

## **Maria João Rodrigues becomes the EP's rapporteur for 2016 economic policy priorities**

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EP, Brussels

On 21 October the Commission proposed a package of new measures to strengthen the Eurozone, following up on the Five Presidents' Report published in June ([http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/economic-monetary-union/docs/5-presidents-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/economic-monetary-union/docs/5-presidents-report_en.pdf)). The Commission announced, among others, that it will propose a recommendation for the economic policy of the whole Eurozone already in 3 weeks and not in the spring. In this way, finance ministers and the European Parliament will be able to discuss more seriously if the Eurozone's 19 national budgets taken together are excessively austere or if the overall 'fiscal stance' is growth-friendly enough. In mid-November, the Commission will also put forward its 'Annual Growth Survey', proposing what should be the priorities of budgetary and structural policies in 2016 (last year, the focus was on combining fiscal consolidation with structural reforms and greater investment).

It has been known for some time that the EP rapporteur on 2016 economic priorities will come from the S&D Group and yesterday it was confirmed that Maria João Rodrigues will take this role and lead the EP discussion on the Annual Growth Survey, the euro area recommendation, the macroeconomic imbalances report and the Joint Employment Report. Her priority will be to focus parliamentarians' and governments' minds on seeing the Eurozone as one big economy, where economic policies need to be much better coordinated in order to ensure solid growth both in the centre and in the periphery. She will also call on the Parliament, Commission and Council to pay greater attention to unemployment and social inequalities when defining economic policies for the Eurozone and its individual member states.