



## IT-TNAX-IL LEGIŻLATURA

P.L. 4660

Dokument imqiegħed fuq il-Mejda tal-Kamra tad-Deputati fis-Seduta Numru 247 tad-9 ta' Marzu 2015 mill-iSpeaker, l-Onor Anglu Farrugia.

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Raymond Scicluna  
Skrivan tal-Kamra

**European Parliamentary Week:**  
**(1) The European Semester Cycles 2014 and 2015;**  
**(2) The Conference under Article 13 of the Treaty on**  
**Stability, Coordination and Governance in the**  
**Economic and Monetary Union**

**3 – 4 February 2015**  
**Brussels**

**Hon Antoine Borg, MP**

**Rapport lill-iSpeaker dwar parteċipazzjoni f'Konferenza/Laqgħa/Żjara ta' natura parlamentari barra minn Malta**

1. Titlu tal-Konferenza/Laqgħa: European Parliamentary Week
2. Data: 3 - 4 ta' Frar 2015
3. Suġġett/i fuq l-Aġenda (Tista' tagħzel li tehmeż l-aġenda tal-laqgħa):

Aġenda mehmuża

- 
4. Konkluzjonijiet tal-laqgħa, jekk ikun il-każ (Tista' wkoll tagħzel li tehmeż il-konkluzjonijiet mar-rapport):
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5. Intervent/i magħmul/a mill-Membru:

F'każ ta' intervent ippreparat minn qabel, tista' tagħzel li tehmeż kopja tad-diskors.

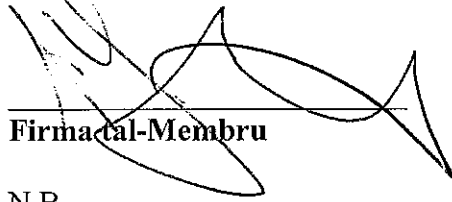
F'każ ta' intervent spontanju, il-punti prinċipali tal-intervent huma:

Fl-intervent tiegħu, l-Onorevoli Antoine BORG qal li għalkemm kien qed jirrapreżenta l-izgħar Stat Membru, huwa jemmen li, minkejja ċ-ċokon, Malta għandha sehem importanti x'toffri lill-Unjoni Ewropea fl-isforzi tagħha biex tohroġ mill-kriżi ekonomika li tinsab fiha. Huwa qal li Malta dejjem emmnet fl-edukazzjoni bħala għodda importanti għall-inklużjoni soċjali u b'hekk kontra problemi ekonomiċi bħall-qgħad u l-faqar, peress li tforri lill-haddiem - kemm żagħżagħ u adulti - l-indipendenza neċessarja biex jimraħ fis-suq tax-xogħol. L-On. Borg enfasizza l-importanza tar-ristrutturar tas-suq tax-xogħol u tal-ekonomija, li Malta għaddiet minnu. Is-suq tax-xogħol kien ibbażat fuq enfasi fuq il-manifattura fuq produzzjoni tal-massa, li però ċkienu hafna minhabba l-effetti tal-globalizzazzjoni u l-għażla ta' min ihaddem li jmur fi swieq b'pagi u spejjeż ferm iżjed baxxi. Pajjiżna allura qaleb għal setturi iktar speċjalizzati, bħas-setturi tas-servizi finanzjarji, gaming, setturi tal-avjazzjoni, u s-setturi tal-farmaċewtika fost oħrajn, fejn kien hemm bżonn retraining sabiex il-haddiema jiġu mharrġa f'hiliet godda, jibqgħu fis-suq tax-xogħol u jiġu evitati problemi ta' inklużjoni soċjali. Ghajnuna nġhatat ukoll lis-self-employed u lin-negozji żgħar għax dawn ukoll huma għodda importanti fl-ekonomija ta' Malta. Barra minn hekk kien hemm enfasi fuq is-sens ta' imprenditorija fil-haddiema u ż-żagħżagħ Maltin. L-Unjoni Ewropea u s-sħubija ta' Malta fiż-żona Ewro għinu sabiex dan jitwettaq, u l-użu tal-fondi Ewropej kattu l-investment kemm fis-suq tax-xogħol kif ukoll fil-haddiema nfishom. L-Onorevoli esprima t-tama tiegħu fil-gvern biex fis-snin li ġejjin jutilizza bl-aħjar mod il-fondi tal-Pakket ta' Koeżjoni 2014-2020 sabiex ikun hemm investment f'suq tax-xogħol iktar kompetittiv.

6. Dokumenti importanti tal-Konferenza/Laqgħa li tħoss li għandhom ikunu mehmuża jekk ikun il-każ.

Rapport mhejji mir-Rappreżentant tal-Parlament ta' Malta għall-Parlament Ewropew u l-Istituzzjonijiet Ewropej.

7. Jekk tixtieq li titqassam stqarrija għall-istampa mill-Parlament annetti abbozz tal-istqarrija għall-istampa u x-xandir.



A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

**Firma tal-Membru**

04/03/2016

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**Data**

N.B.

- (i) Fil-każ ta' delegazzjoni ta' aktar minn delegat wiehed, jista' jsir rapport wiehed li jingabar mill-kap tad-delegazzjoni li fih jitniżżlu l-interventi kollha u r-rapport jiġi ffirmat minn kull delegat.
- (ii) Inti ġentilment mitlub/a li twassal dan ir-rapport għand l-iSpeaker sa mhux aktar tard minn 10 t'ijiem minn meta tkun intemmet il-konferenza/laqgħa.



*Draft Programme as of 29.01.2015*

## **European Parliamentary Week**

### **The European Semester Cycles 2014 and 2015**

#### Meetings

- Tuesday, 3 February 2015 – 09:00 – 11:00 – Hemicycle
- Tuesday, 3 February 2015 – 11:15– 13:15– Hemicycle / PHS03C50 / P1A002
- Tuesday, 3 February 2015 – 14:45 – 18:00 – Hemicycle

#### Cocktail

- Tuesday, 3 February 2015 - 13:15 - 14:45 - Yehudi Menuhin

#### Dinner

- Tuesday, 3 February 2015, 19.00 - Members' Dining Room

#### Monday 2 February 2015

Evening: arrival of delegations and possibly meetings of political groups<sup>1</sup>

#### Tuesday 3 February 2015

**09.00 - 11.00 Plenary session: The European Economic Governance framework: stock taking and future challenges**

*Plenary session chaired by Mr. Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament*

09.00 – 09.10 Opening address by **Mr. Martin Schulz**, President of the European Parliament

09.10 – 09.20 Address by **Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker**, President of the European Commission

09.20 – 09.30 Economic governance from an EU perspective: Intervention by **Ms Pervenche Berès**, rapporteur of the INI report on ' *The review of the economic governance framework: stocktaking and challenges*'

09.30 – 09.40 Economic governance from a national perspective: Intervention by **Ms. Lolita Čigāne**, representative of the Parliament of Latvia

09.40 – 09.50 Economic governance from a national perspective: Intervention by **Mr. Norbert Barthle**, CDU spokesperson on Budgetary issues in the Bundestag

09.50 – 11.00 Exchange of views

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<sup>1</sup> Indicative timing. Meetings of the political groups might take place during alternative slots.

- 11.15 – 13.15 Interparliamentary committee meetings (*in parallel*)**
- Interparliamentary committee meeting organised by the committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs**
- Interparliamentary committee meeting organised by the committee on Employment and Social Affairs**
- Interparliamentary committee meeting organised by the committee on Budgets**
- 13.15 – 14.45 Cocktail – Sandwich lunch / Possible meetings of the political groups<sup>1</sup>**
- 14.45 – 18.00 Plenary session: The review of the EU2020 strategy and priorities for the 2015 European Semester Cycle**  
*Plenary session co-chaired by Mr. Roberto Gualtieri, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Ms. Marita Ulvskog, Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*
- 14.45 – 15.00 Conclusions of the interparliamentary meetings and remarks on the 2015 European Semester Cycle by the **ECON, EMPL and BUDG Chairs**
- 15.00 – 15.10 Address by **Mr. Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness
- 15.10– 15.20 Address by **Ms. Marianne Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility
- 15.20 – 17.45 Exchange of views
- 17.45 - 18.00 Concluding remarks by **Mr. Roberto Gualtieri**, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on the European Semester Cycles 2014 and 2015 and on future challenges of economic governance reform
- 19.00 Dinner** co-hosted by **Mr. Martin Schulz**, President of the European Parliament, and by **Ms. Ināra Mūrniece**, Speaker of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia (*by invitation only*)
- The dinner will include an informal discussion between all participants

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<sup>1</sup> Indicative timing. Meetings of the political groups might take place during alternative slots.



