



European Confederation of Police

+352/43 49 61-1 +352/43 49 61-33

contact@eurocop-police.org

www.eurocop-police.org

EURO COP – 617, rue de Neudorf – L-2220 Luxembourg

European Commission
Commissioner Olli Rehn
200, Rue de la Loi
1040 Brussels
BELGIUM

Luxembourg, 11 March 2010

Dear Commissioner,

I approach you on behalf of the European Confederation of Police to express our serious concern in view news stories published in the Irish Times of 9 March and on www.euobserver.com on 11 March 2010 that quote unidentified sources of your department as having indicated that you and your department seek to influence and control public sector pay. The articles further state that it was not the Greek government but the European Commission that insisted on further cuts in public sector wages of Greek workers:

Irish times:

“While public pay cuts have proved highly controversial in Ireland, the sources pointed out that pay cuts adopted last week by the Greek government were introduced at the behest of the European authorities.”

euobserver:

"It has been known for a long time that public sector salaries in Greece were too high, but we could not do anything," said the EU official.

As a result, the commission's communication is set to propose that a wider range of economic indicators be used when assessing the health of a eurozone economy.

If agreed and turned into legislation, the commission and eurozone members could call on a particular government to correct economic structural flaws, such as excessive public sector salaries, at an earlier stage than currently permitted."



European Confederation of Police

+352/43 49 61-1 +352/43 49 61-33

contact@eurocop-police.org

www.eurocop-police.org

EURO COP – 617, rue de Neudorf – L-2220 Luxembourg

Such conduct is not acceptable and constitutes a serious and unprecedented infringement of national level labour relations. We expect that you officially confirm that your department is not seeking competences to influence public sector pay and that setting public service pay is a matter of negotiations between the government and public authorities as employers and the trade unions as recognized in international law (ILO Conventions).

As our colleagues from the European Public Service Union we further request that you publish the correspondence which has taken place between you and your department and the Greek government. This concerns a matter of high public interest and it will be important to clarify where responsibilities lie.

Thirdly, we recall that the area of freedom, security and justice is dependent on professional, highly motivated and capable police and other law enforcement services in all member states. The safety of EU citizens must not become the next victim of the financial crisis.

If any measures should be taken on the European level at this moment relating to member states' public services, it should be measures to stabilize them and to ensure that their capacities are not damaged beyond repair through austerity measures. This we have demanded with our proposal for a stability pact for police law enforcement in the European Union.

We look forward to your reply at the earliest possible convenience and remain available in the event of questions.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Heinz Kiefer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Heinz Kiefer

President

Attachments:

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/finance/2010/0309/1224265878155.html>

<http://euobserver.com/9/29643>

[EuroCOP call for a stability pact for police](#)

EU seeking power to set guidelines for public sector pay

ARTHUR BEESLEY European Correspondent in Brussels and **DEREK SCALLY** in Berlin

Tue, Mar 09, 2010

EUROPEAN MONETARY FUND: THE EU authorities are seeking power to set detailed guidelines for public sector pay in member states as they advance plans to create a European Monetary Fund (EMF) to prop up governments at risk of sovereign default.

The development follows months of pressure on the euro amid anxiety about the Greek budget deficit and the potential for contagion in the single currency zone.

It comes as high-level officials in key European institutions apply discreet pressure on Germany for moves to enhance the “credibility” of the euro system.

Although the precise parameters of an EMF plan remain subject to negotiation, the scheme would in essence create a lender of last resort within the EU. However, sources briefed on the discussions said assistance would come at a very steep cost to participating countries.

Still under discussion is the extent to which this can be done without breaching the no-bailout clause in EU law. While a spokesman for EU economics commissioner Olli Rehn declined to say whether the EU treaties would have to be changed to proceed with such a plan, other officials believe no change would be required.

However, Dr Merkel said treaty changes would be required.

“Such a fund cannot be created without treaty changes,” said Dr Merkel. “If the EU wants to remain capable of acting, it will keep encountering situations where the Lisbon Treaty cannot be the end of history.

“The EU has to be able to react to the challenges of the time,” she said. “We thought we wouldn’t need such a facility from the euro zone because we assumed that such a situation would not come to pass in the common currency area.”

Dr Merkel said yesterday in Berlin that the Greek crisis had changed her mind in favour of greater EU oversight of euro zone member states’ economies.

The European Commission is rapidly proceeding with a plan to advance the reach of its economic monitoring system. Informed sources said the EU executive was likely to demand a say in this process over public sector pay, a crucial but contentious component of public expenditure.

Dr Merkel said the time had come for euro zone members to agree to share greater financial data than at present to allow closer scrutiny from the EU statistics agency, Eurostat, as well as other euro zone members.

The reform measures are being prepared in a looming overhaul of the euro zone rulebook in an effort to prevent any repeat of the financial emergency in Greece.

German officials have complained about insufficient and incorrect information supplied by Greece to Eurostat, although Dr Merkel said yesterday her suggestions were not directed at Greece which, she said, had yet to ask for financial assistance.

The new measures would strengthen the co-ordination and surveillance of “budgetary discipline” in the single currency area.

