



# Why shouldn't the web look like print?

This topic may sound familiar to people who have been reading my blog for a while. I've posted about most, if not all the component technologies I'll be speaking about below. I hope I can change the context of the discussion enough not to bore you to death.

Unless it's necessary I will not write code, this is meant as an idea generator. Either I've already written about the technology or I will do so in a separate post.

I keep coming back to [Jen Simmons](#) SFHTML5 talk on web layouts. Partly because it takes me back to my beginnings as a web designer and because it challenges me to rethink the way I approach design and development.

This is a two pronged memory for me.

I still remember when the web was beginning and we had no fancy CSS to do things. We were lucky to have `<font>` and `<center>` tags to, somewhat, style the content. All content was purpose built or, if the publisher needed to, there were a few templates here and there but, even then there was a newness and freshness to the designs...

In the description of the slides for the presentation, Jen writes that:

In the early years of the web, there was a lot of variation and experimentation with where to put content on a web page. Then, it seems, we all settled into a handful of patterns and stayed there for over a decade. It wasn't until the arrival of responsive design that new ideas for page layout started appearing. Now with new CSS properties for layout landing in browsers, we may be about to see a bigger renaissance in layout design patterns. How can we better use the space inside the glass rectangle? What layout innovations could help users better find and focus on what they want?

And then I've seen how the web has become stuck in a rigid layout systems. What is known as "the holy grail" became the predominant design layout and it has gotten too rigid, designers are playing it safe and we're losing the creative spark that should drive all good design.

Andy Clarke has presented this ideas in [his blog](#), at the [Beyond Tellerand Conference](#) (see video below) and, most recently in Smashing Books' [Real Life RWD](#).

Technology is good and doing data driven research is not a bad thing but over time we've come to rely on data to drive decisions that, in my opinion should be creative decisions. Also note that I'm referring to web content... I believe apps require a different set of re

That's why I keep asking myself if the web can do what print can. Print seems a lot less constrained in what they can and cannot do than the web is. Fortunately

that seems to be changing.

For the longest time designers have been told that the web is not print and shouldn't be treated as such. My question has always been why not? What makes the web such a different medium?

There are new specifications and APIs being finalized by the W3C and WHATWG that make art directed web content more interesting and more like print and other art directed content.

In 2013 Chris Coyier wrote [Art Directed Articles. Still a Good Idea?](#) in CSS tricks. There, Chris describes the idea as:

The idea of an “art directed article” is that it is designed specifically for the content of the article. It might share some characteristics from the parent site (it probably should), but lots of design elements change to suit the specific article. Layout, colors, type, backgrounds, images, interactions... all custom just for the article.

I'm not advocating that all web content be art directed but we should have the freedom to use these new features and create layouts that really help users interact and understand with the content.

## Do we have the tools to do print on the web?

More and more I'm starting to think we can do a fairly nice job of doing print-like layouts for our web content. Not all the technologies are ready yet but we're getting close.

## Some of the tools

In the following sections we'll look at some of these technologies and how they produce effects that are similar to those we see in print. There will also be a section of technologies that are coming down the standards pipeline that will supplement those technologies already available.

# Flexbox and (native) Grids

[Flexbox](#) and [Grids](#) provide different layout alternatives that take the design away from floats and careful measurements that would need to be very carefully measured for each media query breakpoint.

## Flexbox

### Image Gallery

When I was researching how to create Flexbox content I created this image gallery. It's a fairly simple application where we can see the power of the flexbox syntax. Flexbox takes the content that would be in one continuous line which will wrap if the display is not wide enough.

In the HTML below, the boxes is our flexbox container. Each box has two classes, box will tell the CSS that we should style the content as a flexbox child and box(n) can be used to style individual children.

