

CMFB opinion
on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM)

1. At Eurostat's request, the then CMFB Chairman, with the assistance of the CMFB Executive Body, asked the CMFB Members on 18 December 2012 to state their opinion on the recording in national accounts of the "European Stability Mechanism" (ESM). The deadline for the replies was 9 January 2013. Nineteen (19) national statistical institutes and twenty-five (25) national central banks from the EU Member States returned the questionnaire by 9 January. The ECB also provided its opinion.
2. The CMFB previously finalised a first Opinion on the recording in national accounts of the ESM on 10 March 2011. The first Opinion was based on the potential features of the ESM. It outlined that the ESM would have the status of an international organisation and would meet the criteria of an institutional unit, as defined in the European System of Accounts (1995). Since the March 2011 consultation of the CMFB took place while the preparatory work for setting up the ESM was under way, the CMFB reserved its right to re-examine the statistical accounting until the features of the ESM would become final.
3. The Treaty establishing the ESM entered into force 27 September 2012 with the ratification of the Treaty by all 17 Euro Area Member States. The ESM was launched on 8 October 2012 when its Board of Governors held the inaugural meeting. Hence, Eurostat requested the CMFB to review its initial Opinion.
4. With reference to the actual features defined in the Treaty establishing the ESM and the ESM By-Laws, a very large majority of the CMFB agrees that the ESM should be statistically classified in the Rest of the World sector (subsector S.212, Institutions and Bodies of the European Union); furthermore, that the ESM has the status of an international organisation and it meets the criteria of an institutional unit. The CMFB, thereby, confirms its Opinion of March 2011.
5. A few members provided additional comments regarding the classification of ESM for the purpose of compiling euro area and EU aggregates, while a few members were concerned that the proposed system of governance for the ESM would not provide enough autonomy in its decision-making process.
6. This Opinion has been transmitted to Eurostat and will be kept in the records of the CMFB secretariat.

(Signed)

Joe Grice
CMFB Chairman

Newport, 22 January 2013