While public pay cuts have proved highly controversial in Ireland, the sources pointed out that pay cuts adopted last week by the Greek government were introduced at the behest of the European authorities.

EU economics commissioner Olli Rehn, who says the Greek case illustrates the requirement for tougher economic supervision by the EU executive, will lean on a key clause in the Lisbon Treaty to revise the rules that govern the euro. The clause in question – article 136 – empowers EU governments to adopt “measures specific” to euro members “to set out economic policy guidelines for them”.

National governments have no veto in such cases to prevent the adoption of such measures.

“There is a clear opportunity in political terms to do this and do this now,” said a source briefed on the plan.

The commission’s decision to embark down this road follows threats by EU finance ministers to impose new austerity policies on Greece if the administration of prime minister George Papandreou did not adopt drastic new measures. Mr Papandreou yielded to such pressure last week, introducing new cutbacks and tax-raising measures last week.

© 2010 The Irish Times

EU proposals to explore budget and tax co-ordination

ANDREW WILLIS

10.03.2010 @ 09:28 CET

EUOBSERVER / BRUSSELS - A European Commission proposal on greater economic co-ordination and member state surveillance is set to explore the sensitive topics of greater tax and budgetary co-ordination.

Speaking on the basis of anonymity, an EU official with an understanding of next month's communication told EUobserver the document's aim was to "stimulate debate" and to "correct the imbalance of what was not agreed at Maastricht."

The 1992 Maastricht Treaty led to adoption of the euro currency some seven years later, although economists at the time warned that different member-state fiscal systems, imperfect labour mobility and the lack of a European political union could pose problems for the currency club in the future.

Recent events in Greece have served to highlight the eurozone's weaknesses, with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso saying last week there is increased appetite in national capitals for greater economic co-ordination as a result.

"The fiscal crises in some of our member states have highlighted also the consequences some mistakes made in one country may have on other countries," he told journalists in Brussels.

The commission's communication is to outline a number of potential mechanisms "to ensure the proper functioning of economic and monetary union."

Among the ideas is greater eurozone tax co-ordination, said the EU official, with France and Germany long complaining that countries with low tax rates undermine their capacity to pay for generous state-provided services.

An upcoming report on the completion of the EU's single market by former commissioner Mario Monti is also set to highlight the need for greater European tax co-ordination.



The current Greek crisis has exposed eurozone weaknesses
(Photo: wikipedia)

The EU official also signaled that the commission's communication would explore the idea of greater eurozone member-state examination of each others national budgets, although details are still hazy.

Former French prime minister Edouard Balladur recently presented his own ideas paper to the French government for greater eurozone co-ordination, under which euro area members would have to submit their annual budgets to the 16-country bloc for majority approval.

Preventative arm

Debate has centered this week on the need for a European Monetary Fund, an additional corrective arm capable of providing loans to member states struggling with financing difficulties, as currently seen in Greece.

The commission and a number of eurozone members are keen to introduce greater preventative measures however, to prevent the build-up of structural imbalances that lead to budgetary problems in the future.

"It has been known for a long time that public sector salaries in Greece were too high, but we could not do anything," said the EU official.

As a result, the commission's communication is set to propose that a wider range of economic indicators be used when assessing the health of a eurozone economy.

If agreed and turned into legislation, the commission and eurozone members could call on a particular government to correct economic structural flaws, such as excessive public sector salaries, at an earlier stage than currently permitted.



European Confederation of Police

Position of the EuroCOP Executive Committee adopted 12 May 2009

A Stability Pact for the common area of freedom security and justice – EuroCOP call for a new commitment to the 'Copenhagen criteria'

1. In 1993 the Copenhagen European Council, defined a set of EU membership criteria, which are often referred to as the 'Copenhagen criteria'. These were complemented by the Madrid European Council in 1995:
2. According to these criteria, any EU member state must have achieved
 - stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
 - the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
 - the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic & monetary union.
 - appropriate administrative and judicial structures that permit that Community legislation is implemented effectively
3. The effects of the financial crisis make it necessary for the EU to renew its commitment to keeping these standards as the basis for close cooperation among its Member States and economic and social prosperity of the EU.
4. The EU must not allow any Member State to fall short of these criteria through the effects of the current economic crisis through excessive and short sighted cuts into budgets of essential public services, such as police.
5. The current economic crisis makes it apparent that an EU wide fight against organised crime, trafficking in human beings and terrorism cannot be based exclusively on approximation of legislation.
6. To complement approximation of legislation Member States need to ensure efficient enforcement in these areas. Member States that risk falling short of providing efficient enforcement must not be left to address this on their own.
7. EuroCOP calls on Member States to agree a stability pact for police based on the Copenhagen criteria. This stability pact for the common area of freedom security and justice must ensure that Member States live up to common minimum standards with regards to law enforcement capacities and standards.
8. In addition, EuroCOP calls upon Member States to set up an early warning mechanism that ensures that measures can be taken before the capacities of any Member State to contribute to the common fight against organised crime, terrorism and corruption are severely damaged.
9. With the imminent adoption of the new multi annual framework programme on justice and home affairs, the EU Council is in a unique position to renew its commitment to the Copenhagen Criteria and to show citizens that their concern for a life in peace and freedom of crime matter.