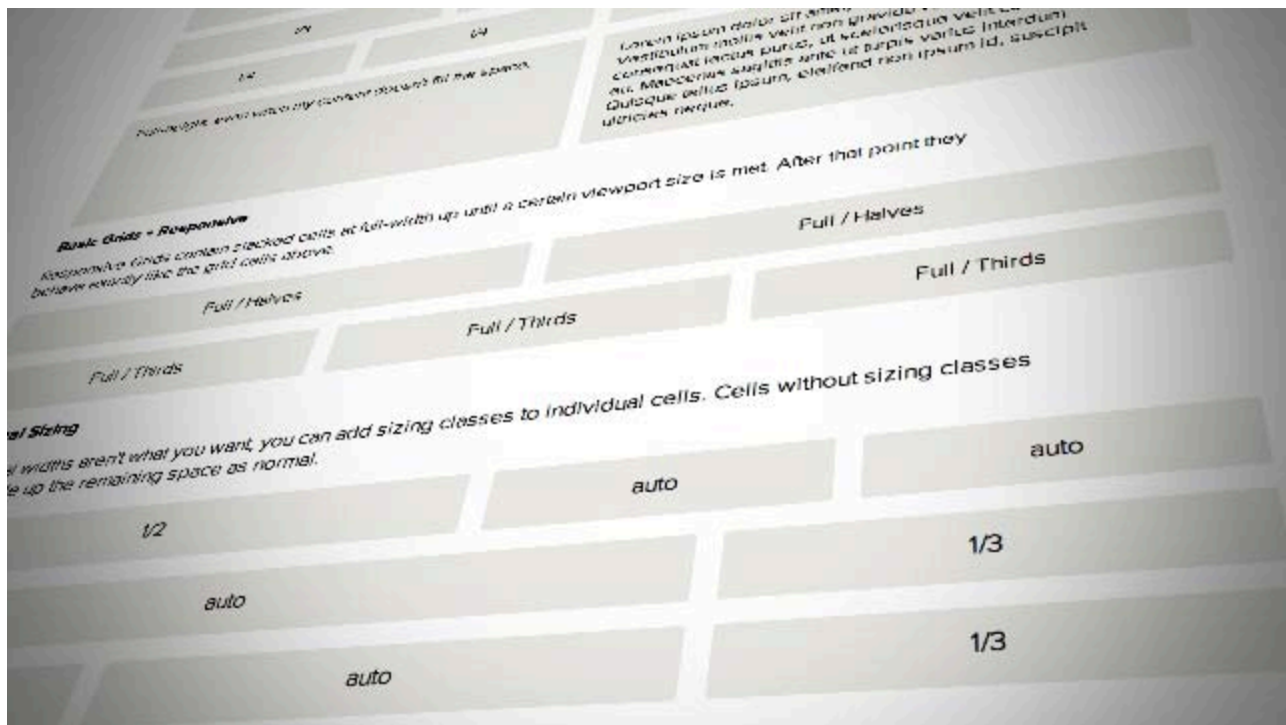
In the css we do three things:

- Set up the element with class boxes ( .boxes) to be a flex container (display: flex) and we set it to be horizontal and to wrap its content (flex-flow: row wrap)
- We set up the items (class .box) with the flex shorthand which equivalent to set the following attributes
  - flex-grow: 1
  - flex-shrink: 0
  - flex-basis: auto
- We set the images inside the box ( .box img) to be 100% wide and with an automated height. This makes the images responsive without using the flexbox

See the Pen [Flexbox Image Gallery Experiment](#) by Carlos Araya ([@caraya](#)) on [CodePen](#).

In [Solved by Flexbox](#) Philip Walton provides additional projects that can be solved using flexbox. By changing the way lay out the content we can create better and more faithful layout from our original source.

