

UDENRIGSMINISTERIET

EUROPAUDVALGET (2. samling)

Alm. del - bilag 986 (offentligt)

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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges Finansministeriets redegørelse for rådsmøde (økonomi- og finansministre) den 12. juli 2002.

Ulla Tovej



16. juli 2002

12 NHB

Referat af rådsmødet (ECOFIN) den 12. juli 2002

Dagsordenspunkt 1: Formandskabets arbejdsprogram

Formanden præsenterede hovedprioriteterne for det danske formandskabs arbejdsprogram efterfulgt af en kort åben debat. Rådet hilste arbejdsprogrammet velkommen. Der var bred støtte til formandskabets prioriteter.

Dagsordenspunkt 2: Skattespørgsmål

Skattepakken

Punktet blev taget af.

Selskabsbeskatning

Kommissionen præsenterede sin meddelelse om selskabsbeskatning efterfulgt af en orienterende debat om løsningsforslagene på kort, mellemlangt og langt sigt. Rådet opfordrede Kommissionen til at fortsætte arbejdet.

Dagsordenspunkt 3: Finansielle spørgsmål

Finansiel stabilitet, overvågning og integration

Rådet drøftede den foreløbige EFC-rapport om finansiel stabilitet, overvågning og integration og vedtog konklusioner, der opfordrer EFC til at udvikle en ny tilgang baseret på Lamfalussy-modellen for alle finansielle områder.

Den interinstitutionelle overvågningskomité

Rådet bekræftede enigheden med Europa-Parlamentet og Kommissionen om mandatet for den interinstitutionelle overvågningskomité og etableringen af dens sekretariat og opfordrede Coreper til at udpege to eksperter til komitéen, der repræsenterer Rådet, med henblik på Rådets godkendelse heraf på et kommende rådsmøde.

Den aktuelle markedssituations betydning for gennemførelsen af den finansielle handlingsplan (nyt punkt)

Rådet tog Kommissionens mundtlige præsentation af den aktuelle markedssituations betydning for gennemførelsen af den finansielle handlingsplan til efterretning.

Dagsordenspunkt 4: Opfølgning på Sevilla (nyt punkt)

Rådet vedtog konklusioner, hvori de nye retningslinier for organiseringen af Det Europæiske Råd hilses velkommen, og ECOFIN-rådets rolle ved forberedelsen af Det Europæiske Råd bekræftes.

Dagsordenspunkt 5: Output gaps

Rådet vedtog, på grundlag af EPC-rapporten om metoder til vurdering af output gaps, konklusioner, ifølge hvilke den nye metode til beregning af output gaps skal tages i brug i forbindelse med vurdering af stabilitets- og konvergensprogrammerne, idet den gamle beregningsmetode dog vil blive brugt som 'back up' i en kort overgangsperiode. I forhold til et enkelt medlemslands stabilitetsprogram for 2002 anvendes dog fortsat den gamle metode. To medlemslande afgav ensidige erklæringer.

Dagsordenspunkt 6: Relative fordele ved forskellige pensionssystemer

Rådet tog EPC-formandens orientering, EPC-rapporten om relative fordele ved forskellige pensionssystemer samt EPC's opdaterede holdning til efterretning og opfordrede EPC til at fortsætte arbejdet med at undersøge de økonomiske og budgetmæssige konsekvenser af befolkningens aldring.

Dagsordenspunkt 7: Offentlige finanser i ØMU 2002

Rådet tog Kommissionens meddelelse om offentlige finanser i ØMU 2002 til efterretning. Formanden konkluderede, at Rådet (ECOFIN) vil vende tilbage til de berørte spørgsmål i efteråret på grundlag af forberedelserne i EPC og EFC.

Dagsordenspunkt 8: Beskyttelse af Fællesskabets finansielle interesser og bekæmpelse af svig

Rådet tog Kommissionens rapport om beskyttelse af Fællesskabets finansielle interesser og bekæmpelse af svig til efterretning og opfordrede Co-reper til at forberede et udkast til konklusioner med henblik på forelæggelse for et kommende rådsmøde (ECOFIN).

Makrofinansiel bistand til Ukraine

Beslutningen om supplerende makrofinansiel bistand til Ukraine blev godkendt uden debat.