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*Projet de programme arrêté au 29.01.2015*

## **Semaine parlementaire européenne**

**Les cycles 2014 et 2015 du Semestre européen**

### Réunions

- mardi, 3 février 2015 – 09:00 – 11:00 – Hémicycle
- mardi, 3 février 2015 – 11:15– 13:15– Hémicycle / PHS03C50 / P1A002
- mardi, 3 février 2015 – 14:45 – 18:00 – Hémicycle

### Réception

- Tuesday, 3 February 2015 - 13:15 - 14:45 - Yehudi Menuhin

### Dîner

- Tuesday, 3 February 2015, 19.00 - Restaurant des membres

### Lundi 2 février 2015

Soir : arrivée des délégations et éventuellement réunions des groupes politiques<sup>1</sup>

### Mardi 3 février 2015

- 09.00 - 11.00** Session plénière : La cadre européen de gouvernance économique : bilan et enjeux  
*Session plénière présidée par M. Martin Schulz, Président du Parlement européen*
- 09.00 – 09.10 Allocution d'ouverture de **M. Martin Schulz**, Président du Parlement européen
- 09.10 – 09.20 Allocution de **M. Jean-Claude Juncker**, Président de la Commission européenne
- 09.20 – 09.30 Gouvernance économique, perspective européenne : intervention de **Mme Pervenche Berès**, rapporteure pour le rapport d'initiative "*Examen du cadre de gouvernance économique: bilan et enjeux*"
- 09.30 – 09.40 Gouvernance économique, perspective nationale: intervention de **Mme Lolita Čigāne**, députée au parlement letton
- 09.40 – 09.50 Gouvernance économique, perspective nationale: intervention de **M. Norbert Barthlé**, porte-parole de la CDU sur les questions budgétaires au Bundestag
- 09.50 – 11.00 Échange de vues

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<sup>1</sup> Horaire indicatif. Les réunions des groupes politiques pourraient avoir lieu à un autre moment.

- 11.15 – 13.15 Réunion interparlementaire des commissions (*en parallèle*)**
- Réunion de commission interparlementaire organisée par la Commission des affaires économiques et monétaires
- Réunion de commission interparlementaire organisée par la Commission de l'Emploi et des Affaires sociales
- Réunion de commission interparlementaire organisée par la Commission des Budgets
- 13.30 – 14.45 Cocktail – déjeuner sandwich / réunions éventuelles des groupes politiques<sup>1</sup>**
- 14.45 – 18.00 Session plénière: L'examen de la stratégie UE 2020 et les priorités pour le cycle 2015 du Semestre européen**  
*Session plénière co-présidée par M. Roberto Gualtieri, Président de la Commission des affaires économiques et monétaires et par Mme Marita Ulvskog, Président faisant fonction de la Commission de l'Emploi et des Affaires sociales*
- 14.45 – 15.00 Conclusions des réunions interparlementaires et remarques sur le cycle 2015 du Semestre européen par les **présidents des commissions ECON, EMPL et BUDG**
- 15.00 – 15.10 Allocution de **M. Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-Président de la Commission européenne en charge de l'emploi, la croissance, l'investissement et la compétitivité
- 15.10 – 15.30 Allocution de **Mme Marianne Thyssen**, Commissaire européenne pour l'Emploi, les affaires sociales, la compétence et la mobilité des travailleurs
- 15.40 – 15.50
- 15.50 – 17.45 Échange de vues
- 17.45 - 18.00 Conclusions par **M. Roberto Gualtieri**, Président de la Commission des affaires économiques et monétaires, sur les cycles 2014 et 2015 du Semestre européen et sur les défis de la réforme de la gouvernance économique
- 19.00 Dîner** offert conjointement par **M. Martin Schulz**, Président du Parlement européen, et **Mme Ināra Mūrniece**, Présidente de la *Saeima* lettone (sur invitation uniquement)
- Discussion informelle entre tous les participants

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<sup>1</sup> Horaire indicatif. Les réunions des groupes politiques pourraient avoir lieu à un autre moment.



**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**  
**European Parliamentary Week**

**The European Semester Cycles 2014 - 2015**

Interparliamentary Committee Meeting  
organised by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)

**Tuesday, 3 February 2015 - 11:15 - 13:15 - Paul-Henri Spaak (PHS) building - room P1A002**

**11.15 - 12.15 Employment and social indicators' scoreboard in the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP), taking account of youth unemployment**

11.15 - 11.25 Opening address by **Marita Ulvskog**, Acting Chair of the EMPL Committee

11.25 - 11.30 Address by **Maurizio Sacconi**, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Labour and Social Security of the Italian Senate (*Senato della Repubblica*)

11.30 - 11.35 Address by a representative of the Spanish Parliament (name tbc) (*Cortes Generales*)

11.35 - 12.15 Exchange of views between Members of the European Parliament and National Parliaments

**12.15 - 13.15 Impact of the Commission's Investment Plan (including the objectives of the European Fund for Strategic Investment and the youth employment targets) on job creation**

12.15 - 12.25 Opening address by xxx, Rapporteur on the EMPL opinion on the *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Fund for Strategic Investments and amending Regulations (EU) No 1291/2013 and (EU) No 1316/2013*

12.25 - 12.30 Address by **Edmund Wittbrodt**, Chairman of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Polish Senate (*Senat Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*)

12.30 - 12.35 Address by **Dominic Hannigan**, Chairman of the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs of the Irish Parliament (*Houses of the Oireachtas*)

12.35 - 13.15 Exchange of views between Members of the European Parliament and National Parliaments



*Draft Programme as of 28.01.2015*

## European Parliamentary Week

### THE CONFERENCE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF THE TREATY ON STABILITY, COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE IN THE ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION

#### HEMICYCLE

#### Wednesday 4 February 2015

- 09.00 - 12.00 Plenary session: A European New Deal: stimulating public and private investment for growth and jobs in Europe**  
*Plenary session co-chaired by Mr. Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament, followed by Mr Olli Rehn, Vice-President of the European Parliament, and Ms Ināra Mūrniece, Speaker of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*
- 09.00 - 09.10 Address by **Mr. Martin Schulz**, President of the European Parliament
- 09.10 - 09.20 Address by **Ms Ināra Mūrniece**, Speaker of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia
- 09.20 - 09.30 Address by **Mr. Pierre Moscovici**, European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs Commission
- 09.30 - 09.40 Address by **Mr. Wilhelm Molterer**, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank
- 09.40 - 09.50 Address by **Mr. Jean Arthuis**, Chair of the Committee on Budgets
- 09.50 – 12.00 Exchange of views
- 12.00 – 14.00 Cocktail – Sandwich lunch / Possible meetings of the political groups**
- 14.00 - 16.00 Plenary session: Fiscal consolidation and structural reforms: state of play and best practices in implementing the fiscal compact**  
*Plenary session co-chaired by Roberto Gualtieri, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, and Mr. Kārlis Šadurskis, Chair of the Budget and Finance (Taxation) Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*
- 14.00 - 14.10 Address by **Mr. Jānis Reirs**, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Latvia
- 14.10 - 14.20 Address by **Mr. Jeroen Dijsselbloem**, President of the eurogroup
- 14.20 – 14.30 Address by **Mr. Olli Rehn**, Vice-President of the European Parliament
- 14.30 – 16.00 Exchange of views

**16.00 – 18.00 Plenary session: Strengthening the Social dimension of the EMU**

*Plenary session co-chaired by Ms. Marita Ulvskog, Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, and Ms. Aija Barča, Chair of the Social and Employment Matters Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia*

16.00 - 16.10 Address by **Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis**, European Commission Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue

16.10 - 16.20 **Ms. Marita Ulvskog**, Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

16.20 - 16.30 Address by **Mr. Pierre-Alain Muet**, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee in the French National Assembly

16.30 - 16.40 Address by **Mr. Guy Ryder**, International Labour Organisation Director-General

16.30 – 18.00 Exchange of views



ЕВРОПЕЙСКО ПАРЛАМЕНТ ПАРЛАМЕНТО ЕУРОПЕО ЕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΠΑΡΛΑΜΕΝΤ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
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*Projet de programme arrêté au 28.01.2015*