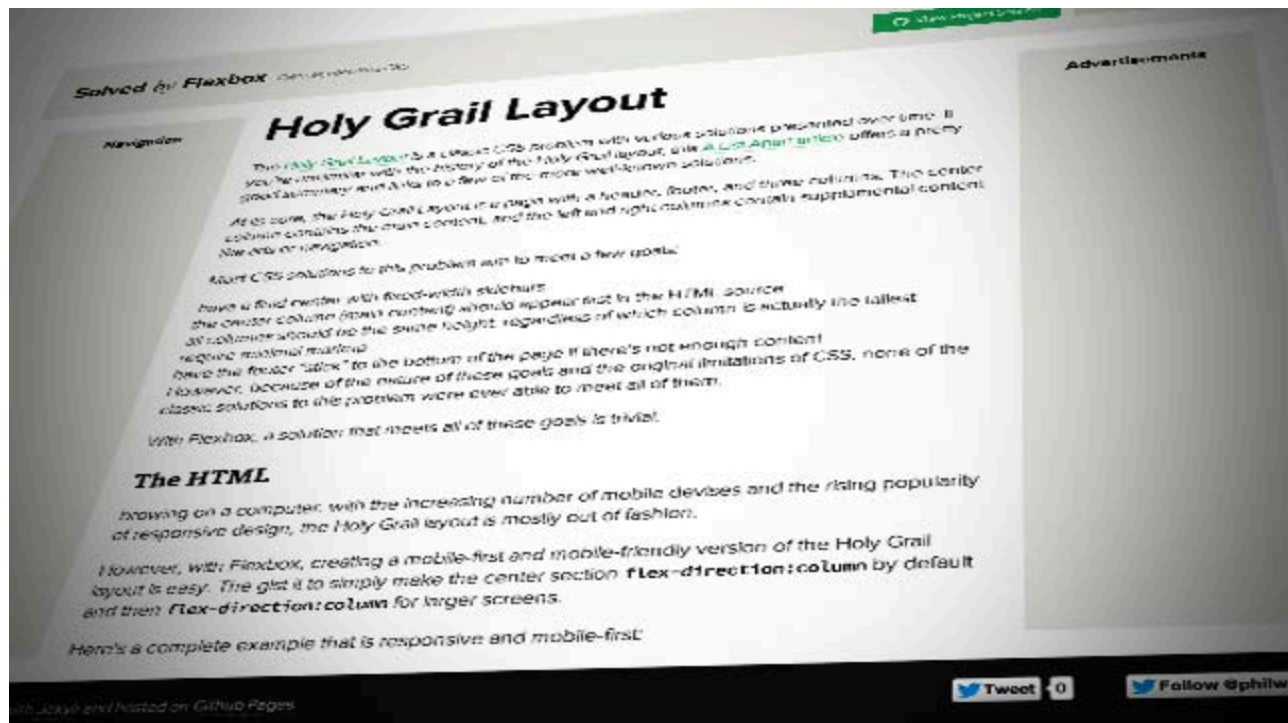
## Grids:



## Media Objects: \*\*



## Holy Grail Layout:



## CSS Grids

Grids allow to place the content anywhere in the defined grid. If you're familiar with Grids like those Bootstrap, Foundation, [960.gs](https://960.gs) or Suzy the idea is the same but the syntax is now fully native.

Unlike the alternatives mentioned above native CSS grids use the browser's CSS parser and don't rely on floats and percentages. We save the additional weight of the framework

With a grid (whatever kind) we can get a close approximation to what a 12 or 16 column layouts that we see in print and we can lay out the content in as many different ways as you can think

The example below, taken from [Grid by example](#), shows how to build a "holy grail layout" using CSS Grids and Media Queries to change the layout as needed for different displays and resolutions.

# Extracts from "Our Cats, by Harrison Weir"

Introductory

The First Cat Show

Habits

Trained Cats

Usefulness of Cats

## Usefulness of cats

Let any one have a plague of rats and mice, as I once had, and let them be delivered therefrom by cats, as I was, and they will have a lasting and kind regard for them.

In our urban and suburban houses what should we do without cats? In our sitting or bedrooms, our libraries, in our kitchens and storerooms, our farms, barns, and rickyards, in our docks, our granaries, our ships, and our wharves, in our corn markets, meat



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In our urban and suburban houses what should we do without cats? In our sitting or bedrooms, our libraries, in our kitchens and storerooms, our farms, barns, and rickyards, in our docks, our granaries, our ships, and our wharves, in our corn markets, meat markets, and other places too numerous to mention, how useful they are! In our ships, however, the rats oft set them at defiance; still they are of great service.

How wonderfully patient is the cat when watching for rats or mice, awaiting their egress from their place of refuge or that which is their home! How well Shakespeare in *Pericles*, Act iii., describes this keen attention of the cat to its natural pursuit!

The cat, with eyne of burning coal, Now crouches from (before) the mouse's hole.

A slight rustle, and the fugitive comes forth; a quick, sharp, resolute motion, and the cat has proved its usefulness. Let any one have a plague of rats and mice, as I once had, and let them be delivered therefrom by cats, as I was, and they will have a lasting and kind regard for them.

