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Enhanced Debt Management: Solving the eurozone crisis by linking debt management with fiscal and monetary policy

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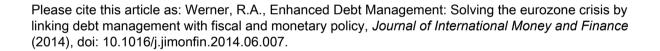
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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Enhanced Debt Management: Solving the eurozone crisis by linking debt management with fiscal and monetary policy

Richard A. Werner¹

Abstract

Unconventional approaches to suit unusual circumstances have become acceptable in monetary policy, a formerly highly conservative discipline. In this paper it is argued that unconventional approaches should also be considered in sovereign debt management, in order to contribute to resolving the eurozone sovereign debt crisis. First, the Troika crisis lending to indebted sovereign borrowers in the eurozone is reviewed and compared with standard IMF post-crisis lending. The main difference and shortcoming is the unsustainable character of the eurozone approach, due to the omission of demand stimulation components. To address this and other shortcomings, the features of an ideal alternative funding tool are identified. It would solve the funding problems of affected sovereigns, help stabilise the banking system, but most of all stimulate domestic demand and hence end the vicious downward spiral. It is found that this funding method can be implemented as part of enhanced public debt management by each nation's debt management office.

JEL codes: H63, E63, E51

Keywords: bank credit; bank lending; credit creation; debt management; enhanced debt management; debt monetisation; public debt management; quantitative easing; quantity theory of credit

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Professor Richard A. Werner, D.Phil. (Oxon), is Chair in International Banking at the University of Southampton Management School and Director of its Centre for Banking, Finance and Sustainable Development. He is also a member of the ECB Shadow Council. Email: werner@soton.ac.uk Acknowledgements: Thanks to HSH Prince Max von Liechtenstein for suggesting the 'enhanced debt management' terminology. I would also like to thank Dr Konstantinos Voutsinas and Mr Shamsher Dhanda for their very effective research assistance. Many thanks to three anonymous referees, as well as the journal editor, and, last but not least, the editor of the special issue, Professor Taufiq Choudhry, for pertinent comments that helped improve the paper. Finally, I would like to thank Lord Adair Turner for helpful comments, and also Prof. Em. Charles Goodhart, who as discussant commented favourably on this paper when it was presented at the April 2013 University of Southampton International Conference on the Global Financial Crisis: European Financial Markets and Institutions. His words were: "Richard has proposed a new mechanism by which bank credit can be stimulated... It is a very interesting idea and do take it seriously, as it is well worth taking seriously. One could implement it, too, in the UK.... This approach undoubtedly would enable fuller monetary expansion, in essence allowing monetary policy [in the eurozone] to be brought back to the nation state. ..."

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