## **Semaine parlementaire européenne**

### **CONFÉRENCE INTERPARLEMENTAIRE SUR L'ARTICLE 13 DU TRAITÉ SUR LA STABILITÉ, LA COORDINATION ET LA GOUVERNANCE**

#### **HÉMICYCLE**

**Mercredi 4 février 2015**

- 09.00 - 12.00** **Session plénière: un *New Deal* européen : encourager l'investissement public et privé pour la croissance et l'emploi en Europe**  
*Session plénière co-présidée par M. Martin Schulz, Président du Parlement européen, suivi par M. Olli Rehn, Vice-Président du Parlement européen, et par Mme Ināra Mūrniece, Présidente de la Saeima lettonne*
- 09.00 - 09.10 Allocation de **M. Martin Schulz**, Président du Parlement européen
- 09.10 - 09.20 Allocation de **Mme Ināra Mūrniece**, Présidente de la *Saeima* de la Lettonie
- 09.20 - 09.30 Allocation de **M. Pierre Moscovici**, Commissaire européen pour les affaires économiques et financières, la fiscalité et les douanes
- 09.30 - 09.40 Allocation de **M. Wilhelm Molterer**, Vice-Président de la Banque européenne d'investissement
- 09.40 - 09.50 Allocation de **M. Jean Arthuis**, Président de la Commission du Budget
- 09.50 – 12.00 Échange de vues
- 12.00 – 14.00** **Cocktail – déjeuner sandwich / possibles réunions des groupes politiques**
- 14.00 - 16.00** **Session plénière : Consolidation budgétaire et réformes structurelles : état des lieux et bonnes pratiques dans la mise en œuvre du pacte budgétaire**  
*Session plénière co-présidée par M. Roberto Gualtieri, Président de la Commission des affaires économiques et monétaires, et M. Kārlis Šadurskis, Président de la Commission du Budget et des Finances (fiscalité) de la Saeima lettonne*
- 14.00 - 14.10 Allocation de **M. Jānis Reirs**, Ministre des finances de la Lettonie
- 14.10 - 14.20 Allocation de **M. Jeroen Dijsselbloem**, Président de l'eurogroupe
- 14.20 – 14.30 Allocation de **M. Olli Rehn**, Vice-Président du Parlement européen
- 14.30 – 16.00 Échange de vues

**16.00 – 18.00 Session plénière: Renforcer la dimension sociale de l'UEM**

*Session plénière co-présidée par Mme Marita Ulvskog, Président faisant fonction de la Commission de l'Emploi et des Affaires sociales, et Mme Aija Barča, Présidente de la Commission de l'emploi et des affaires sociales de la Saeima lettone*

- 16.00 - 16.10 Allocution de **M. Valdis Dombrovskis**, Vice-Président de la Commission européenne en charge de l'Euro et du dialogue social
- 16.10 - 16.20 **Mme Marita Ulvskog**, Présidente faisant fonction de la Commission de l'Emploi et des Affaires sociales
- 16.20 - 16.30 Allocution de **M. Pierre-Alain Muet**, Vice-Président de la Commission des finances à l'Assemblée nationale française
- 16.30 - 16.40 Allocution de **M. Guy Ryder**, Directeur-Général de l'Organisation internationale du Travail
- 16.30 – 18.00 Échange de vues

BRUSSELS, 04 JANUARY 2015

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMETARY WEEK

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THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER CYCLES 2014  
AND 2015

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THE CONFERENCE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF  
THE TREATY ON STABILITY,  
COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE IN  
THE ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION

KENNETH CURMI  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
PARLIAMENT OF MALTA TO THE  
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND  
EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY WEEK

THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER CYCLES 2014 AND 2015

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**PLENARY SESSION: THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK:  
STOCK TAKING AND FUTURE CHALLENGES**

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**Mr Martin SCHULZ**, President of the European Parliament, opened the conference, addressing both the Parliamentarians and the National Representatives in his opening speech, noting that more than one hundred and twenty parliamentarians from twenty-six countries were taking part in the conference.

Mr SCHULZ emphasised that National Parliamentarians and European Parliamentarians were partners not rivals, and that EU integration is only possible through collaboration.

The Lisbon Treaty provided conferred enhanced powers on National Parliaments, in particular through subsidiarity and increased divulgence of information, and the importance of enhanced cooperation was now being recognizing, especially through Interparliamentary Committee Meetings.

Still, the Union was facing challenges and Mr SCHULZ reminded everyone that Europe was stumbling from one crisis summit to another.

The importance of National Parliaments in bringing Europe out of crises was not underestimated, and that is why the Commission must submit its Country-Specific Recommendations to the National Parliaments before proposing them to the Council. This also increases the accountability in Union policy-making.

Democratic accountability is just as important in national parliaments, and the European Parliament must play a stronger role in seeking cooperation with National Parliaments in order to strengthen accountability and close the democratic deficit in the Union.

**Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER**, President of the European Commission, agreed that the Union is a joint enterprise which must stand the test of accountability.

Economic "governance" and "semester" are alien concepts to many citizens, and Mr JUNCKER stated his preference for the term **economic government** rather than governance.

The European Semester gives greater coherence to process which were launched recently - it is not a literary exercise, it is not a friendly get together around a glass of wine but serious business.

Ownership by national parliaments and member states is still lacking in the process of the European Semester.

The six-pack and two-pack are being subjected to an exercise drawing up an inventory of weaknesses and it is possible to revise the two texts; try to get them down to ground level, conveying political messages people can understand.

The *Juncker Investment Plan* attempts to get to the real economy, which is why the individualization of projects was a task left to the European Investment Bank.

Mr JUNCKER stressed that flexibility was introduced in the growth and stability pact, not to transform it into a flexibility pact but to factor in the need for growth and investment.

Commissioners must reach the people and not stay in Brussels, Mr JUNCKER added.

Finally, Mr JUNCKER said that rules surrounding the country recommendations must become more predictable and must be revisited, but in the end must apply to all member states, indiscriminately.

**Ms Pervenche BERÈS**, rapporteur of the INI report on *The review of the economic governance framework: stocktaking and challenges*, stressed that problems - unemployment, stagnant growth and deflationary spiral, as well as growing divergences between member states - must be addressed. Ms BERÈS insisted that we must ask ourselves whether we, as a Union, like the idea of economic governance. She welcomed the Juncker plan as a positive signal and much is expected to come out of it.

Nevertheless, Ms BERÈS said that we must not forget the investment deficit currently present in the Union, and the plan itself forces questions on how economic governance functions. The investment plan is welcome, but is no panacea. The efficiency of economic governance systems must be monitored and strengthened, and more trust instilled - the Union has matured enough to talk about the right policies to follow. What is needed a debate: a democratic debate, an intelligent debate where we decide on the policies that are needed.

Ms BERÈS suggested a more communitarian approach.

The long term requirement of the union for long term development - the 1% rule for debt reduction presents a number of problems. Ms BERÈS underlined that the social pillar is missing, and opined that fiscal policy must be discussed. She appealed for a shared objective allowing people to make decisions in a global context and allowing the Union to move forward.

**Ms Lolita ČIGĀNE**, representative of the Parliament of Latvia, spoke about economic governance from a national perspective. She noted how a statement of vision for economic development is present in the US and missing in the EU but explained this by recalling that the EU does indeed have an instrument -the annual growth survey - which however is not fully realised.

Ms ČIGĀNE mentioned the three pillars: (i) a coordinated boost to investment; (ii) a renewed commitment to structural reforms and (iii) pursuing fiscal responsibility: control over debt and deficit levels.

It is important for National Parliaments not to feel left out or pushed around by a bigger body; otherwise public opinion will be negative toward the union, thinking that reforms are not for their own good, but for the good of someone else.

**Mr Norbert BARTHLE**, CDU spokesperson on Budgetary issues in the Bundestag, also speaking about economic governance from a national perspective, noted that Europe is not doing well at the moment: Europe is associated with crises and Eurosceptic parties are becoming stronger. There seem to be lots of rules, but no implementation throughout the Union.

Mr BARTHLE stressed that flexibility is dangerous - rules must be implemented, not played around with. It might be painful, but reliability is essential if trust is to be built in Europe. Credibility is decisive. In Germany many are critical of the bond purchases by the ECB. It is important that

governments make the necessary efforts - excessive deficits must not be given more room to expand. Growth and budget consolidation go together. Mr BARTHLE also declared that, in the short term, structural reforms have no negative budgetary effect - in fact they relieve budgets.

Proper implementation is the basic concept of currency union and all countries must adhere.

Mr BARTHLE suggested small but practicable steps forward: more investment, more innovation and more competitiveness. Juncker's investment program goes precisely in the right direction.

The Union needs more investment but this cannot be financed by more debt.

**Mr L'uboš BLAHA**, Chair of the Committee on European Affairs of the Slovakian National Council, opined that the free market liberalism was the root of the problem: free market liberalism had created the problem: it cannot be solved with more free market liberalism. The crisis was brought by free market liberalism, more free market liberalism won't solve it. Austerity measures are killing the economy and the TTIP may be dangerous to the social fabric.

**Mr Eduardo CABRITA**, Chair of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Public Administration of the Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, noted that the Troika approach was a mistake and needed to shift to more inter-governmental debate and debate with national parliaments. The new investment plan is positive and strongly supported by Portugal.

**Mr Kalev KALLEMET'S**, representing the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Estonian Riigikogu declared to support the committee to remain strong and not change the policies of the Union.

**Mr Mečislovas ZASČIURINSKAS**, from the Committee on Social Affairs and Labour of the Lithuanian *Seimas*, asked what have we learnt from the crisis? He claimed that Europe was not ready for such a crisis, neither in a political or economical way. The crisis did not start in Europe, so why is it that the US economy is growing and Europe's is not? The European economic and social model is not viable - the wealth gap is growing. A two speed Europe has taken hold - people who voted for the European treaty voted for more cohesion. It is important to create a social Europe in all member states. Economic governance must be strengthened, but social governance must be ensured, otherwise the former will fail.