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You can also use Flexbox and Grids together. You can create a masthead using Flexbox and place it inside a grid like you normally would :-)

## Columns

[CSS Multi-column Layout Module](#) provides multicolumn layouts for the web without hacking the content to display how we want it to.

### [Google+: “New Google+: Stream, Hangouts, and Photos”](#)

Written by [George B. Moga](#) at [21:35](#)

#### Photos: your darkroom is now a Google data center

- **Auto Enhance.** Taking a good photo and making it great is a task generally reserved for professional photographers. That’s why, for example, we continue to support and improve tools like the [Nik Collection](#). For everyone else we’re introducing Auto Enhance: a new way to improve brightness, contrast, saturation, structure, noise, focus... and dozens of other factors automatically. Simply upload some photos, then open the lightbox to see Google’s enhancements. And that’s it. (And of course: you can undo the changes at any time.) Here’s some [sample images](#) to get you started.
- **Auto Awesome.** Sometimes we’ll create a brand new image based on a set of photos in your library. For example: if you upload a sequence of photos, we’ll try and animate them automatically. Or if you send us a few family portraits, we’ll find everyone’s best smile, and stitch them together into a single shot. Likewise with panoramas, filmstrips, and a

whole lot more. We call these kind of enhancements Auto Awesome.

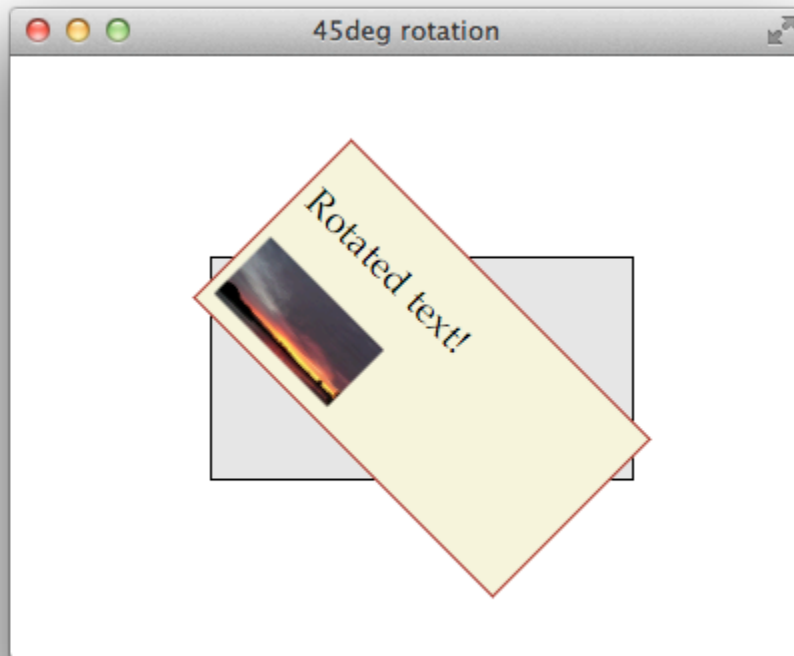
Even as an amateur photographer, I have all the new ‘auto’ functions (and Auto Awesome is the lamest name for a feature I heard in a while). [Image processing](#) is indeed part of every photo, whether it’s done by in-camera software or on my desktop PC’s, but as most photographers know, the camera’s auto settings is rarely the result of a photo. I don’t expect [Google](#) to do a better job of automated software, even running on their [server farms](#). These all sound like features intended for users who can’t be bothered to learn what they’re doing, and as such I expect them to be copied by other services (probably for Instagram) in the next six months. Photography enthusiasts will want something more over the result of their work. After all, *Auto Awesome* reads “You don’t take a photograph, you *Auto Awesome* it.”

The columns module still cannot do threaded frames (think of InDesign) but that may yet become part of the web as part of a different specification.

