**Follow up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution of 6 February 2018 on the European Central Bank Annual Report for 2016**

**2017/2124 (INI)**

**1. Rapporteur:** Jonás FERNÁNDEZ(S&D/ES)

**2. EP reference number:** A8-0383/2017 / P8\_TA-PROV(2018) 0025

**3. Date of adoption of the resolution:** 6 February 2018

**4. Subject:** European Central Bank Annual Report for 2016

**5. Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON)

**6. Brief analysis/ assessment of the resolution and of requests made in it:**

The resolution is based on the European Central Bank's (ECB) annual report for 2016. It notes that the accommodative monetary policy pursued by the ECB, including its low interest rates and Assets Purchase Programme (APP), has contributed to cyclical economic recovery and employment creation, also by preserving favourable financing conditions for companies and households. At the same time, the resolution expresses concerns over the consequences of unconventional monetary policy measures for individual savers and the financial equilibrium of pension and insurance schemes as well as the build-up of asset bubbles. It also stresses that monetary policy alone cannot achieve long-term economic development unless it is complemented by sound fiscal policies and competitiveness-enhancing reforms at Member State level. It welcomes the steps forward taken by the ECB in publishing its decisions of general application, Regulations, recommendations and opinions, and asks the ECB to increase its transparency towards the public. Finally, the report affirms the European Parliament's commitment to the independence of the ECB in the conduct of monetary policy, as enshrined in the Treaties.

**7. Response to requests and overview of action taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

On the specific calls to the Commission mentioned in the resolution:

**Paragraph 36** "[Τhe European Parliament] *takes note of the ongoing discussions concerning a 'central bank digital currency' or 'digital base money' that would be made available to a wide range of counterparties, including households; encourages the Commission and the ECB to study such schemes with a view to improving public access to payment systems, alongside physical money, as well as the potential challenges entailed for the ECB’s monopoly of issuing money* […]"**:**

The Commission agrees that further study of the potential challenges associated with central bank digital currency schemes or digital base money with respect to access to payment systems is needed. To this end, the Commission will liaise closely with the ECB.

Concerning cryptocurrencies, the Commission has already undertaken several initiatives. In 2016, a Financial Technology Task Force (FTTF) was set up, bringing together relevant Commission services and outside experts and stakeholders. In the course of 2017, the Commission carried out a public consultation and launched the project #Blockchain4EU to explore existing, emerging and potential applications based on blockchain for non-financial sectors. Finally, in 2017, the Commission also published a call for tender to set up an EU Blockchain Observatory which should become an EU expertise hub to discuss forward-looking topics on blockchain technology at EU level.