

Euractiv.com – 2013:

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The EU must work for the people, not for the beauty of processes

EurActiv.com

March 19, 2013, Tuesday 11:26 AM GMT

- Unable to cite link (found through LexisNexis)
- Shift in EU since beginning of Sovereign Debt crisis – a tightening of EU grip on policy at national level – EUROSEM epitomizes that shift
- Brussels able to formulate far-reaching recommendations
- EU has not dealt with crisis appropriately – through increased policy surveillance
- During EUROSEM – Europe 2020 has been pushed to back-burner
- CSR's fail to mention strategy
- Tension in EUROSEM between – short-term approach based on price-based adjustments on one side, and need for social and productive investment on other
- EU leaders at risk of giving too much leeway to bureaucrats and short-sighted approach to mutual surveillance

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MEP Giegold: France and Germany no longer able to lead the EU

EurActiv.com

June 12, 2013 Wednesday 2:03 PM GMT

- Unable to cite link (found through LexisNexis)
- Interview with German MEP Giegold
- He questions whether the French have accepted the EUROSEM process
 - Referring to French president saying the Commission could not tell France what to do
- Shows difference in fundamental viewpoint between Germany and France – EU leaders

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Verheugen: EU needs to respond to external, internal chaos

EurActiv.com

July 12, 2013 Friday 1:22 PM GMT

- Unable to cite link (found through LexisNexis)
- Opinion of ex EP president Jerzy Buzek (Poland)
- EU needs to strengthen itself internally if it is to increase power and influence as a global power
 - Part of this needs to be increased coordination
 - EUROSEM is a tool of that – a step in positive direction
- Strength of external policy determined by internal cohesion

- Thus, must carry out structural reforms in member states that will increase competitiveness of European economy

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Economist: 'Being pro-European is not a vote-winner in Germany'

EurActiv.com

May 16, 2013 Thursday 7:33 AM GMT

- Unable to cite link (found through LexisNexis)
- Interview with Karl Aiginger – director of Austrian Institute for Economic Research
- Upcoming elections – German people don't want to pay more for Union issues
 - Thus, being pro-European is not guaranteed vote in elections
- Berlin leader in debt crisis
- Goals of Europe 2020 forgotten
 - Look at EUROSEM – gov. are punished if they do not keep with consolidation goals, but never reprimanded for failing to address poverty – which are part of the Europe 2020 goals

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Slovak PM denounces 'fashion' of not paying taxes

EurActiv.com

March 19, 2013 Tuesday 7:41 AM GMT

- VAT fraud as biggest problem for Visegrad countries
- As part of EUROSEM – Visegrad countries were encouraged to strengthen their tax collection systems
 - In Poland, a reform of the tax administration system has been launched – based on CSR
 - “Slovakia had already adopted its national action plan for tax collection, which includes 50 measures divided into three stages. The first package primarily targets risk assessment of tax payers for VAT registration”
- Slovakia is second worst country in EU for tax evasion
- Countries encouraged by Commission to follow one another's best practices

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Four recommendations for the EU summit

EurActiv.com

June 26, 2013 Wednesday 4:36 PM GMT

- EUROSEM – focuses primarily on debt consolidation
- CSRs should give guidelines for countries to comply with strategy lines – including Europe 2020

- In its review, Council should emphasise the employment/innovation/poverty reduction goals from the Europe 2020 strategy, and show need to front load funds
- Commission does not say enough about “lacking investment of member countries to foster employment, insufficient education expenditures, nor the increasing distance to poverty or climate goals”
- Critique of misguided goals for the Commission as laid out in EUROSEM

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/social-europe-jobs/opinion/youth-guarantee-a-good-start-but-not-the-whole-picture/>

- February 26, 2013
- Critique of the “Youth Guarantee” – part of EUROSEM
- Austerity seen as only solution to crisis – but austerity cuts education, and training, and reduces employment opportunities
- Well-educated fleeing from most harshly effected areas
- Up to member states to implement guidelines – no reprimand if they fail to do so
- Good jobs and training are also not guaranteed by guidelines, also up to member states
- Does not ensure training and jobs, simply recommends it
- It is a good step, but more needs to be done

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/innovation-industry/news/unions-and-businesses-join-forces-on-youth-unemployment/>

- June 12, 2013
- Part of EUROSEM May 29 proposals
 - Youth Guarantee
 - Youth jobs strategy
 - Vocational Training
 - Apprenticeships
- Commissioner of Employment and Social Affairs (Andor) said:
 - “Stepping up the number of apprenticeships and traineeships will increase opportunities for young people, and raising their vocational skills is an attractive alternative to academic education.”
- “EU heads of states agreed in February to launch the €6 billion Youth Employment Initiative, with the aim of making it fully operational by 1 January 2014”
 - €1.3 million in assistance to set up apprenticeship schemes
 - EU countries can claim their part of 4-billion-euro pie to set up Youth Guarantee

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/health-consumers/interview/campaigner-for-the-first-time-the-eu-has-power-over-national-health-budgets/>

- September 12, 2013

- Because of EUROSEM – EU has increased power over national healthcare budgets
- European Public Health Alliance launched new think tank to deal with health debates in individual countries
- Think-tank looking at how economic policy impacts health – essentially how the EUROSEM impacts health and how they want it to impact health
- Also look at EUROSEM at national level from health aspect

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- October 15, 2013
- France pushing for more bilateral engagement in future semesters – between Commission and member states, before Commission issues CSRs
 - Reflects tension between EU execs and France because of that year's recommendations – Commission told France to cut labour costs and reform pension system
 - France failed to alter pension system
- Other members seemingly in support of France – want more involvement from national level in semester process – specifically before Commission publishes recommendations