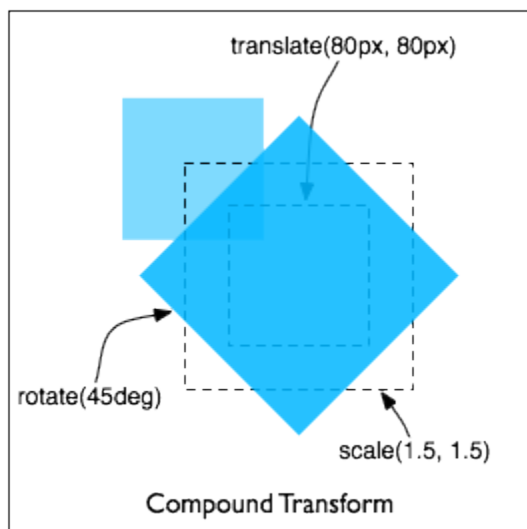
Support for widow and orphans is mostly complete with [Firefox being the last remaining holdout](#) in supporting the feature (and the bug laying dormant since 2010 doesn’t inspire much confidence in them being implemented either.)

# Rotation, skews and translations

For most people rotation and translation are done in the context of CSS 2D Transformations but we can also use them as static elements that will appear in its final form when displayed on.



We can also chain transformations to achieve more sophisticated effects.



# Shape outside

I've always loved how text wraps around an image shape, be it a circle or some sort of polygon where the text wraps close to the shape of the image regardless of its shape. When the [CSS Shapes Module Level 1](#) specification was released and even more so when it went to Candidate recommendation I was ecstatic.

Now we can do layouts like these without hacks.

See the Pen [CSS Shapes Demo #2](#) by SitePoint ([@SitePoint](#)) on [CodePen](#).

See the Pen [CSS Shapes Demo #8](#) by SitePoint ([@SitePoint](#)) on [CodePen](#).

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Until the [level 2](#) specification is implemented in browsers we'll just have to be happy with shape-outside and its limitations. What I'm really excited is for shape-inside to be fully implemented.

Shape inside allows to put text inside a shape without having to resort to javascript or hacks using 2 shape outside objects to get a similar effect.

The level 2 specification also gives us padding and margins for our shapes :-)



I first met Dean not long after my wife and I split up. I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won't bother to talk about, except that it had something to do with the miserably weary split-up and my feeling that everything was dead. With the coming of Dean Moriarty began the part of my life you could call my life on the road. Before that I'd often dreamed of going West to see the country, always vaguely planning and never taking off. Dean is the perfect guy for the road because he actually was born on the road, when his parents were passing through Salt Lake City in 1926, in a jalopy, on their way to Los Angeles. First reports of him came to me through Chad King, who'd shown me a few letters from him written in New Mexico reform school. I was tremendously interested in the letters because they so naively and sweetly asked Chad to teach him all about Nietzsche and all the wonderful intellectual things that Chad knew. At one point Carlo and I talked about the letters and wondered if we would ever meet the strange Dean Moriarty. This is all far back, when Dean was not the way he is today, when he was a young jailkid shrouded in mystery. Then news came that Dean was out of reform school and was coming to New York for the first time; also there was talk that he had just married a girl called Marylou.

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# Things (maybe) coming that may help

Out of the many things in the CSS working group universe I've picked 3 to highlight because I think they have the most potential.

## Exclusions

[CSS Exclusions Module Level 1](#) provides a way to create exclusions in our CSS-based layouts; making the image below possible in CSS.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Integer quis nisi purus, at tempus ligula. Maecenas eu consectetur sapien.

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non lectus. Aliquam fringilla sodales sapien, vel vulputate mi pulvinar eu. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Maecenas suscipit sem nisi. Quisque ligula velit, gravida quis cursus sed, porttitor et turpis. Nulla facilisi. Praesent mauris sem, congue sit amet placerat cursus, eleifend vitae mi. In cursus mollis elementum. Nulla ut placerat velit.

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We can use exclusions to provide effects like those in magazines. From using it to highlight pullquotes with extra white space around or use shape inside to lay text in shapes other than boxes.



## Euro vizija tolsta, skeptikų daugėja

2012 m. Lietuvos ekonomikos rodikliai jau patekę į lemiamą Maastrichto kriterijų vertinimą, lemsiantį, ar 2014 m. turėsime eurą. Ar realus ir vis dar geidžiamas šis uždavinys?

Rima Gvozdaite

**2006** m. iki euro Lietuvai pritrūko vos 0,1 proc. – tiek viršijome infliacijos Maastrichto rodiklį. Šiuo metu jį viršijame 1 proc., o valdžios sektoriaus deficito ribą – net 3 proc. O jau po kelių mėnesių, gegužę, laukia tarpinis konvergencijos rodiklių vertinimas, dar po metų – galutinis įvertinimas.