**Mr Pierre-Alain MUET**, Vice-Chair, Committee on Finances of the French *Assemblée Nationale* stressed that coordination of Economic policies throughout the Union is necessary to get back to growth.

**Mr Srđan GJURKOVIĆ**, Chair, Committee on Finance and Central Budget, from the Croatian Parliament said that economic governance is integral to the ECB's monetary policy - the problem lies however in the sphere of the real economy. In Croatia the investment cycle is expected to be better and more fairness introduced. Competitiveness can bring progress, but austerity is an obstacle. Mr GJURKOVIĆ also noted how only 10-15 % of country specific recommendations have been implemented. He suggested that the economic reality in the member states should always be taken into consideration to ensure better implementation of the CSRs.

**Mr Jean Paul DENANOT** from the European Parliament remarked how the future of the EU economy will be centred around innovation and how this innovation must be focussed on creating jobs - innovation being pure research, applied research and the industrious use of this research. Mr DENANOT noted that business creates jobs and wealth but not in a linear fashion. SMEs play a key

role, so we must ask: what will Europe do to ensure they develop further? Is public sector support for that possible?

**Mr JUNCKER**, in his replies, stated that the investment program is looking for private sector investment, not debt-financed investment. The problem currently is that the capital that exists does not find its way into the real economy, particularly not to the SMEs - investment capital must go to the real economy without introducing additional debt. Mr JUNCKER asserted that he is not in favour of budgetary austerity - this is not an end in itself, it causes social problems and has negative effects on social cohesion. However, he does not agree that any kind of budgetary rigour is synonymous to austerity - the union must be wholly responsible with its finances. Irresponsible behaviour must be stopped.

Rigour will be the basis for all future European Union policy.

**Mr Edmund WITTBRODT**, Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Polish *Sejm*, expressed his country's huge expectations of the investment plan that is being put forward and the new resources linked to strategic investments. Nevertheless, doubts remain about the leverage effect that is being attributed to this fund. There is a concern that this commission is being too optimistic: is the private sector really in a position to commit to this kind of European project? These are after all high risk investments.

**Lord John Quentin DAVIES**, from the UK House of Lords, remarked that the Eurozone has gone through many achievements, including the banking union, fiscal pacts, monetary union, decisions taken under the pressure of crises. Patience is needed for the quantitative easing programs of the ECB. The union must always be based on the principles of rules and observing them. A middle-way or compromise with Greece must be achieved but not at the expense of unravelling the considerable progress the Union has made through its policies, including in Greece.

**Mr Pedro SAURA GARCÍA**, from the Committee on Treasury and Public Administration of the Spanish Chamber of Deputies said that things must change in the union because social and economic results have been disappointing. Tax harmonisation seems pretty illusory: the Union must have more progressive taxation. Mr SAURA GARCÍA recalled that the redistribution of wealth is one of the key goals of the European Union and progress must be made on that. Mr SAURA GARCÍA concluded that a progressive fiscal policy would ensure that we can contribute in creating jobs and increase productivity, and invited Commissioners to engage with National Parliaments.

**Mr Paolo GUERRIERI PALEOTTI** from the Italian Senate agreed that to address the main challenge of legitimacy facing all European institutions, more effective policies are needed, especially to relaunch economic growth, otherwise Eurosceptics will only grow stronger. Monetary and fiscal investment that can stimulate both weak aggregate demand and supply weaknesses implemented at the level of the Eurozone as a whole. Co-ordination with national parliaments is important but only in the context of the union as a whole.

**Mr Andrej HUNKO**, from the German Bundestag, appealed for a basic revision and a new approach to be implemented, a change from the neo-liberal program upheld and proposed thus far.

**Mr Georges GILKINET**, from the Committee on Finance and Budget of the Belgian Chamber of Representatives, said that more must be needed to solve the economic problems currently facing the EU as well as the democratic deficit. The scope and focus of the investment plan is ambiguous, which is why the Union needs a vision and a clear set of objectives.

**Mr Peter SIMON** from the European Parliament, appealed for a constructive debate. The Union must cater for different countries and different cultures: a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work. It must also invest without piling up debt. A dialogue between the European Parliament and National Parliaments must be maintained.

**Mr Kimmo SASI**, Chair Committee on Finance of the Finnish *Eduskunta*, stressed the importance of paying attention to interest rates - which are a very effective scoreboard - and reminded politicians of their responsibilities.

**Ms Skevi KOUTRA-KOUKOUMA**, the Deputy Chairperson of the Cypriot Committee on Labour and Social Insurance, talked about the difficulty of simplifying the complicated structures currently existing, and expressed doubt on the possibility of reaching the lofty objectives listed in the Juncker plan.

**Ms Birutė VĖSAITĖ**, from the Lithuanian Committee on European Affairs, remarked that national governments rarely implemented the structural reforms recommended by the Commission, and opined that perhaps these should be made binding.

**Ms Marisa MATIAS**, from the European Parliament, stressed that the people who need the money most, people from the Southern countries, must not be forgotten, and any plans must address the needs of the latter better.

**Mr BATHLE** concluded by saying that the exchange showed that different parliaments have different views.

**Ms ČIGĀNE** remarked how much of the debate circulated around either fiscal responsibility or stimulate growth. Structural reforms must be implemented in order for the investment package to work. High levels of inequality are directly linked to structural reforms.

**Ms BERÈS** stated that the Unions need to learn how to set up tools for taxation and redistribution. The debate must be opened because the issue of underinvestment is more critical than relative debt. The Juncker plan will achieve nothing unless implemented well and followed.

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE MEETING ORGANISED BY THE  
COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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PART I | Employment and social indicators' scoreboard in the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP), taking account of youth unemployment

Chair **Ms Marita ULVSKOG** stressed the importance of having an overview. Precarious employment is one of the biggest problems affecting Europe: one cannot talk about fairness while putting forward proposals that promote social dumping. Likewise, one cannot propose higher retirement ages without actually checking the possibility for people to work longer in their lives. High quality jobs must be made available to European citizens, and in order to create sustainable growth inequality must be reduced.

**Ms Maria del Mar ANGULO MARTINEZ**, from the Spanish Committee on Treasury and Public Administration, shared how her country had seen improvements in the labour market with jobs being created, especially among young people. High rate of people leaving school and low levels of entrepreneurship are still structural problems the country faces. Social exclusion was a danger, so

reforms through measures to promote entrepreneurship and freelancership were implemented. Many have benefitted from these measures. Training contracts and incentives in line with the strategy throughout Spain were also promoted. All Member States should be working in a firm way with the backing of the EU institutions. Both national and EU level initiatives are essential, and a youth guarantee system is essential. Social protection is still a problem throughout the Union, which is why it is important to promote growth in the economy as a whole. Social protection is important for large families and families with family members having a disability.

The Union needs a strategic plan for long-term unemployment. Stable jobs are a priority. Stability is key for recovery.

**Ms Katalin CSÖBÖR**, from the Hungarian National Assembly, stated that her committee had adopted the EU semester with regular meetings and great importance attributed to the Europa 2020 Agenda, concentrating on the Investment plan and SMEs, an important part of the Hungarian economy when it comes to job creation. She stressed the importance of geographical balance when considering funding.

**Mr L'uboš BLAHA**, Chair of the Committee on European Affairs of the Slovakian National Council, agreed with the Chair that the biggest problem the Union currently faces is precarious jobs: businessmen not caring enough for social protection. Social dumping is also a huge problem, and the problem might be coming from the more affluent Western countries keen to protect their business interests.

**Mr Andrej HUNKO**, from the German Bundestag, stated that instruments in the EU show an imbalance - instruments on fiscal policy, six-pack two-pack - few economic coordination policies, few social policy instruments. The scoreboard is not sufficient. The Union has indicators but no mechanisms to take action in the fiscal policy area. The social dimension must be strengthened.

**Mr Javier LOPEZ**, from the European Parliament, remarked that in reality Spain is not doing so well: huge unemployment, many had to emigrate, the reforms have not been successful, huge social demonstrations with trade unions. Solutions must be found. The most vulnerable should be at the forefront of concerns. House evictions under both governments were unfortunately too numerous. Hopefully there will be growth next year but this increase is seemingly not being put in the labour market. Mr LOPEZ concluded by stressing that the wealth gap must not be allowed to continue to grow.

**Ms Tiziana BEGHIN**, from the European Parliament, remarked that indicators are useful to get a mental picture but they do not allow us to see how the situation will develop. The Union needs something which helps to make predictions on future situations in order to choose the appropriate measures and policies in the present. Citizens want to see social progress and prosperity.

**Ms Skevi KOUTRA-KOUKOUMA**, the Deputy Chairperson of the Cypriot Committee on Labour and Social Insurance commented on the Oxfam report on poverty and inequality. Ms KOUTRA-KOUKOUMA stated that policies have done nothing to solve the real problems people in Europe are facing. It is shocking that the billionaires get even richer, and people who are getting hungry are now hungrier. She warned that labour mobility (emigration) should not be a solution since unemployment exists throughout the EU. Salaries are driven down thanks to training programs.

