



2019/2213(BUD)

21.4.2020

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Budgets

on Guidelines for the 2021 budget – Section III
(2019/2213(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Nikos Androulakis

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Calls for an ambitious 2021 budget that will enable the EU to rise to the external policy challenges, fulfil its objectives and strive towards the goal of achieving strategic autonomy;
2. Is concerned by the rapid worldwide spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the affected countries; is convinced that international cooperation is crucial to overcome this global crisis; believes that the EU should take the lead in the global efforts to contain the pandemic and mitigate its impact; calls on the EU to show solidarity with the affected third countries, particularly those in its immediate neighbourhood, including by mobilising additional resources via the EU's external financing instruments to help affected countries rebuild their economies, mitigate the socio-economic impact of this crisis and strengthen the capacities of public health systems worldwide;
3. Underlines the strategic importance of enlargement policy in the Western Balkans and of the EU neighbourhood policy; emphasises the need to increase the funding for the Western Balkan countries and the countries of the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood in order to support political and economic reforms, with a focus on the most committed partners following the principle of 'more for more and less for less'; recalls the need to implement strict conditionality in regard to financial support; stresses the need to particularly support pro-European and pro-democratic forces in these regions, thereby fostering the development of EU values and respect for the rule of law;
4. Believes that the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) should focus its funding on the areas of functioning of democratic institutions, the rule of law, good governance and public administration; recalls that the Commission has recommended opening accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia, and calls for adequate financial provisions in order to support political reforms and alignment with the *acquis*;
5. Underlines that financial allocations under the IPA III should be conditional on respect for European values such as the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, democratic process, respect for fundamental values and good neighbourly relations; calls on the Commission to monitor the implementation of conditionality; asks the Commission to use the funds currently allocated under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) to support, via direct management by the EU, Turkey's civil society, human rights defenders and journalists and to increase opportunities for people-to-people contacts, academic dialogue, access for Turkish students to European universities, and media platforms for journalists with the objective of protecting and promoting democratic values and principles, human rights and the rule of law;
6. Recalls the worrying developments in the countries in the Southern Neighbourhood, including the continuing conflicts in Syria and Libya, the rise of extremism, and refugee and migrant waves; calls on the Commission to dedicate adequate financial resources for the countries in the Southern Neighbourhood under the new EFIs structure;

7. Calls on the Commission, in view of the increasing uncertainty and instability in the region, to step up its financial support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in 2021, in order to preserve uninterrupted basic services for millions of Palestinian refugees and allow the Agency to carry out its critically important mandate; deplores the continued destruction and confiscation of EU-funded humanitarian assistance in the West Bank; is concerned by the lack of resolve of the EEAS and the Commission, as highlighted by the European Court of Auditors, to secure compensation from the Israeli authorities, as requested by Parliament in its resolution of September 2018;
8. Reiterates its call for a profound and comprehensive review of the EU's relations with Egypt, notably its assistance programme; considers, as stressed in its resolution of October 2019, that the human rights situation in Egypt requires a serious revision of the Commission's budget support operations and calls for EU assistance to be restricted to primarily supporting civil society;
9. Recalls that various European political leaders have highlighted the importance of significantly advancing relations with the African continent, and hence stresses the need to adequately match words with deeds and provide adequate funding in order to address the many joint short-term, medium-term and long-term challenges and opportunities which Europe and Africa can only tackle together;
10. Requests that the Commission come up with a comprehensive EU Arctic Strategy that takes into account all the geopolitical and geostrategic aspects as well as the rapid climate change in the region; asks the Commission to include the Arctic in the 2020 Work Programme;
11. Welcomes the proposal made by the Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, to create a 'Geopolitical Commission'; reiterates, however, the need to ensure the fulfilment of other EU priorities and values, such as the protection of human rights, gender equality, the protection of the environment and minority rights; highlights, therefore, the need to protect the above-mentioned while building a new 'geopolitical' EU;
12. Recalls that human rights are an integral part of the EU's external action policy; reiterates the need for increased funding dedicated to supporting human rights worldwide, with a particular focus on the protection of human rights defenders, in particular those most at risk; stresses in this regard the need to continue the Human Rights Defenders Mechanism (Protectdefenders.eu) and to increase the funding dedicated to it; believes that the EU should strictly refrain from budget support as a modality to provide assistance in countries which grossly fail to meet international standards in the field of human rights and democracy or which fail to demonstrate their commitment to fighting corruption; highlights the importance of election observation missions, notably by local civil society groups, and calls for an appropriate level of funding;
13. Calls for further funding for strategic communication actions to counter disinformation campaigns, which are increasingly used to undermine the democratic order in the Union and in countries in the Union's near neighbourhood; highlights the importance of the flagship project of the European External Action Service's 'East StratCom Task Force -