Vyriausybė vis dar tikisi peršokti gana aukštą kartelę ir sulaukti kvietimo nuo 2014 m. prisijungti prie euro zonos, nors daugelis analitikų tuo rimtai abejoja. Bent jau teorinių galimybių sutilpti į kriterijus gal dar likę, tačiau visuomenės užsidedimo įsijoti į bendrą ES valiutos sąjungą – ne: per sociologines apklausas daugiau kaip pusė šalies gyventojų sakosi nenorį euro.

### Alternatyvos Lietuva neturi

Finansų ministrė Ingrida Šimonytė vardija, kodėl neverta cirkoti energijos ginčijantis, ar Lietuvai reikia euro: „Lietuva teisiskai įsipareigojusi įstoti į euro zoną – mes neturime vadinamojo „opt out clause“, kurį turi

Danija ar Jungtinė Karalystė. Be to, litas priartėjęs prie euro, vadinasi, iš esmės patiriame visas neigiamas mąstytės euro zonoje pasekmes

(išskyrus mokėjimus į naujai kuriamus „gelbėjimo fondus“), tačiau nepatiriame jokių teigiamų.

Tokia būsena lygintina su nemalonių trypčiojimų pricangyje. Nors lito kursas euro atžvilgiu fiksuotas, investuotojai tą mato kitaip ir valiutų kurso keitimo rizikos neįmanoma panaikinti kitaip, nei įsivedant eurą. Kredito reitingų agentūros aiškiai deklaruoja, kad mąstytės euro zonoje taptų pagrindu kilstelėti Lietuvos reitingą, vadinasi, atpiginti skolintumąsi.“

I.Šimonytė priduria, kad kartais biudžeto deficito mažinimas pateikiamas kaip Vyriausybės užgauda, nors tiesa yra paprasta: kuo mažesnis deficitas, tuo mažiau reikia skolintis, tad savo problemas turime visų pirma išspręsti dėl savęs, o ne dėl euro.

Pasak Lietuvos banko valdybos pirmininko Vito Vasiliausko, euras yra tik tikslo sukurti tvarią ekonomiką finišo juostelė. „Maastrichto kriterijai aiškiai apibrėžia reikalavimus, kuriuos atitinkanti valstybė gali būti laikoma stabilios ekonomikos šalimi. Šiandien esame tokiam ūkio raidos taške, kai būtent stabilumo ir tvarumo reikia visų labiausiai, o jo – bent šio tokio – galime tikėtis tik laikydami griežtos finansinės drausmės. To reikalauja ir mūsų valstybės finansų būklė, ir pasaulio rinkose tvyranti įtampa bei optimizmo netrykštančios ekonominės prognozės. Būtent todėl stengtis atitikti Maastrichto kriterijus – būtina“, – tvirtina V.Vasiliauskas.

**Lietuvos banko valdybos pirmininkas V.Vasiliauskas:**

**„Tvari ekonomika – tikslas, o euras yra šio tikslo finišo juostelė.“**

irgi sulauktume didelio gyventojų pasipriešinimo, nes apie 80 proc. paskolų yra eurai, o 80 proc. indėlių – litais.

Vis dėlto, „Swedbank Markets“ tarnybos vadovo Tomo Andrejausko nuomone, turėtume kantriai sekti, pagal kokį scenarijų rutuliosis euro zonos krizė: šandien įsivesti eurą būtų nepalanku jau vien dėl to, kad reikėtų prisidėti apie 1 mlrd. eurų kitoms ES valstybės gelbėti. O finansų analitikas Valdemaras Katkus nekeičia nuomonės: euro Lietuvai nereikia. „Jei einame viena ekonomikos vage su visomis ES valstybėmis, tuomet stokime į euro zoną, tačiau jei mes vystysimės sparčiau nei euro zona, tuomet kam paties susivaržyti ir lėtinti ekonomikos augimą.“

### EURO PRANAŠUMAI

- Lyginant kredito rizikos apsidraudimo sąnaudas, Lietuva sutaupytų apie 700 mln. Lt per metus.
- Verslas taupytų konvergencijos sąnaudas – apie 300 mln. Lt per metus.
- Nebeliktų valiutų rizikos, todėl didelių galimybių pritraukti užsienio investuotojų.
- Importuojamų prekių ir paslaugų kainos nesikeistų dėl nacionalinių valiutų svyravimo.

