

SPRING 2012 REFORM BAROMETER – BELGIUM

	Level			Rank			Gap		Areas of Action	
	2010	2011	Change	2010	2011	change	EU top 5	Gap ¹		
Pillar I	1 GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity- PPP)	28989	29822	2,9%	10	11	-1	NL AT IE SE DK	-7%	
	2 GDP per capita (€ at 2000 prices)	29549	29950	1,4%	11	11	0	DK IE SE NL AT	-14%	
	3 Labour productivity per hour worked (PPP)	45,3	46,1	1,9%	5	5	0	NL BE FR IE DE	3%	
	4 Labour productivity per person employed (PPP)	70248	72000	2,5%	5	5	0	IE BE AT FR NL	4%	
	5 Private investment (excluding non residential, %GDP)	7,9	8,1	0,2	4	4	0	SK AT BE IT CZ	-0,3	
	6 Industrial activity (% total value added)	18,0	18,1	0,1	21	21	0	SK CZ IE RO HU	-12,3	
	7 R&D expenditure (% GDP) *	2,0	2,0	0,0	11	12	-1	FI SE DK DE AT	-1,2	
	8 Operating surplus (% total value added)	39,0	39,2	0,2	22	23	-1	BG GR RO LT IE	-16,0	
Pillar II	9 Current Account (% GDP)	3,2	2,4	-0,8	11	11	0	SE DK NL LU DE	-3,3	
	10 Export market share (gain from 2000)	-8,5	-8,7	-0,1	24	24	0	LT RO HU BG CZ	-71,8	
	11 Net export contribution to GDP	1,2	0,2	-1,0	12	22	-10	PT IE GR SK HU	-2,9	
	12 Relative yearly gain in global trade share (% total trade)	-0,08	-0,02	0,1	22	17	5	EE LT LV BG CZ	-0,13	
	13 Relative unit labour cost (gain from 2000)	1,5	2,6	1,1	11	13	-2	DE SE AT PL GR	9,6	
	14 High-tech exports (% total exports) **	6,8	8,8	2,0	19	18	1	MT LU HU IE CY	-21,2	
Pillar III	15 Employment rate (% working age population)	62,0	61,9	-0,1	19	19	0	AT NL LU DE CY	-8,5	
	16 Employment rate 15-24 (% population 15-24)	25,2	25,5	0,3	22	21	1	NL DK AT DE UK	-27,8	
	17 Employment rate 55-64 (% population 55-64)	37,3	38,6	1,3	27	26	1	SE DE DK UK FI	-22,0	
	18 Annual hours worked (per capita)	1551	1560	0,6%	25	25	0	PL PT CZ GR HU	-21%	
	19 Labour participation (% working age population)	68,2	68,1	-0,1	26	26	0	SE DK NL PT DE	-11,7	
	20 Working age population (as % total population)	65,8	65,7	-0,1	26	27	-1	SK PL CY LT RO	0,9	
	21 Unemployment rate (% labour force)	8,6	8,8	0,2	19	19	0	AT NL LU DK MT	3,4	
Pillar IV	22 Gross debt - general government (% GDP)	96,2	97,2	1,0	28	25	3	EE BG LU RO SE	74,6	
	23 Net debt - general government (% GDP)*	-78,5	-78,0	0,5	27	26	1	EE DK BG RO SE	-83,5	
	24 Government budget balance (% GDP)	-4,1	-3,6	0,5	10	12	-2	HU SE EE LU FI	-2,1	
	25 Primary balance (% GDP)	-0,7	-0,3	0,4	9	12	-3	HU SE DE EE IT	-2,8	
	26 Tax burden (% GDP)	46,1	46,0	0,0	30	31	-1	BG LT LV RO SK	18,1	
	27 Highest marginal tax rate, individual rate (%)	50,0	50,0	0	26	26	0	BG CZ LT RO SK	-15	
	28 Public investment (% total public expenditure)	3,3	3,6	0,1	31	31	0	RO PL BG LV LT	-11,4	
Pillar V	29 Net foreign assets (% GDP) *	-21,6	-16,3	5,3	3	5	-2	LU NL CY BE DE	59,5	
	30 Net financial assets, households (% GDP) *	200,3	204,7	4,5	2	2	0	BE IT MT NL CY	33,9	
	31 Net financial liabilities, non financial corporations (% GDP)*	-94,3	-102,8	-8,5	9	9	0	SK DE NL GR DK	42,5	
	32 Regulatory tier 1 capital to risk weighted assets *	13,2	15,5	2,3	10	5	5	EE BE MT LU RO	0,6	
	33 Non performing loans to total gross loans	2,7	2,8	0,1	10	7	3	FI LU SE AT BE	-9,1	
	34 Loans to private sector (% GDP) *	87,1	82,0	-5,1	9	8	1	RO SK PL CZ LT	30,3	
	35 Bank liabilities (%GDP) *	294,1	276,2	-18,0	19	18	1	RO SK PL LT BG	196	

■ Five best

■ Lowest third

1. Percentage points, when not indicated otherwise

* 2009/ 2010 data

** 2008/ 2009 data

A methodological note can be found in the report or [here](#).

PRIORITIES FOR REFORM IN 2012

	I. Policy Area	II. Concrete Recommendations	III. Are the proposed recommendations already in the agenda of your Government?	
			Yes	No
Priority 1	11	Labour costs may not increase faster than the average of our three neighbouring countries (competitiveness law of 1996)		
Priority 2	16	Eliminate public deficit in particular by focusing on government expenditures		
Priority 3	14	Increase effective retirement age + reduce annual growth rate of public health care expenditures		
Priority 4	12	Stronger activation of unemployed people + an urgent need of people with a more technical profile		
Priority 5	17	Introduce efficiency programmes on all levels of government and in all public companies		

Policy areas

1. Business Environment - Regulatory barriers to entrepreneurship
2. Business Dynamics - Start-up conditions
3. R&D and Innovation
4. ICT
5. Competition policy framework
6. Sector specific regulation (telecom, energy)
7. Market integration - Openness to trade and investment
8. Active labour market policies
9. Job protection
10. Labour supply measures for specific groups (older workers, women...)
11. Wage bargaining and wage-setting policies
12. Labour market mismatch and labour mobility
13. Making work-pay: interplay of tax and benefit system
14. Pension and health care reforms
15. Quality of fiscal institutions and budgetary framework
16. Consolidation of public expenditures
17. Public sector efficiency
18. Public investment
19. Tax reforms
20. Access to bond markets
21. Access to equity markets
22. Venture capital and SME financing instruments
23. Bank lending conditions
24. Long term investment instruments

EUROPEAN SEMESTER

1. Do you believe the European Semester will bring a real change to policy coordination in Europe?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
		x		

2. Basing your analysis on the National Reform Programme submitted by your government, would you consider that it reveals a greater commitment from your country to this process?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>

3. Do you believe the National Reform Programme submitted by your government properly reflects the key challenges in your county?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>

4. The Commission's country specific recommendations for your country are:

<i>Excessively complacent</i>	<i>Slightly too positive</i>	<i>Absolutely appropriate</i>	<i>Slightly too negative</i>	<i>Excessively harsh</i>
		x		

5. Are the country-specific recommendations being properly implemented?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>

6. Are commitments concerning the euro plus pact properly addressed by your government in the NRP?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>

7. Do you believe the Commission recommendations in this area to be appropriate?

<i>Yes, absolutely</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>Not enough</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
x				