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The Commission as policy entrepreneur in European economic governance: a comparative multiple stream analysis of the 2005 and 2011 reform of the Stability and Growth Pact

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ABSTRACT

Regarding the analysis of European economic policy choices since 2010, the literature has largely taken the path of intergovernmentalism, concluding that the member states were the key leaders of the economic and fiscal negotiations and relegating the Commission to the loser status. This article aims to open the black box of European economic policy-making through process tracing and embed a discussion on policy entrepreneurship by the Commission within an analysis of policy change in economic governance. It argues that the coupling of a high problem load with a high level of systemic ambiguity opens a window of opportunity for bottom–up entrepreneurship of

the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs which is snuffed out by the political College and the member states when the problem load and the systemic ambiguity are low.

KEY WORDS:

Bottom–up entrepreneurship | European Commission | multiple streams framework | bottom–upStability and Growth Pact | windows of opportunity

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Notes

1. Interview P14, DG ECFIN, 9 June 2015; interview P24, European Parliament, 22 June 2015; interview P18, DG ECFIN, 9 June 2015.

2. Interview P20, DG ECFIN, 10 June 2015.

3. In bold in the original text.

4. Interview P3, European Commission Cabinet, 26 June 2015; interview P5, Council of the European Union, 9 June 2015; interview P6, DG Competition, 23 June 2015.

5. Interview P5, Council of the European Union, 9 June 2015.

6. Interview P10, DG ECFIN, 10 June 2015.

7. Interview P10, DG ECFIN, 10 June 2015.

8. Interview P24, European Parliament, 22 June 2015.

9. Interview P24, European Parliament, 22 June 2015.

10. Interview P4, Council of the European Union, 8 June 2015; interview P9, European Central Bank, 2 July 2015; interview P25, European Parliament, 22 June 2015.

11. Interview P3, European Commission Cabinet, 26 June 2015.

12. Interview P31, Permanent Representation, 23 June 2015.

Additional information

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