Rådskonklusioner vedrørende finansiel stabilitet, overvågning og integration

"The Council welcomes the interim report of the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC) and invites the EFC, according to the principles agreed by the Council on 7 May 2002, and on the basis of the Resolution adopted by the Stockholm European Council and of Council Decision 1999/468/EC on comitology arrangements, and with the support of the Commission, to elaborate the new approach for all financial sectors based on the 'four-level Lamfalussy framework' for securities. The new approach should:

- enhance cross-sectoral consistency, including facilitating consideration of issues related to financial conglomerates in the 'level 2' regulatory committee or committees, while taking into account the specificities of the insurance sector; and
- take into account synergies between banking supervision and central banking.

The Council considers it appropriate for the Financial Services Policy Group to be reconfigured under Member State chairmanship to give political advice and oversight on financial market issues to the ECOFIN Council.

The Council is of the view that insurance sector legislation should be dealt with by the ECOFIN Council.

The Council invites the EFC to pursue reflection on the proposal to bring together representatives of all EU parties with an interest in maintaining financial stability in a new forum.

The Council invites the EFC to produce its report on implementation modalities by the end of September. In particular, this should:

- indicate reporting mechanisms with respect to the Council and the European Parliament;
- identify chairmanship and secretariat arrangements;
- make proposals for allocating membership, including observer status, of the committees; and
- propose an indicative timetable for implementation and evaluation of the possible new arrangements.

A number of issues do, of course, remain outstanding, and the Council will return to these in the autumn. Institutional aspects and good relations with the European Parliament are of great importance and need careful consideration and must take fully into account existing political and legal agreements. The Council invites COREPER to assess the institutional aspects with a view to providing timely guidance for its future work and paving the way for the necessary discussions with the European Parliament."

Rådskonklusioner vedrørende opfølgning på Sevilla

"An effective European Council is essential for the work of the European Union and for a good functioning of economic and monetary union. The ECOFIN Council therefore welcomes the new rules for organising the proceedings of the European Council and the measures concerning the structure and functioning of the Council. The ECOFIN Council takes note that the Seville European Council considered that the new rules for the preparation of the European Council will be implemented having regard to EMU operating rules. The ECOFIN Council will continue to prepare contributions of central importance for the deliberations of the European Council, including for the annual Spring meeting on economic and social issues established by the Lisbon European Council, and with regard to other matters within the competence of Ministers of Economy and Finance, in particular those related to the functioning of EMU.

As its main contribution to the annual Spring European Council, the ECOFIN Council prepares its Key Issues Paper on the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines. The Broad Guidelines form the main instrument identified by the Lisbon European Council for implementing the economic strategy adopted at that meeting, as well as the most important instrument for the policy co-ordination required to ensure a sound foundation for the good functioning of EMU.

With this in mind, the ECOFIN Council reiterates the importance it attaches to the proper preparation of its Key Issues Paper, as the main means of ensuring that the Spring European Council can give the orientations necessary for the subsequent elaboration of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines. Noting that the preparation of the Key Issues Paper draws heavily on the Council's examination of Member States' annual stability and convergence programmes, the ECOFIN Council recalls that it can be finalised only upon completion of that exercise. The ECOFIN Council continues to involve relevant Council formations in preparing the Key Issues Paper.

The ECOFIN Council invites future Presidencies to reflect on how best to comply with the timetable set for the preparation of European Council meetings, while maintaining the quality of the ECOFIN Council's and the Commission's contributions to the European Council's deliberations. It should be ensured that the Presidency, the ECOFIN Council and the Ministers of Economy and Finance fulfil their obligations in respect of and in conformity with the Treaty and notably Declarations 3 and 4 annexed to the final act of Maastricht."

Rådskonklusioner vedrørende output gaps

"The Council welcomes recent progress in refining further the production function approach for the estimation of output gaps and it considers that this ap-

proach should constitute the reference method when assessing stability and convergence programmes. The Council welcomes the Commission's intention to apply this method in a non-mechanistic, transparent and consistent way.

A transition period is considered useful, during which the HP filter should be used as a backup method. This transition period shall be as short as possible and the situation shall be reviewed on a regular basis."