

STABILITY AND GROWTH PACT - Η ΘΕΣΗ ΜΑΣ

Πρέπει να διαφυλάξουμε το Σύμφωνο Σταθερότητας. Η Γερμανία δεν δέχεται το κείμενο της Επιτροπής, αλλά η Επιτροπή δεν κάνει πίσω. Για να υπάρξει Απόφαση Συμβουλίου, πρέπει να προηγηθεί κείμενο της Επιτροπής. **Οδηγούμαστε σε αδιέξοδο** επειδή οι Γερμανοί μαζί με τους Γάλλους, τους Ιταλούς και το Λουξεμβούργο έχουν blocking minority και έτσι, το κείμενο της Επιτροπής δεν θα γίνει αποδεκτό. Έτσι το θέμα δεν θα έρθει στο Συμβούλιο Κορυφής, γεγονός που σημαίνει (σύμφωνα με τον κ. Ράπανο) ότι το Σύμφωνο Σταθερότητας καταρρέει.

Αρχείο

Η Ιταλική Προεδρεία προτείνει την εξής μεσοβέζικη λύση: Να υπάρξει Council Resolution που να αποδέχεται ακριβώς το κείμενο της Επιτροπής για το θέμα της Γαλλίας και της Γερμανίας, αλλά χωρίς νομική βάση, δηλαδή να μην στηρίζεται στα άρθρα 104.7, 104.78 και 104.9 της Συνθήκης.

Δεν μας συμφέρει η λύση αυτή διότι απαξιώνει το Σύμφωνο Σταθερότητας. Επίσης, θα υπάρξει αυθαιρεσία στο μέλλον, γεγονός που δεν συμφέρει μια μικρή χώρα: π.χ. δεν μας αρέσεις Ελλάδα, σου πετάμε ένα Council Resolution.

Επισυνάπτεται το σημείωμα Ράπανου. Ο κ. Ράπανος προτείνει να ελαστικοποιηθεί το κριτήριο για τη Γερμανία και τη Γαλλία με το να μεταφερθεί η χρονιά που πρέπει να ισχύσει ο περιορισμός του 3% στο έλλειμμα για το 2006 αντί του 2005. Έτσι, η αξιολόγηση θα γίνει μετά τις Γερμανικές εκλογές. Ίσως αυτή να είναι η καλύτερη θέση.

«Understanding the political and economic difficulties that both countries phase and in view of the fact that both countries are in a process of serious structural reforms we could accept the legal framework of the Commission and invite Germany and France to reduce their deficit below 3 %, **not in 2005 as the Commission recommends but in 2006**. This gives much more room for maneuver to both countries and the credibility of the Stability and Growth Pact is safeguarded. It seems that the French government could accept this proposal, (but the Germans still insist that they cannot accept article 104.9 as the legal base).»

EXCESSIVE DEFICIT PROCEDURE FOR FRANCE AND GERMANY

In January 2003 the Ecofin Council, after a recommendation by the Commission, and on the base of article 104.7 of the Treaty, decided that Germany had an excessive deficit and invited the German government to take measures to correct the deficit so that in 2004, this is below 3 per cent.

Also, the Ecofin of June 3rd decided according to article **104.7** of the Treaty that there was an excessive deficit in France and invited the French authorities to "put an end to the present excessive deficit situation as rapidly as possible and by 2004 at the latest".

On the 8th of October the Commission made public a recommendation to the Council that, according to article 104.8 of the Treaty that France had taken no effective action to comply with the Ecofin decision. Following that on the 20th of October the Commission adopted a recommendation to the Council according to article 104.9 of the Treaty and proposes to the Council to make the following recommendations to France to put an end to the present excessive deficit situation as rapidly as possible and at the latest by 2005

In the meantime, and only two days ago the Commission made two recommendations to the Council for **Germany**, quite similar to those for France, since Germany also failed to comply with the Council's recommendation to reduce its deficits below 3 % in 2004. The Commission's recommendation invites Germany to reduce its deficit below 3 % in 2005.

The German government reacted fiercely accusing the Commission and Mr. Eichel said that they are not accepting the recommendations of the Commission since it is on the base of article 104.8 the one and article 104.9 the other 104.9, because according to the German view, these articles refer to countries that have failed to comply with the Council recommendations, while in the case of France and Germany the governments have complied with the Council decisions although only partially.

The French authorities agree of course with the German view, although they are willing to accept article 104.9 as long as the Germans do the same. The German government proposes that the Commission's recommendation should be according to article 104.7. However, the legal services of the Commission argue that this is not possible and cannot go back to article 104.7 as if nothing happened with the deficits of the previous years, and agree with the Commission's proposal. Also the Council's legal services have said that the only way to change the legal base and make a decision on the base of article 104.7 and not 104.9 is that the Commission makes such a proposal. The Council cannot, therefore, make a decision without a recommendation from the Commission.

It is clear that the Council will be in a very difficult position. The Council may take a vote of course, according to the German view. The Commission will not accept this and as a result there will be no decision and this will be a serious blow to the Stability and Growth Pact. It seems presently that France and Germany will have the support of Italy, and Luxemburg, and therefore there is a blocking minority.

So, in the Forthcoming Eurogroup the discussion may be focused mostly on legal aspects and not so on substance. It is very likely that no decision will be made next Monday and the credibility of the Stability and Growth Pact will be almost zero.

In view of this, the Greek delegation in the EFC made the following proposal.

Understanding the political and economic difficulties that both countries face and in view of the fact that both countries are in a process of serious structural reforms we could accept the legal framework of the Commission and invite Germany and France to reduce their deficit below 3 %, not in 2005 as the Commission recommends but in 2006. This gives much more room for maneuver to both countries and the credibility of the Stability and Growth Pact is safeguarded. It seems that the French government could accept this proposal, but the Germans still insist that they cannot accept article 104.9 as the legal base.