

Basic information

2010/3013(RSP)

RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects

Resolution on Europe 2020

Subject

4 Economic, social and territorial cohesion
4.15 Employment policy, action to combat unemployment
5.05 Economic growth
8 State and evolution of the Union

Procedure completed

Key players

Council of the European Union

Council configuration

Meetings

Date

General Affairs

3060

2010-12-14

General Affairs

3064

2011-01-31

Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN

3067

2011-02-14

Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN

3062

2011-01-18

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs

3053

2010-12-06

European Commission



Commission DG

Commissioner

Secretariat-General

BARROSO José Manuel

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
06/12/2010	Debate in Council		
14/12/2010	Debate in Council		
18/01/2011	Debate in Council		
31/01/2011	Debate in Council		
14/02/2011	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
16/02/2011	Debate in Parliament		
17/02/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0068/2011	Summary
17/02/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
17/02/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/3013(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B7-0097/2011	09/02/2011	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0098/2011	09/02/2011	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0102/2011	09/02/2011	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0105/2011	09/02/2011	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0106/2011	09/02/2011	
Motion for a resolution		B7-0109/2011	09/02/2011	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0068/2011	17/02/2011	Summary

Resolution on Europe 2020

2010/3013(RSP) - 14/02/2011

The Council adopted conclusions on the EU 2020 strategy: macroeconomic and fiscal guidance to the Member States. It agreed to submit them to the European Council with a view to its meeting on 24 and 25 March 2011.

Launching the European Semester: the Council welcomes the Commission's first Annual Growth Survey marking the start of the European semester for economic policy coordination; **a more integrated macroeconomic and macro-structural surveillance;** and advancing the EU's comprehensive response to the economic and financial crisis, both at Member State and EU level.

The Council reaffirms that the most urgent task for the EU is to restore confidence by preventing a vicious cycle of unsustainable debt, disruption of financial market and low economic growth, through ensuring sustainability of public finance, correcting harmful macro-economic imbalances, advancing financial repair and boosting potential economic growth.

In the context of more integrated country surveillance under the European Semester, the Council emphasises that the main focus of Stability and Convergence Programmes and National Reform Programmes for the period 2011/2012 (to be submitted preferably by mid-April or end April at the latest) should be on implementing rigorous fiscal consolidation, promoting employment growth and accelerating growth-enhancing structural reforms, taking into account country-specific situations.

The Member States are invited to present a comprehensive response with concrete, detailed and ambitious measures to both fiscal and macro-structural challenges, including bottlenecks to growth, in their Stability or Convergence Programmes and National Reform Programmes. The Council underlines that public acceptance of budgetary consolidation and major structural reforms is key: to this end, it is important to take distributional effects into account.

Implementing a rigorous fiscal consolidation: it is of utmost importance for all Member States to ensure **government debt sustainability**, not least through announcing and implementing credible and detailed consolidation plans, in addition to pension, health care and labour market reforms.

Member States facing very large structural budget deficits or very high or rapidly increasing levels of public debt, fiscal consolidation should be frontloaded.

The Council calls on Member States to present in their forthcoming Stability and Convergence Programmes concrete multi-annual consolidation plans including specific deficit, revenue and expenditure targets and the strategy envisaged to reach these targets.

Correcting macro economic imbalances: Member States with large current account deficits and - high levels of indebtedness - both public and/or private - should present concrete policy measures to address these imbalances in their forthcoming National Reform Programmes and, where appropriate, also in Stability and Convergence Programmes.

To improve competitiveness, Member States need to promote labour cost developments consistent with local economic and labour market conditions, medium term productivity trends and the need to unwind existing imbalances. Rigidities which impede the competitiveness adjustment need to be removed.

The Council underlines that in Member States with large current account surpluses, policies should aim at identifying and implementing, where relevant, structural reforms that help strengthening domestic demand.

Adopt growth and job-enhancing structural reforms:

- fiscal consolidation should be accompanied by reforms aimed at ensuring sustainable and adequate **pension systems**, notably: (i) by increasing the effective retirement age and by better aligning retirement age and/or pension benefits to changes in life expectancy; (ii) by reducing early retirement schemes which risk reducing the labour force; (iii) by promoting active labour market policies and life-long learning. While public pensions will continue to play an important role, private savings including second pillar schemes could provide a useful complement to enhance retirement incomes and should be encouraged;
- **labour market policies** should promote skills, create incentives to work and reduce labour market exclusion, in particular of vulnerable groups;
- where possible, **taxes should also be shifted away from labour** in order to stimulate labour utilisation and create conditions for growth;
- the **reallocation of labour across and within sectors** should be facilitated. The regimes for recognising professional qualifications should be simplified to facilitate the free movement of citizens and workers;
- it is necessary to **promote innovation capacity** and skills-upgrading, increasing capital investment including in infrastructure, ensuring an efficient regulatory business environment, administrative efficiency as well as promoting a higher degree of competition, particularly in some regulated sectors.

In general, **unemployment benefits** should be reviewed to ensure that they provide incentives to work while limiting long-term unemployment and the consequent losses in human capital during downturns.

The Council reaffirms the importance of **further deepening of the Single Market**. Focus should be given to promoting the well functioning and integration of markets, notably services markets (including financial markets); smart EU regulation; and EU's economic, social and territorial cohesion. The Services Directive should be implemented fully.

Resolution on Europe 2020

2010/3013(RSP) - 17/02/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Europe 2020.