### EURO TRŪKUMAI

- Euro zonos stabilizavimo fondai turėtų mokėti apie 1 mlrd. eurų tiesioginę kontribuciją.
- Dėl kainų apvalinimo šoktelėtų prekių ir paslaugų kainos.
- Reikėtų susivaržyti Maastrichto kriterijais.



▲ Euro zone will be probably soon separately in two different group.

### LIETUVA NETENKINA DVIEJŲ IŠ KETURIŲ MA

Rodiklis	Kriterijus	ES vidurkis
Infliacija*	3	2,6
Valdžios sektoriaus deficitas	-3	-6,2
Valstybės skola	60	85,4
Ilgalaikės palūkanų normos	7,3	7

\*Palyginti su trijų ES valstybių narių, kuriose mažiausias infliacijos lygis.  
Šaltinis: SEB, Finansų ministrė

2015–2016 m. ar 2017

Daugelio analitikų vertinimu, turėti euro neįmanoma, inusi, kad anksčiausia įstoti į euro zoną. Nors I.Šimonytė pripažįsta, lengviau atitikti valdžios sektoriaus deficitą, kuris sutrukdė. Kad ir kaip paradoksaliai, turime lygiuotis į problemą ekonomikos pakilimas pildėjimą, o ekonomikai sietgi defliacija. Be to, Lietuva veikia pasaulinės energijos kainų tendencijas.

G.Nausėdo pasauliniams infliacijos silpnėjimui atvirksė. „2012 m. infliacijos o inėjimui sievėti pasirinkė išlaikant jant Seimo didesnį galutinai laivoje 2014 m. pasekmų viešinti.“

„Snoras“ nacionalinio banko turtas daug mažesnis finansų analitikas.

DNB grupės vyriausioji Jekaterina Rojaka atkreipia j tai, kad kol kas neskelbia tikėtina, nemažai) valsty padidins naujos Visagino elektrinės projektas.

Vis dėlto „Swedbank“ tarnybos vadovo T.Andrejausko teigimu, Lietuvai įsivesti eurai trukdytų ne Maastrichto bet visuomenės nuomonė primena, kad lietuviai visu-

## CSS page floats and overflow

[CSS Overflow Module Level 3](#) is another attempt to do content fragmentation on the web, similar to what [CSS Regions](#) did except that unlike regions it is not implemented on any current browser. It can create different layouts by changing the way content flows within a page.

[CSS Page Floats](#) takes care of floats that move to the top or bottom of content passages. This draft is the web equivalent to what print publications use to move which figures and photos to the top or bottom of columns or pages, along with their captions.



## Ways to enrich our web layouts

I guess I could reverse the question and ask what the web do that print can't but I'll be nice and ask how can we enrich our web content.

The primary way is to add motion and interactivity. Best way to do this is with the Web Animation API.

[The web animation API](#) (WAAPi) is an attempt to unify all animation libraries available for the open web (SVG, CSS animations and CSS Transitions) using the same syntax.

WAAPi makes complex animations easier to handle and provides additional functionality that not part of the component specifications. It also allows developers to do animations without requiring heavy libraries like GSAP (although there is still a place for GSAP in the animation ecosystem.)

## Keeping things in perspective

We can make our web content take some of the metaphors and conventions of printed media ***where it makes sense to do so.***

While I've always advocated for us to take advantage of the types of things we can do in print for our web content I'll be the first one to insist that we do not go

overboard with the fancy.

I'm not advocating for the web to turn into a digital version of our favorite magazines but to stop thinking that the holy grail layout is the only way we should be designing our contents and limiting the work of designers to just variations on a theme.

## Examples

- <http://codepen.io/chriscoyier/full/YyxKea/>
- <http://helenvholmes.com/the-future-of-wearables/>
- <http://codepen.io/sturobson/full/gaGzKw/>
- <http://thegreatdiscontent.com/>
- <http://codepen.io/bartveneman/full/JGNmde/>
- <http://read.artspacetokyo.com/>
- <http://read.shapeofdesignbook.com/>