**Mr João FIGUEIREDO**, from the Committee on Social Security and Labour of Portugal, remarked that Portugal has gone through a tough period of alignment. Nevertheless the Portuguese have hope for the future through labour reform process, providing a better job situation than a couple of years ago. Unemployment levels back to 2011 levels. Vocational training is a current priority.

**Mr Mečislovas ZASČIURINSKAS**, from the Committee on Social Affairs and Labour of the Lithuanian *Seimas*, opined that there are not enough resources, while social security and cohesion is not being given the proper attention. The social dimension is directly related to the well-being of people and is therefore of prime importance. Social exclusion grows into political exclusions. Minimum standards for social protections must be defined and enforced.

**Ms Aideen HAYDEN**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Finances of the Irish Senate stated that there had been similar experiences in Ireland but progress, especially in unemployment levels, was being made. She stressed that the future is not going to be built on low quality jobs. There was a growing uncertainty in the Irish labour market. We must deal with these issues as a Union - job security for youth must be ensured through early childhood training and education.

**Ms Jita STEINBRÜCK**, from the European Parliament, said that the Union must work together at the European level but even at the National Parliaments, in order to strengthen our approach to determine what we need to do to fight social exclusion and social dumping. Create jobs for young people and also strong sustainable jobs not zero-hour contracts. There is growing uncertainty in Member States. We must look at the results of the country-specific recommendations and make these binding.

**Mr Antoine BORG**, from the Maltese House of Representatives, stated that he represented a small country but one which despite its size had a lot to offer Europe in its effort to get out of its negative economic situation and solve its problems. He stated that the Maltese believe education is the best tool to solve these problems. He emphasised the importance of restructuring the labour market, and the benefits of retraining. He said that his country actively helped the self-employed and SMEs and promoted entrepreneurship especially in youth because this creates creativity which can help workers attain better mobility and create new markets. EU membership helped and through EU funding Malta could invest more in labour market and workers.

**Mr Emilian PAVEL**, from the European Parliament stated that many look to the east including Romania because labour is cheap, and fiscal incentives in place there: low wages, low taxes. The bridge between the East and the West must be built: young people don't want to emigrate, but they must have job opportunities at home.

**Mr Mário RUIVO**, Vice-Chair, Committee on Social Security and Labour of Portugal stressed that the social dimension must be strengthened. Statistics show a lot of unemployment precarious jobs, more social inequality and more youth unemployment. The troika trying to impose measures did not help: austerity made the problems worse. The EU must set up conditions so that all countries do something to improve the social dimension.

PART II | [Impact of the Commission's Investment Plan \(including the objectives of the European Fund for Strategic Investment and the youth employment targets\) on job creation](#)

**Mr Edmund WITTBRODT**, Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Polish *Sejm*, remarked on the high unemployment rate. He said that his country concentrates on sciences not humanities, and this has proved an effective method. He also suggested that we must not ignore the past: the Lisbon strategy was a promise of something better which in the end did not materialise. With regard to the Juncker plan, there were many high risk investment projects which private industry might not be interested in. The Union needed short-term solutions.

**Mr Dominic HANNIGAN**, Chair of the Joint Committee on European Affairs, from the Irish House of Representatives- Youth unemployment is the biggest challenge the Union faces. Europe

will stagnate if there is no initiative for growth implemented as soon as possible. He welcomed, therefore, the Juncker proposal. Mr HANNIGAN mentioned the intervention of Mr BORG from Malta regarding the impact of SMEs on job creation. He also noted that he had the same worries other colleagues had expressed: the EIB does not usually invest in such high risk investments. Furthermore, long term investment must be balanced with short-term solutions to tackle the immediate problems. The Union must also ensure that jobs are sustainable and high-quality.

**Ms Danuta JAZLOWIECKA**, the rapporteur on the EMPL opinion on the *Proposal for a Regulation on the European Fund for Strategic Investments and amending Regulations (EU) No 1291/2013 and (EU) No 1316/2013*, talked about the implementation of the regulation: a source of hope for the bettering of people's situation in life. She called it a new engine for growth in Europe: a new instrument to give renewed hope for growth. The investment fund is based on 3 pillars - the first pillar is to kickstart initial investment; the second pillar is to have targeted initiatives making sure that the funds meet the need of the real economy; third pillar to provide a more regulatory environment and predictiveness. Ms JAZLOWIECKA stated that the multiplying effect can be achieved: the more Member States, Banks and private investments join, the more benefits can be reaped. Money spent on short term measures do not yield the necessary results. One must however not ignore doubts as to whether this multiplier effect can be reached, given the role of SMEs in the economy: these should be the main beneficiaries of the fund.

**Mr Jacob LUND**, from the Danish Parliament's Committee on European Affairs, sees new opportunities from this investment fund - projects which may increase better distribution of energy. He stressed that we must respect labour market conditions so there is no social dumping in these projects. We must train people who are going to participate in these projects so as to stimulate the participation of young people and get the full benefit from these projects.

**Mr Mečislovas ZASČIURINSKAS** opined that free movement is not necessarily a good thing - there is currently an exodus of young people due to the situation of the country. The country invests but the people leave because of the two-speed Europe. Those young people then create the GDP in the countries they emigrate to, and yet are blamed in these same countries for the problems they are facing.

**Ms Silviya SIMFA**, from the Committee of Social and Employment Matters of Latvia stressed the importance of sustainable and inclusive growth, smart public and private investment programme. She encouraged cooperation with social partners, to ensure better involvement of the latter.

**Mr Piotr NAIMSKI**, from the Polish *Sejm's* Economic Committee, noted the importance of more production in the GDP: productivity is hampered by the climate policy - an extra tax which brings production down. The Juncker plan will be funded from existing funds and may endanger the social cohesion funds. He stressed that there should be no harmonisation of the minimum wage.

**Ms Gabriela CREȚU**, from the Romanian *Senat's* Committee on European Affairs stated that full employment is not a goal of our market-economy: the main goal is to fight inequality. She said that SMEs are better job providers, and yet the Juncker plan is oriented toward the bigger enterprises.

**Ms Laura AGEA**, from the European Parliament, was doubtful of the Juncker plan, and stated that merely redistributing existing resources cannot solve problems. Furthermore, high risk investment will not attract private investors.

**Mr Uroš PRIKL**, Chair, Committee on Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Disability of the Slovenian National Assembly was optimistic about job creation and their quality, however stated that a two speed Europe is detrimental to these goals.

**Mr Enrique CALVET**, from the European Parliament said the problem is that the Union needs long term investment but must tackle short term unemployment. The social aspect must not be ignored, he stressed.

**Mr Emilian PAVEL**, from the European Parliament, opined that infrastructure will help in the short-term to create jobs, but innovation and research secure long-term benefits, and bring value-added. IT and energy are also spheres where the Union needs to devise projects.

**Ms JAZLOWIECKA** said that to avoid exodus the Union must prepare business to provide jobs for youth. Furthermore, national laws that support and stimulate Public-Private Partnership.

The Chair concluded that everyone agrees that the plan is risky, but also that it's a relief that the discussion has started, and the Union must make the most out of this ongoing debate.

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**PLENARY SESSION: THE REVIEW OF THE EU2020 STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES  
FOR THE 2015 EUROPEAN SEMESTER CYCLE**

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**Mr Roberto GUALTIERI**, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, invited the Committees to present their relevant conclusions.

With regard to the committee he chairs, Mr GUALTIERI reported that tax fraud and tax evasion, and tax avoidance and tax planning are two problems that must be tackled at EU level, but a distinction must be made between tax fraud and tax evasion on one hand, which are clearly illegal activities and aggressive tax planning and tax avoidance taking advantage of national loopholes in tax systems which while technically legal are of a questionable moral nature.

He noted that the National Parliaments have a crucial role to play, especially when it comes to harmonisation, convergence and cooperation. He welcomes the first steps taken by the Commission and the Member States in this area.

Mr GUALTIERI called the Banking Union a revolution, and insisted that there must be greater scrutiny and accountability.

He stressed the importance of not putting the burden of intervention in case of crisis on the taxpayer.

**Ms Marita ULVSKOG**, from the European Parliament and Acting Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, said that the goal for Europe should be to create employment through sustainable and high-quality jobs. She emphasises the need to strengthen the social dimension of the EMU and introduce social policy measures.

With regard to the Investment Plan, Ms ULVSKOG said political will must be strong for it to be successful. Member States must be committed to the plan, and private investment must be attracted. She also mentioned the need to ensure projects are based on their job-creation potential, and the inclusion of SMEs which have an important role to play.

**Mr Jean ARTHUIS**, Chair of the Committee on Budgets, stated how payment delays were damaging to investment, as well as to the Union's own credibility. May's election results point to the current lack of trust in the European Union. Lack of trust in the EU must be addressed.

