

Call for Papers

Fiscal Policy Challenges in Europe

Berlin, March 22-23, 2007

Organised by Sebastian Hauptmeier (ZEW), Friedrich Heinemann (ZEW and AEI), Christian Kastrop (German Federal Ministry of Finance) and Ludger Schuknecht (ECB)

The German Federal Ministry of Finance and the Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW) are hosting a conference on “Fiscal Policy Challenges in Europe” organised by Sebastian Hauptmeier (ZEW), Friedrich Heinemann (ZEW and AEI), Christian Kastrop (German Federal Ministry of Finance) and Ludger Schuknecht (European Central Bank).

The conference will cover theoretical, empirical and institutional issues under the following headings (for more information, see the following page):

- **Quality of public finances, fiscal reform and the Lisbon objectives**
- **Public sector efficiency and performance**

The conference will feature talks by the German Finance Minister, **Peer Steinbrück**, the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, **Joaquín Almunia**, the Member of the Executive Board of the European Central Bank, **Jürgen Stark**, as well as the State Secretary in the German Federal Ministry of Finance, **Thomas Mirow**. Academic keynote speeches will be provided by **Roberto Perotti**, Director of the Innocenzo Gasparini Institute for Economic Research at Bocconi University, and **Vito Tanzi**, Consultant to the Interamerican Development Bank, former Italian Undersecretary of State for Economy and Finance and former Director of the Fiscal Affairs Department at the International Monetary Fund.

Please submit your **paper** or **extended abstract** in electronic form and with your details to the Centre for European Economic Research at the following e-mail address: hauptmeier@zew.de **Submission deadline is December 20, 2006**. The conference languages will be English and German. Authors of selected papers will be notified in January. Travel (economy class) and accommodation costs of academic presenters will be covered.

With best regards,

The Organisers

Conference topics

Fiscal policy in EMU needs to attain at least two central objectives: maintain fiscal sustainability in all member states and provide an enabling environment for high growth and cohesion. This conference will focus on the role of fiscal institutions and policies in attaining these objectives and on how to better compare the performance of governments in attaining these tasks. It seeks theoretically well-founded and empirical contributions that would help advance the policy debate.

1) Quality of public finances, fiscal reform and the Lisbon objectives

The renewed Lisbon Strategy aims to improve economic performance within the European Union. As most Member States have fallen behind the objectives defined in the Lisbon Agenda and, at the same time, are facing substantial fiscal burdens due to upcoming demographic challenges, enhancing employment and growth via fiscal policies has gained renewed interest. Conducting expenditure and tax reforms and revisiting the role of the state aim to attain the Lisbon objectives by strengthening the incentives arising from tax-benefit systems, from bureaucracies and from public services on investment, employment and innovation. At the same time, recent debates over Europe's social model and reform resistance reveal anxieties about the distributional implications of reform and national policy autonomy.

2) Public sector efficiency and performance

In light of European difficulties in the fiscal sphere, policy coordination and bench-marking has become more prominent and learning from success stories takes on more urgency. However, despite a much livelier debate on government performance and efficiency at the global level, there is only a very limited literature that tries to overcome difficulties of measuring, comparing and explaining differences in the performance and efficiency of governments internationally. Also the possible influence of budgetary systems on efficiency and effectiveness warrants further exploration.