



**2017/2226(INI)**

2.2.2018

# OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth  
Survey 2018  
(2017/2226(INI))

Rapporteur: Nuno Melo



## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises that the protection of the environment is not an obstacle to economic growth and employment, and that, on the contrary, the decarbonisation of the economy should be seen as a key source of new and sustainable economic growth and employment; considers that the EU must invest more in order to maintain its status as the global frontrunner of the transition to a low-carbon economy and a sustainable production-consumption system;
2. Emphasises that environmental and sustainability policy must be given a more prominent role in the European Semester, particularly for key issues such as resource efficiency, natural capital and ecosystem services, green jobs, sustainable innovation and green financing;
3. Reiterates that since at least 20 % of the EU budget for 2014-2020 should be spent on climate change-related action, the contribution for 2018 should overshoot the overall target in order to offset the lower allocations from the first half of the current multiannual financial framework; stresses that stable and appropriate funding is essential to achieving the European Union's commitments, especially in the light of the Paris Agreement; calls on the Commission, in this regard, to guarantee that the mechanism of climate change mainstreaming is fully optimised;
4. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into all EU policies and initiatives; stresses that it is essential that the goals of the 2030 Agenda are comprehensively reflected in the European Semester in order for the EU to achieve them; calls on the Commission to develop, without delay, a long-term roadmap for the full implementation of the SDGs in the EU, recognising their interrelationships and the equal importance of each; calls on the Commission, moreover, to integrate all outstanding aspects of the 2030 Agenda and the 7th Environment Action Programme into the European Semester;
5. Stresses that the European Semester debate is of particular importance in view of the need to find a new development model for structural reforms and selective investments – investing in strategic areas;
6. Highlights the environmental significance and socio-economic benefits of biodiversity, such as the Natura 2000 network, which contributes between 1.7 and 2.5 % of EU GDP through the provision of ecosystem services such as carbon storage, water purification, pollination and tourism; notes with concern that the EU's 2020 biodiversity targets will not be met without substantial additional efforts and adequate financial commitments, for which the European Semester is an essential tool;
7. Regrets the fact that the Commission's Annual Growth Survey for 2018 still fails to place the future of the EU economy in the context of the necessary phasing out of carbon emissions and a shift to a circular economy, and is therefore missing the opportunity to guide the EU economy to a more stable, inclusive, productive and

resilient path;

8. Emphasises the need for horizontal application of sustainability criteria and performance-based objectives for all EU structural and investment funds, including the European Fund for Strategic Investments, in order to achieve a comprehensive transition to sustainable and inclusive economic growth; calls on the Commission and the Member States to re-direct investments towards sustainable technologies and businesses in order to finance growth in a sustainable manner over the long term;
9. Considers that measurement and benchmarking methodologies for resource efficiency and greenhouse gas intensity should be included in both the European Semester – within the framework of the scoreboard for macroeconomic imbalances – and in the review of the Europe 2020 strategy;
10. Welcomes the increasing amount of institutional and private capital allocated towards financing the SDGs; invites the Commission and the Member States to develop sustainable development criteria for EU institutional spending, to identify potential regulatory barriers and incentives to SDG investment and to explore opportunities for convergence and cooperation between public and private investments;
11. Recommends that measures to support the continuation of the recovery focus on the delivery of investments that support transition to a fossil-free, efficient and renewable economy in support of domestic employment and demand;
12. Stresses that investment in resource efficiency, energy savings and emission reductions will both increase productivity across the economy and reduce external costs and impacts; highlights the opportunities to support the transition towards a circular economy with a view to creating new jobs in innovative, maintenance and repair services and designing and making new, more sustainable products;
13. Considers that, as part of the discussion on the European Semester, the Commission should come forward with new policies and incentives to encourage Member States to rapidly phase out fossil fuel subsidies by 2020, as these constitute one of the most pressing hurdles to the achievement of EU climate and renewables targets, the EU 2020 goals and the SDGs;
14. Reiterates the need to phase out other environmentally harmful subsidies by 2020 and to shift taxes from labour to environmental taxation;
15. Welcomes the proclamation at the Social Summit for Fair Employment and Growth in Gothenburg of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which is based on 20 principles, including, in the area of health care, the right to access affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality;
16. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts to develop, reform, and implement effectively policies that address health promotion and disease prevention, including with technical support from the Commission's Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP);
17. Welcomes the initiative shown by the Commission in launching the web portal on

health promotion and disease prevention, which provides up-to-date information on topics relating to the promotion of health and well-being, and constitutes an important source of clear and reliable information for citizens; stresses that this portal should be fully accessible to all EU citizens, including those suffering from dyslexia or other such difficulties;

18. Stresses the need, in the context of the review of the European Civil Protection Mechanism, to effectively create an EU civil protection response reserve of civil protection assets, as a complement to national resources, in order to strengthen the European common response capacity to disasters such as forest fires and earthquakes; stresses the need to encourage greater cooperation on the advanced planning of European disaster-response operations by, among other measures, mapping Member States' assets, drawing up contingency plans and improving risk-management planning;
19. Calls for greater coherence with other EU policies in the field of disaster prevention and preparedness, such as the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change, the European Structural and Investment Funds, the Solidarity Fund, environmental legislation, and research and innovation policies;
20. Stresses that extreme events, such as drought in southern European countries, hurricanes and catastrophic floods, require the signatories to the Paris Agreement to show greater ambition to meet the established targets;
21. Calls on the Commission to create a real sustainable management and protection strategy for forests in order to help combat the effects of climate change, with an emphasis on 'sustainable' and an added emphasis on the species of trees grown in those forests; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to implement and incentivise a project to encourage tree and shrub growth along the banks of streams and rivers, thus helping to alleviate the effects of prolonged heavy precipitation;
22. Calls for greater and structured involvement of civil society and environmental organisations within the European Semester process, and for greater involvement of environment ministers within the European Semester process at Council level.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	24.1.2018
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:               50 -:               1 0:               0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Marco Affronte, Pilar Ayuso, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Paul Brannen, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Birgit Collin-Langen, Seb Dance, Stefan Eck, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Arne Gericke, Julie Girling, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Karin Kadenbach, Urszula Krupa, Giovanni La Via, Jo Leinen, Peter Liese, Susanne Melior, Gilles Pargneaux, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, John Procter, Julia Reid, Frédérique Ries, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Renate Sommer, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu, Ivica Tolić, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Damiano Zoffoli
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Elena Gentile, Martin Häusling, Norbert Lins, Nuno Melo, Ulrike Müller, Christel Schaldemose, Bart Staes, Keith Taylor, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Jiří Maštálka

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

50	+
ALDE	Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Ulrike Müller, Frédérique Ries
ECR	Arne Gericke, Julie Girling, Urszula Krupa, Bolesław G. Piecha, John Procter, Jadwiga Wiśniewska
EFDD	Piernicola Pedicini
GUE/NGL	Stefan Eck, Jiří Maštálka
EPP	Pilar Ayuso, Ivo Belet, Birgit Collin-Langen, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Nuno Melo, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Renate Sommer, Ivica Tolić, Adina-Ioana Vălean
S&D	Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Paul Brannen, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Seb Dance, Elena Gentile, Jytte Guteland, Karin Kadenbach, Jo Leinen, Susanne Melior, Gilles Pargneaux, Christel Schaldemose, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu, Damiano Zoffoli, Carlos Zorrinho
Verts/ALE	Marco Affronte, Martin Häusling, Bart Staes, Keith Taylor

1	-
EFDD	Julia Reid

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention