

**Question for written answer E-001454/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: European solution for public debt alleviation in the Member States

The fallout from the pandemic has caused spiralling public debt levels in the Member States, with the euro area average set to hit at least 100% of GDP by 2022¹. Moreover, there is a large degree of uncertainty overshadowing the Commission's winter economic forecast² revising downwards projected growth rates for 2021, given that they will be directly determined by the evolution of the pandemic. Epidemiologists are already warning of a third wave of the virus, expressing concerns about its the rate of mutation and the effectiveness of existing vaccines against the new emerging strains. The prolongation of restrictions by Member States are now making the Commission's winter predictions appear somewhat optimistic in retrospect, as public debt is expected to increase further.

In order to support the recovery more effectively and speed up a return to growth, over one hundred economists from thirteen European countries are now calling for the cancellation of the public debt held by the European Central Bank (almost 25 % of European public debt)³.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say what measures it intends to take to avoid a new debt crisis?
2. Is it considering the proposal to cancel the public debt held by the ECB or at least to alleviate the public debt levels attributable to the fallout from the pandemic?
3. Is it considering stepping up the Recovery Fund resources constituted during the first wave of the pandemic?

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/el/ip_20_2021

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/el/ip_21_504

³ <https://annulation-dette-publique-bce.com/>, https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2021/02/05/la-bce-peut-offrir-aux-etats-europeens-les-moyens-de-leur-reconstruction-ecologique-sociale-economique-et-culturelle_6068861_3232.html, <https://www.freitag.de/autoren/der-freitag/schulden-abschreiben-zukunft-gewinnen>, <https://elpais.com/opinion/2021-02-04/anular-la-deuda-publica-mantenida-por-el-bce-para-que-nuestro-destino-vuelva-a-estar-en-nuestras-manos.html>