He stressed the need to strengthen relations between National Parliaments and the European Parliament. National Parliaments rarely have control on their national budget - Governments thus have a huge responsibility. The Mid-Term Review of the MFF is a good indicator, and an indispensable tool in fostering a healthy economic environment. Governments must take on their commitments. The European Budget is a formidable tool to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives.

Mr ARTHUIS also said that CSRs should be debated in the plenary session of each national parliament.

**Mr Jytki KATAINEN**, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, stated that progress on targets has been uneven. Climate, Energy and Education are doing well, whereas Research and Development, Poverty and Economy are problematic spheres. A Review of the Europe 2020 is in order but we must first present a synthesis of the main findings by the Commission, and a report on the state of play of the 2020 targets and only then proposals for review can be presented.

The European Parliament has played an important role since the launch of the strategy. The Commission hopes this collaboration continues.

The Semester cycle is one of the most important tools of the 2020 Strategy. There is an important link here with the Investment Plan

The 2015 Annual Growth Survey proposed a focus on (i) boosting investment; (ii) renewing commitment to structural reforms; and (iii) pursuing fiscal responsibility.

The Commission is looking forward to hearing the views of the National Parliaments.

**Mr Darius ROSATI**, rapporteur on the Semester, noted that the CSRs are not being fully implemented. He also noted there were different views on causes of crises and policies; nevertheless there is broad consensus with regard to the 3-pillar approach.

Mr ROSATI stressed the importance for National Parliaments, as well as National Governments, to take ownership.

**Mr Sergio GUTIERREZ PRIETO**, rapporteur on the AGS, said that economic policies in the EU must be coordinated, and National Parliaments must be involved more. He noted that there is a lack of democratic legitimacy. National Parliaments must feel part of the process. We must ask ourselves: will fiscal consolidation be able to create jobs and stimulate growth?

Mr GUTIERREZ PRIETO stressed that the entire reform strategy must be reviewed, especially with regard to those structural reforms on employment. He also emphasised the need to bring the Social Dimension back.

**Mr Andreas SCHWAB**, reporting on the Single Market Governance, highlighted the importance of co-decision, where Member States have a significant role to play. The Single Market should play a more important part in the European Semester. Governments have to ensure that the European Union market is more advantageous to citizens.

He said that the European Semester needs to be more than just an exchange: it is a tool which can enlighten us on why certain states are finding difficulties in implementing reforms.

**Mr Manuel SARRAZIN**, Committee on the EU Affairs of the Bundestag said that the European Semester is important for the Europe 2020, but the public debate is conspicuous by its absence. Member States are not engaging their citizens enough on EU matters. National Parliaments must be more involved so that an EU-phile environment is fostered.

**Mr Ivo OLIVEIRA**, from the Portuguese Committee on European Affairs, welcomed the Juncker Plan, though expressed doubts on the multiplier effect.

**Mr Srdan GJURKOVIĆ**, Chair, Committee on Finance and Central Budget, of the Croatian Parliament, remarked that private sector investment is important to ensure fiscal consolidation and financial stability, yet low-interest rates are problematic in securing investment.

**Mr Richard YUNG**, from the French *Sénat*, stated that low growth rates and high unemployment means Europe must act swiftly and robustly.

**Ms Ivana MALETIĆ**, from the European Parliament, stressed the need for higher coordination.

**Mr Andrzej GAŁAŻEWSKI**, Vice-Chair, Committee on European Union Affairs of the Polish *Sejm*, said there must be flexibility in the EU2020: we must recognize that it's SMEs which creates jobs so we must facilitate their operation.

**Mr Paulo SÁ**, from the Committee on Budget, Finance and Public Administration of the Portuguese *Assembleia Da República*, said the results of the Troika program contradict the objectives to create high-quality jobs. In Portugal, the labour market situation is extremely worrying.

**Mr Paolo GUERRIERI PALEOTTI**, from the Committee on Budget of the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, said that almost no goal has been achieved from the Europa 2020 strategy. The mid-term review should be the opportunity to redefine almost radically this strategy, particularly in linking the strategy with the European Semester.

**Ms Pervenche BERÈS**, from the European Parliament, said that long-term investment should finance a change, particularly in the environment. Thus the price of carbon is essential - the Union must have visibility on that. The Digital aspect of the Plan on the other hand, must see the benefits of investments here go to the general public, and not by large companies such as Google, Facebook, amazon, etc.

**Mr Karel FIEDLER**, from the Committee on Budget of the Czech Chamber of Deputies referred to the wealth gap and said that investment should go to create new jobs, but also ensure that many of the working class come out of poverty.

**Mr GUALTIERI** concluded the session by welcoming the fruitful discussion which confirmed the importance of interparliamentary cooperation.

Mr GUALTIERI reiterated that it's government, not merely governance. He said that CSRs should be more binding but also more democratic. Without ownership from Member States, there cannot be reform.

The Investment Plan still raises questions. The Juncker Plan should be a tool to boost growth and create jobs and not merely redistribute investment. SMEs must be involved. High quality jobs with decent salaries must be a priority. A Europe-wide minimum salary should be considered. Part-time contracts are a problem; other jobs, on the other hand, are over-paid.

Mr GUALTIERI stressed that National Parliaments should have a more direct relationship with the Commission.

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY WEEK

THE CONFERENCE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF THE TREATY ON STABILITY,  
COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE IN THE ECONOMIC AND  
MONETARY UNION

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PLENARY SESSION: A EUROPEAN NEW DEAL: STIMULATING PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH AND JOBS IN EUROPE

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**Mr Martin SCHULZ**, President of the European Parliament, opened the session.

Mr SCHULZ recalled how the fiscal compact is an attempt to create a fiscal union beyond the control of parliamentarians bypassing the Commission, and how the European Parliament fought for maintaining these issues within the Community method. He also expressed the wish to learn from the experience of the National Parliaments in implementing it.

So far, he said, the European Union had focussed on creating a deeper fiscal union without considering the social dimension. Yet social criteria are not different from budgetary rules: they must be monitored and abuses must be stopped, just as economic conditions are monitored and abuses punished. He mentioned the Commission's scoreboard on key employment and social indicators to complement the existing macro-economic imbalances scoreboard.

The European Parliament will be closely scrutinizing the Investment Plan and putting forth proposals to improve it: setting the plan on a legitimate legal basis is one of the priorities.

**Ms Ināra MŪRNIECE**, Speaker of the *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, appealed for a delicate balance between fiscal, structural and monetary measures. The European Union must think about its future role and competitiveness in the world, while keeping true to its values including solidarity and work-life balance.

Through the representatives of the National Parliaments, Ms MŪRNIECE added, citizens enjoy a democratic connection to the decision making.

**Mr Pierre MOSCOVICI**, European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs Commission, said that boosting investment and employment is the top priority the Commission has for the people of Europe. The Plan is essential to re-launch economic growth in Europe and overcome the risk of stagnation, the goal being to mobilize investment toward the real economy. Most notably the plan intends to mobilize 315 billion euros for investment.

There will be no negative impact on the EU budget: the idea is to use public money differently and more efficiently. The idea is to launch a catalyst effect and draw in other financial resources, mainly from private sources.

Investment in digital connection, energy, education, transport and infrastructure will be prominent. Better waste treatment and recycling and other investments with the needs of the future economy in mind are envisaged. Efficiency will be key to ensure the best return on investment is attained. Barriers to investment will be brought down, and the internal market needs to be improved, particularly in the service and digital sectors.

Funding for businesses - SMEs in particular - also needs a rethinking. Financial markets must fund the real economy.

A legal basis is urgently needed in order to put the plan into operation.

**Mr Wilhelm MOLTERER**, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank, addressed the national parliaments representatives saying that they are key into ensuring investment happens.

The completion of the internal market and introducing structural reforms as well as removing barriers to investment through better regulation are high priorities in reaching the ultimate goal of increasing investment itself.

More investment means more employment, and is the first step in solving the social problems Europe faces.

Mr MOLTERER said that one of the key reasons that investment is down is the lack of confidence in the investment climate in Europe and the regulatory uncertainty. Market fragmentation is also a problem hindering investment. The tight fiscal space and the regulatory response to the crisis have put Member States and Banks in an economical straightjacket.

The Union needs to use public funds better: it must use public money in a way as to attract private investment.

The Fund has two financial legs: one via the European Investment Fund to dedicate money especially for the SMEs: to increase the capacity for SME's lending: start-ups and kick-starts. The second leg is the facility to support infrastructure investment and innovation investment.

A third leg would be the advisory hub, a joint initiative by the EIB and the Commission: both technical and financial advice are alluded to here.

**Mr Jean ARTHUIS**, Chair of the Committee on Budgets, called the Juncker Plan the beginning of a response to the crisis facing the European Union. The problems of the Eurozone, he believes, are largely due to a lack of proper governance.

Mr ARTHUIS appealed to Parliamentarians to contribute to better the governance and democratic legitimacy of the Union. Citizens are looking for decisions, and parliamentarians must deliver. Parliamentary scrutiny needs to be present.

Mr ARTHUIS said that what was needed was not only *governance*, but *government*.

Finally, Mr ARTHUIS concluded by calling for an effort to reinstitute trust in the European Union.

**Mr Kalev KALLEMETS**, from the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Estonian *Riigikogu* opined that being a millionaire is not a material element in itself but a "measure of achievement", and stressed that it is important not to suppress the entrepreneurial attitude.

**Mr Joachim POß**, from the Committee on EU Affairs of the German *Bundestag*, called the new deal a historical ideal and model, and appealed to all that this is an opportunity not to be missed: it shouldn't be talked to death, and given the go-ahead as the future of Europe relies on it. The regions that need to be helped must find the necessary assistance.

**Mr Alfred SANT**, from the European Parliament, highlighted an interesting but serious problem. Since most budgets are not worked out on accrual but on a cash basis, no distinction is made between expenditure on investment and other recurrent expenditure. Treating investment in the same way as other expenditure, allows governments to cut from investment, this being easier and politically expedient, in order to maintain their budget expenditure within the maximum of 3% of GDP, as per the Stability and Growth Pact.

Thus, Mr SANT added, it seems to be an unintended consequence of the SGP rules to incentivize governments in reducing investment expenditure. He said that incremental public investment that national governments undertake in their own economies should be subject to the same logic applied to financial contributions to the Strategic Investment Fund, which will be excluded from consideration under SGP rules.

**Lord Lyndon Henry HARRISON**, Chair, Sub-Committee on EU Economic and Financial Affairs of the House of Lords, said the single market is the quickest route to jobs and growth but many national parliaments are holding up the process.

**Ms Elisa FERREIRA**, from the European Parliament, congratulated the Commission on the investment fund and stressed that a new dynamic is needed in the EU: without breathing space the economy cannot function. However, she noted with sadness that most of the restructuring was made at the expense of public investments, especially in those economies that were most fragile.

**Mr MOSCOVICI** in his replies stressed that Europe must maintain its position in the world economy, and this plan was only one step in that direction.

**Mr MOLTERER** assured everyone that the multiplier effect will be 1:15, and that this is a safe estimate.

As for the projects, the EIB will choose the projects, and these must be financially, technically and environmentally sound.

Furthermore, Mr MOLTERER said he expected to see Member State involvement.

**Mr ARTHUIS** on his part insisted that the legal basis must be established quickly as the matter is urgent: inertia inflicts damage and the Commission needs the legal tools to implement its proposed measures.

**Mr Paolo GUERRIERI PALEOTTI**, from the Committee on Budget of the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, said that medium and long-term, private and public investment is crucial for the European economy to get back on its feet.

**Mr Richard YUNG**, from the French *Sénat*, called the debate paradoxical, given that part of the effort so far was to reduce public investment, and yet Member State contribution is now being requested: where is the money to fund such contributions going to come from?

**Mr Paulo SÁ**, from the Committee on Budget, Finance and Public Administration of the Portuguese *Assembleia Da República*, talked about the conditions required for growth to materialize. Austerity imposed by the Troika hindered that growth in Portugal. The fiscal consolidation measures affected private investment.

**Mr Kimmo SASI**, Chair Committee on Finance of the Finnish *Eduskunta*, welcomed the Plan but remarked on a conflict apparent in the raising of loan prices to small companies (which are usually high risk) and the need to actually boost SMEs.

**Mr MOSCOVICI** said it was important not to fund all projects, but rather those projects where the impact on the economy can be most effective. He also stressed the importance of contacts with national parliaments.

**MR ARTHUIS** answered the question of why is there need for a government in the Eurozone by recalling that there is the European central bank. He added that new countries are welcome to join the Eurozone.

**Mr Kārlis ŠADURKIS**, Chair of the Budget and Finance (Taxation) Committee of the *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, closed the debate by stressing on the importance of the new deal measures: low rate investment is both cause and result of the low investment found in Europe, he said. The Union is seen as old fashioned and rigid in its rules, thus investments end in the Far East or in countries like Brazil.

Europe must invest in high quality and Member State involvement and ownership cannot be stressed enough.

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**PLENARY SESSION: FISCAL CONSOLIDATION AND STRUCTURAL REFORMS:  
STATE OF PLAY AND BEST PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING THE FISCAL COMPACT**

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**Mr Kārlis ŠADURKIS**, Chair of the Budget and Finance (Taxation) Committee of the *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, opened the debate, stressing the importance of sustainability, which is a "fragile phenomenon". Mr ŠADURKIS urged that decisions leading to sustainability should be made - fiscal consolidation and structural reforms must be pursued not for their own end but to stimulate growth. Investment is an essential ingredient.

**Mr Jānis REIRS**, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Latvia, was rather direct in his assessment: unemployment high; perspectives for growth in the EU in the coming years is rather bleak. There are potentially negative impacts on the economic and social policies of the EU. Despite all this, the institutions are willing to improve the economic situation and have come up with several proposals in order to avoid stagnation, highlighting two main lines of political action: growth through fiscal consolidation and structural reforms.

The autumn forecast on the draft budgets of the member states has shown that fiscal consolidation will be neutral. Unfortunately, several Member States do not live up to the requirements of the stability and growth pact.

Mr REIRS said it is important to undergo analysis and reviews of budgets: the results help give a picture of the fiscal dimension of the EU. He reminded everyone that the economic and social welfare of Europe is a collective project.

**Mr Olli REHN**, Vice-President of the European Parliament, recalled that the European economy had a brief period of growth in spring 2013. This has now been replaced with weak growth and high unemployment, despite a slight improvement in some countries.

Member States carry the greatest responsibility in ensuring re-growth, which is why better policy coordination throughout Europe is necessary.

Mr REHN mentioned three things necessary for sustained economic growth: 1) prolonged accommodative monitoring policy from the ECB 2) consolidation of public finances by member states; 3) intensified structural reforms to make Europe more competitive and flexible.

**Mr Dominic HANNIGAN**, Chair of the Irish Dáil Éireann's Joint Committee on European Affairs, said it is early to pass judgement on the fiscal compact; the major innovation of the fiscal compact was the introduction of the golden rule - no universal method for adjusting fiscal certainty. Measures forced in Ireland - mostly due to the bank bailout the Irish had to endure and finance - like the reduction in public service jobs, for instance, have put Social Cohesion in the country at risk. The citizens are at the end of their tether. This is why stimulation and growth is especially needed at the moment. Growth has returned to the Irish economy - on the longer term the fiscal compact rules will be easier to adhere to.

**Mr Pauo MOTA PINTO**, Chair of the Portuguese Parliament's Committee on European Affairs, insisted that governance rules should be equally applicable to all Member States.

**Mr Mečislovas ZASČIURINSKAS**, from the Committee on Social Affairs and Labour of the Lithuanian *Seimas* reminded everyone that the compact itself means nothing if there is no willingness to implement it.

**Mr Norbert BRACKMANN**, from the *Bundestag's* Committee on Budget said that in order to achieve the ultimate aim of implementing structural policies and reducing unemployment, the fiscal compact has to be adopted to introduce greater stability in economies.

**Mr Eduardo CABRITA**, Chair, Committee on Budget, Finance and Public Administration from the Portuguese parliament claimed that austerity measures imposed by the Commission have made things worse. The approach of the Troika was entirely undemocratic.

**Mr Kai Jan KRAINER**, Vice-Chair, Finance Committee of the Austrian Parliament referred to the differences between the US and the EU and how these have led to different outcomes; EU must rethink its priorities since the US economy is now recovering well.

**Mr Paolo GUERRIERI PALEOTTI**, from the Committee on Budget of the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, recalled that adjustment policies have not solved the debt problems in many EU countries - what is needed is something to boost growth, and only expansionary economic policies can achieve that, including monetary, fiscal and investment policies.

**Mr REIRS** stated that the EIB will monitor projects and only those projects which stimulate growth shall be selected. He recalled that Europe is different than the US in caring for the equal redistribution of income.

**Mr REHN** said it is up to the National Parliaments to decide whether Europe is to punch below its weight in international fora - as it is currently doing in the IMF context - and be led by China and the US or find its appropriate place on the global stage.

**MR HANNIGAN** was concerned about any special treatments for member states and insisted that all must be treated with fairly and equally. All Member States must realise that the Union has rules and they must be followed.

**Ms Helma NEPPÉRUS**, from the *Tweede Kamer's* Finance Committee stressed that a stable euro is essential if the EU is to emerge from the current stagnation.

**Mr Pierre-Alain MUET**, Vice-Chair of the French *Assemblée Nationale* Committee on Finances complained about the absence of an overall view of the economic policies in the Union, and stated that genuine coordination is therefore absolutely essential.