General Sources (via LexisNexis) 2013:

prf.admin. (November 23, 2013 Saturday). European Semester: Minister of State Győri argues that national competences should not be curtailed. *Hungarian Official News Digest*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59WS-32B1-JCMN-Y0GJ-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- November 23, 2013
- Enikő Győri, MFA Minister of State in charge of EU Affairs – says EUROSEM is overstepping its authority, into areas that should be national interests
 - Does not want process to be burdened with out-of-scope issues
- Questions whether justice scoreboard is reasonable
- In objective setting process of EUROSEM – EU fundamental principles have been ignored time and again
 - Such as the principle of equal treatment that must be observed all of the time

Targeted News Service. (October 1, 2013 Tuesday). Still Much Room To Improve The European Semester, Say Still Much Room To Improve The European Semester, Say MEPs. *Targeted News Service*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59GN-9JX1-JC11-12C0-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- October 1, 2013
- Released by European Parliament
- EUROSEM in need of many fixes
 - take proper account of growth, employment, investment and social concerns
 - Democratic accountability of EUROSEM must be improved
- Resolution made by EP urges Commission to insert social concerns into Semester
- "Calls for legislative proposals to give EMU a social pillar and set up a "social pact for Europe"
 - Because some members welfare programs have been eroded by cuts
- Commission must also increase visibility of EUROSEM
 - Member states should increase involvement of national parliaments, social partners, and civil society
 - Particularly in national reform programs

States News Service. (September 18, 2013 Wednesday). EUROPEAN SEMESTER: HOW TO IMPROVE THE EU COORDINATION OF ECONOMIC POLICIES. *States News Service*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59CR-1331-DYTH-G3DP-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- September 18, 2013
- EP opinion
- EUROSEM should be more transparent
 - Should involve European National Parliaments more closely
- "Countries need to get back in charge of the country-specific recommendations and the quality of the recommendations needs to be looked at."
 - As well, countries should not be free to do whatever they want because of the impact decisions have on other countries
 - Thus, some oversight is needed
- National Deputies called for regular debate between Commission and EP about EUROSEM
- CSRs must be released earlier to gauge position of each member state

(November 19, 2013 Tuesday). Sustained economic recovery is the main priority during the fourth cycle of European Semester. *Premium Official News*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59GD-TWK1-DXCW-D0T7-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- November 19, 2013
- Release from the European Union
- Fourth EUROSEM cycle to focus on Sustained Economic recovery
 - Boosting growth and creating jobs
- Roadmap and AGS paved way for this

(October 2, 2013 Wednesday). The future of the Economic and Monetary Union: Commission proposes ideas to deepen social integration. *Premium Official News*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59GV-VSB1-DXCW-D1XM-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- October 2, 2013
- Release from European Union
- Commission proposed to create new scoreboard
 - “To allow for better and earlier identification of major employment and social problems in the framework of the European Semester”
- “Further involving trades unions and employers at both the EU and national level in the definition and implementation of policy recommendations during the European Semester” – part of communication released by Commission
- Room to better consult social actors in EUROSEM
- In June 2013, European Council said social dimension should be strengthened – “notably by using appropriate employment and social indicators”
 - Via EUROSEM

Toby Vogel . (October 3, 2013). Social scoreboard to be part of budget reviews. *European Voice*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:59GV-XR41-JBH0-Y0M1-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- October 3, 2013
- Commentary/analysis on the proposal by the Commission to adopt social scoreboards
- Social indicators are not binding – though there was a push by László Andor (Commissioner for employment, social affairs and inclusion) for them to be binding
- There is no automatic trigger for them to be binding
- In response the leader of the Socialists and Democrats group in EP said that the indicators would be useless if they were not binding
- Scoreboard would become part of Union’s employment report which is published each fall – featuring five main indicators:
 - unemployment, youth unemployment, household disposable income, the at-risk-of-poverty rate, and inequality

Targeted News Service. (March 14, 2013 Thursday). No Time Waste: Europe Must Continue on the Path of Reforms to Get to Safe Waters!. *Targeted News Service*. <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:57YT-KPF1-JC11-10BV-00000-00&context=1516831>.

- March 14, 2013
- Release by BusinessEurope
- Walking on thin ice in crucial time of recovery from sovereign debt crisis

- Commission must ensure EUROSEM strengthens implementation of structural reforms to support job growth and creation
- BusinessEurope 2013 Reform Barometer has identified 5 key areas for structural reforms:
 - 1. Taxation and public finance
 - 2. Business Environment
 - 3. Innovation and Skill
 - 4. Access to Finance and Financial Stability
 - 5. Reform of Labour Markets
- 41 member federations of BusinessEurope encourage EU member states to continue with structural reforms and to achieve commitments they made in context of EUROSEM

Fawltly Europe. (2013, November 2). *Economist*, 41. <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/apps/doc/GP4100931320/ECON?u=uvictoria&sid=bookmark-ECON&xid=1cd29031>

- November 2, 2013
- CSR’s already annoyed France, which told the Commission not to dictate reforms
- Article questions whether EUROSEM CSR’s will call out Germany for a surplus – when there is crisis around Europe economically
- “The Message to Germany is clear: increasing its domestic demand is critical to helping weaker states recover”
- “Opening up services would boost demand in Germany, enhance competitiveness in southern Europe – and even give Britain a good reason to stay in the EU”
- Shows Germany being unequal beneficiary of EUROSEM policy?

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