The resolution had been tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/ALE and ECR groups.

It strongly urges the **strengthening of the Community method with regard to the governance structure** of the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#). It reiterates the importance of integrating the EU 2020 goals into the economic governance framework and calls for the European Semester to be part of the legislative governance package, while including national parliaments and social partners at an early stage in order to foster democratic accountability, ownership and legitimacy.

Parliament also wants the **EU budget and national budgets to reflect better the ambitions of the Europe 2020 strategy**. The strategy must close the gap between its declared ambitions, the resources available and the methodology used. It calls for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) to reflect the ambitions of the Europe 2020 strategy, and emphasises that Europe 2020 requires reforms and very substantial and early public and private investments in a wide range of projects. The Commission and Member States are asked to produce a **credible funding framework**. Funding Europe 2020 demands a concerted set of policy initiatives, engaging European institutions, such as the EIB and the ERBD. Members emphasise, in addition, that private sector funding will be indispensable and requires legal frameworks that will address the long-term risks involved.

Parliament considers that Member States should be encouraged to give the **highest priority to tackling unemployment and preventing long-term exclusion from the labour market**. These two priorities should be combined with measures to ensure more job creation, better jobs and high levels of high quality employment in the medium and longer term. Members stress the vital role of a holistic approach to the re-launch of the [Single Market Act](#) to ensure better economic performance and a strengthened social dimension while restoring confidence by putting citizens at the heart of the Single Market. They express disappointment that two years after the adoption of the [Small Business Act](#) the Commission is lacking in concrete actions and initiatives. The Commission and the Council are urged to promote a more SME-friendly environment and transparent use of pre-commercial public procurement for innovative and green technologies.

With regard to **flagship initiatives**, Parliament stresses that the current content of the strategy remains of a very general nature, and that this set of initiatives could only be achieved through concrete commitments from Member States in their National Reform Programmes and concrete and consistent legislative proposals.

Flagship 'Innovation Union: the resolution stresses the need to secure the financing of research, innovation and development in the EU via a **significant increase in relevant expenditure post 2013**. It highlights the lack of funding for crucial instruments for research, innovation and deployment that have already been adopted, and calls for a revised Financial Regulation to facilitate SME applications. Members believe that it is not subsidies that innovative European companies need, but more freedom and **better access to venture capital**.

Flagship 'Youth on the Move: Parliament calls on all Member States to set up, as part of their National Reform Programmes, a national strategy to tackle youth unemployment and secure young people access to education and training. It strongly supports the proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European Youth Guarantee and urges the Council to adopt it as soon as possible. It also calls for stronger proposals on inclusion. The Commission is asked to continue to fund existing mobility and youth programmes such as Lifelong Learning (Erasmus, Leonardo, Comenius, Grundtwig), Youth in Action and Marie Curie.

Flagship 'A digital agenda for Europe: while welcoming the ambitious proposals on the 'Digital Agenda', Parliament urges the Commission to speed up the adoption of proposals related to the digital single market, such as e-commerce, intellectual property, trust & security online, roaming and e-authentication.

Flagship 'Resource-efficient Europe: Parliament urges the Commission to continue its work on formulating concrete policies to ensure a switch to a resource-efficient and renewable-based economy. It calls on the Commission to develop concrete benchmarks and to ensure that agreed targets are met and that they can be monitored within the framework of the Europe 2020 European Semester of policy coordination. Members also underline the urgent need to modernise and upgrade the European energy infrastructure, to develop smart grids and build interconnections, which are necessary for realising the internal energy market, enhancing security of supply, and to meet our energy and climate targets and speed up authorisation procedures.

Flagship 'An industrial policy for the globalisation era: Parliament calls for a holistic, balanced and forward-looking approach to EU industrial policy, aimed at developing a strong, competitive, coherent, efficient and diversified industrial base and where innovation, research, competition, Single Market, trade and environmental policies are coordinated. Key objectives should be (i) to promote job creation and the international competitiveness of European enterprise; (ii) intelligent restructuring and dialogue with employees; (iii) a sustainable economy; (iv) free choice in technology options and mobility of researchers.

Flagship 'An agenda for new skills and jobs: whilst highlighting the fact that strong social protection systems prevent long-term exclusion, Parliament insists that investment in active labour market policies, education and training opportunities for all to acquire new skills are essential to reduce unemployment. Members notes that flexicurity has been successfully implemented in certain countries, but warns that flexicurity concepts cannot deploy their potential in Member States with low possibilities of strengthening social protection systems due to budget restrictions and macroeconomic imbalances. Reducing labour market segmentation must be achieved by providing adequate security for workers under all forms of contracts, especially vulnerable groups. The Commission is reminded not to neglect the need to ensure a socially just transition to a more sustainable labour market and the huge potential of sustainable jobs.

Flagship 'European platform against poverty and social exclusion: Members recall that the Europe 2020 strategy includes a target to lift at least 20 million people who are in, or at risk of, poverty and social exclusion out of this state. They urges the Commission and the Council to ensure full compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Horizontal Social Clause (Article 9 TFEU) in order to ensure that **all policies contribute to rather than undermine that poverty-reduction goal**. They also call on Member States to be committed to tackling child poverty. Lastly, Parliament reiterates its call for a broader agenda to promote decent work, ensure workers' rights throughout Europe and improve working conditions, tackle inequality and discrimination, and combat in-work poverty.