euro area;

5. Notes that most of the structural reforms are concentrating on a small number of areas, such as labour markets, the taxation system, restructuring the banking sector, removing unjustified restrictions on regulated trades and professions, liberalising certain industries,

improving the efficiency and quality of public expenditure, avoiding unnecessary layers of government, combating tax evasion, and reforming mortgage and real estate markets;

6. Urges the Commission to be more explicit in its recommendations and to monitor recommendations made in the past, i.a. by providing more detailed explanations and evaluations in those cases where the Commission thinks a country has only partially followed the recommendations;

7. Encourages the Member States to strictly follow the rules set by the Stability and Growth Pact, as modified by the 'six-pack', in order to render public finances more resilient, ensure that the European economy becomes more sustainable and reduce pressure from the banking sector; expects the Commission and the Council to enforce these rules in a strict manner; firmly believes that fiscal discipline and fiscal institutions should be strengthened at both national and sub-national level and that government expenditure should be shifted towards long-term investment, which would foster sustainable growth;

8. Welcomes the end of excessive deficit procedures for several Member States; hopes that more procedures can be brought to an end in the near future;

9. Welcomes the ratification of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union by a growing number of the 25 Member States that signed it; urges all other Member States to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible; lauds the positive outcome of the Irish referendum on that Treaty;

10. Urges all parties involved to speedily agree on the 'two-pack' to complement current legislation adopted in co-decision; urges all parties involved not to dilute Council conclusions shortly after they are adopted;

11. Lauds the economic dialogue held so far between Parliament and national representatives, and wishes to conduct further dialogues;

12. Underlines the need to strengthen the working methods of the Eurogroup;

13. Reiterates its call to take action to improve the stability of the financial system in the euro area;

14. Recalls that the recommendations by the Commission are a contribution to the Spring Council and that this procedure is not a legislative one;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the governments of the Member States and the European Central Bank.