**Mr Averof NEOFYTOU**, Chair of the Cypriot Committee on Foreign and European Affairs said the dilemma is whether to borrow more or pay the debt. He stressed that apart from solidarity there should be justice and fairness, and therefore growth which comes at the expense of further debt is not sustainable. However difficult it may be for individual countries, we must learn to live by the rules and abide by the rules.

**Mr REIRS** fully agreed with the last comment: instead of generating new debt for the future generation, we must provide them with opportunities for growth.

**Mr GUALTIERI** claimed that there were two legacies of the fiscal compact: the Euro summit and this conference.

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**PLENARY SESSION: STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE EMU**

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**Ms Aija BARČA**, chair of the Social and Employment Matters Committee of the *Saeima* of the Republic of Latvia, stressed the importance of growth being both inclusive and sustainable. Special attention must be paid to ensure inclusive labour markets and reduce poverty, and facilitate mobility. An adequate standard of living must be ensured for EU citizens. Social inclusion is extremely important. Despite this being mainly a national competence, there is an important place for exchange and cooperation.

Ms BARČA emphasised that social consequences of policies have to be borne in mind when implementing structural reforms.

**Ms Marita ULVSKOG**, co-chair of the session, said that we are far from the EU2020 goals. The internal market is a cornerstone of the European project and has the potential to generate growth and employment, but for the market to function properly and not lead to social dumping and abuse the EU must set minimum standards to protect workers.

Member States competing between themselves for lower wages is damaging to both the States themselves and the Union as a whole.

The rise of nationalism and populism does not augur well for the future of Europe.

Poverty in Europe is a reality: the wealth gap is present both throughout the Union and in the individual Member States, endangering social cohesion. Inequality must therefore be addressed immediately. The standard of living of the average European citizen must be bettered.

**Mr Pierre-Alain MUET**, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee in the French National Assembly, said that the first condition for strengthening the Social Dimension of the EMU is having macro-economic policies which enable us to secure employment, growth and social cohesion.

The crisis has showed the need for a shared macro-economic diagnosis to adopt policies which work throughout the Eurozone, where genuine governance is needed.

The sanctions imposed on Greece by the Troika are the antithesis of the solidarity the Union holds at heart and promotes.

Structural funds boosted structural improvement in Member States, and were the hallmark of the cooperative policies the Union needs.

Mr MUET mentioned the possibility of establishing a Union unemployment insurance.

**Mr Valdis DOMBROVSKIS**, the European Commission Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, remarked that the 3 pillars mentioned in the AGS will help Europe on its way to growth. Strengthening the Social Dimension of the EMU is a key aspect in reaching that goal.

The widening gaps between the rich and the poor and the periphery and centre of Europe are worrying, and must be addressed.

Mr DOMBROVSKIS said that negative developments in one Member States should be and indeed are the concern of the whole Union. Growth in a solely economic way is not desirable, especially if it has negative effects on social cohesion. Measures taken so far must be consolidated, simplified and made more socially legitimate.

The Commission's work programme for 2015 includes a number of measures and will be presenting three packages: (i) the monetary union package, which will have a strong social dimension; (ii) a labour mobility package, which will address mobility and tackling abuses by means of better coordination of social security systems; (iii) a package promoting integration especially targeting long-term and youth unemployment.

Incentives for job creation and social cohesion will also be proposed. EMU should ensure inclusiveness, by fighting the two-tier labour market that has developed throughout Europe.

National Parliaments, Social Partners and Civil Society at large must all be involved in the process.

**Mr Guy RYDER**, International Labour Organisation Director-General, remarked on the negative trends brought about by the crisis, which reversed the developments in convergence, resulting in deepening divergence.

National successes can help provide a model for European solutions: combatting undeclared work as is happening in Poland and Portugal, improving social protection of vulnerable jobs as in Spain, facilitating transition to stable employment as in Austria.

Enhanced country efforts on their own will not be enough, however: they must be framed an EMU-wide approach.

Asymmetric shocks must be put in check. Existing instrument such as structural investment funds offer immediate tools; new tools may also be set up. The strategic investment plan is one such tool.

**Mr Uroš PRIKL**, Chair, Committee on Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Disability of the Slovenian National Assembly, mentioned a fourth pillar: jobs and social security. The solution, he said, lies in creating high-quality jobs. The employment policy should be connected with education, housing and other social aspects. He insisted that minimum standards for employment is not enough: optimal standards must be ensured throughout the Union.

**Mr Mečislovas ZASČIURINSKAS**, from the Committee on Social Affairs and Labour of the Lithuanian *Seimas*, called the session a "symbolic event", hoping that the social dimension will be the first priority. Mobility is the main value of the EU, but this should be a value for everybody: EMU and the strengthening of social dimension cannot be the main priority if many people emigrate because of the social situation of their native countries. A two-speed Europe must not continue to create the social divergence currently existing in the Union.

**Mr Andrej HUNKO**, from the German Bundestag, stressed that strengthening the Social Dimension was essential. Instruments on fiscal discipline exists, yet deficits continue to be a big problem, and the social dimension presents itself as an even bigger problem: we have indicators but no mechanisms.

**Maria João RODRIGUES**, from the European Parliament, said that high levels of unemployment and social dumping were two sides of the same coin. Better coordination of economic and social policies are important to ensure proper sustainable as well as social economic growth.

**Mr DOMBROVSKIS**, replied to some questions. With regard to the work the Commission is doing on Social Dimension, Mr DOMBROVSKIS said that more prominence will be given to indicators, also when preparing CSRs, thus balancing social and economic policies.

Economic growth and job creation must be boosted to deal with poverty and social exclusion, as unemployment remains one of the most serious social problems the Union is facing.

**Mr RYDER** commented on the Greek experience. Processes of social dialogue in that country had broken down. An erosion of social bargaining and a severe downward levelling of wages were also experienced.

Mr RYDER noted the importance of convergence to be present in the EMU, and to ensure that labour mobility be based on fair and equal treatment.

**Ms ULVSKOG** admitted that more time must be dedicated to issues within the social dimension. She appealed for equal wages and equal conditions for the work that is done in a Member State regardless of the country of origin must be ensured.

**Mr Pierre-Alain MUET** said that the hallmark of Europe was the social module depending on the country which is developed over the period of economic development. There were more developed and less developed countries, in wealth estate and social provision, but they combined social and economic progress, and tried to keep the less developed countries in conversion. Since the crisis the social module seems to go to the reverse. All the member state countries have to develop and move towards the highest productivity level, but the social dimension is treated equally as economics.

**Mr Philip CORDERY**, from the Assemblée Nationale's Committee on European Affairs, said that co-operation is necessary, working together in a European level is essential to re-launch growth and fight against inflation, but all of this may end up being useless if there remain two areas where we don't have policies: 1. physical policies 2. social and wage policies, where the Union lacks solidarity and lacks cooperation.

**Ms Silvija SIMFA**, from the Latvian *Saeima's* Committee on Social and Employment Matters said it was essential to combat undeclared work in the EU and in the Member States. She noted that quality of jobs is also important in the investment package. Social dialogue means a social and economic development and gives voice to the society, the decisions effect people's life.

**Mr Karel FIEDLER**, from the Czech Committee on Budget, remarked that salaries, innovations, and productivity help create new jobs. Mr FIEDLER mentioned another aspect which is seldom discussed: legislation and rules could make life more difficult for producers in terms of competitiveness. He stressed that the Union should not decrease salaries in order to increase competitiveness. However, he noted that exports of goods from producers that are not on the same standard as others were allowed, and that deteriorates the labour market.

**Mr Ivo OLIVEIRA**, from the Portuguese Parliament's Committee on European Affairs, stressed that strengthening the social dimension is essential, and suggested the use of structural funds for the social sector.

**Lord Lyndon Henry HARRISON**, Chair, Sub-Committee on EU Economic and Financial Affairs of the House of Lords, asked how the Union can practically marry the social dimension with the economic concerns.

**Mr MUET** stressed that Europe need solidarity, upwards conversion, and needed to bring together economic and social measures. What Europe is good at, he added, is marrying together competition (boosts growth) and solidarity (strengthens growth).

**Mr DOMBROVSKIS** promised that the EU Commission will present a labour mobility package where it presents ways to support labour mobility and prevent brain drain and tackle abuses by means of better coordination of security systems, including workers' directives.

**Ms BARČA** reminded those present of the conference in Riga on the 22-23th February on these issues.

**Mr RYDER** noted that the challenges Europe faces are being experienced not in a vacuum but in a global economic context, and unfortunately Europe's performance is compared unfavourably to other parts of the world. The point is, that the manner in which the Union competes in the global economy is based on very fundamental choices and values, one of these being the basic rights of workers. It is important to note that every single European member ratified the fundamental values and, alas, this cannot be said of the rest of the world. Nevertheless, Europe cannot compete on the base of low wages and pushing down of labour standards.

**Ms ULVSKOG** remarked that good labour conditions drive innovation and growth.

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