EU vs. Disinfo' in the fight against disinformation, propaganda and foreign influence;

14. Underlines that climate change is changing the geopolitical landscape as well as increasing humanitarian needs in many parts of the world; insists that the next budget should help the Union meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement, should be fully aligned with the objective of limiting global warming to under 1.5°C, and should contribute to halting and reversing the decline in biodiversity; underlines in this regard also the importance of effective climate and environmental (including biodiversity) proofing of the budget; stresses that every effort should be made to ensure that the overall climate mainstreaming target is reached over the whole period 2021-2027;
15. Stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming and the need for proper indicators and a specific methodology, as well as regular monitoring, in order to analyse the impact of the EU budget on gender equality; calls on the EEAS to improve the gender and geographical balance among its staff; stresses the need for specific measures to ensure the presence of gender advisers in EU delegations and CSDP missions and operations;
16. Insists that the budget for the Common Foreign and Security Policy should focus on priority areas, both geographically and thematically, and on areas where EU action can bring most added value;
17. Emphasises the importance of providing adequate financial support to frame a genuine European Defence Union, promote strategic autonomy and bolster the EU's role on the global level; stresses in particular the importance of maintaining Parliament's position regarding the amounts for the European Defence Fund (EDF) and for military mobility; stresses that continued support to and enhanced coordination of defence-related policy and actions under EDA, PESCO, EDF and other initiatives should be ensured; urges the Commission to provide for the funding of the administrative and operating expenditure of the European Defence Agency and Permanent Structured Cooperation from the Union budget, thereby restoring Parliament's budgetary function as provided for by Article 41 TEU;
18. Stresses the importance of maintaining Parliament's position regarding the allocation for the European Space Programme, which strengthens Europe's role as a global player and is a strong asset for its security and defence;
19. Notes that a new generation of external financing instruments (EFIs) will come into force in 2021, including a streamlined global instrument replacing most of the existing EFIs;
20. Reiterates that the new EFI architecture should enhance coherence, accountability, efficiency and democratic oversight; emphasises the need for a greater role for Parliament in the strategic steering of the new instruments; expects to be involved from an early stage in the (pre-)programming of the new instruments;
21. Calls for increased transparency and scrutiny of EFI funding in recipient countries, so as to ensure that financial resources are used to the most efficient and effective degree possible; demands regular exchanges through a structured dialogue between Parliament and the Commission that would allow Parliament to evaluate in detail the use of the budget; calls for increased cooperation and consultation with local beneficiaries throughout the budgetary planning and implementation phases; stresses the need to

promote the visibility of EFIs by raising awareness of their positive impact and benefits in order to strengthen the impact of funding and enhance EU public diplomacy;

22. Requests that the Commission prepare contingency plans in due time in order to ensure continuity of funding in the event that the new programmes are not adopted in time for the start of the new multiannual financial framework (MFF);
23. Urges the Commission to present a differentiated budget nomenclature for the new external financing instruments, notably by including at least one budget line for each third country receiving significant amounts of EU assistance; stresses that in the context of a more streamlined set of instruments, the budget structure needs to be sufficiently detailed and transparent to allow Parliament to carry out its budgetary functions effectively and fulfil its oversight role.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	20.4.2020
Result of final vote	+: 51 -: 14 0: 5
Members present for the final vote	Alviina Alametsä, Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Maria Arena, Petras Auštrevičius, Traian Băsescu, Lars Patrick Berg, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Susanna Ceccardi, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Katalin Cseh, Tanja Fajon, Anna Fotyga, Michael Gahler, Kinga Gál, Giorgos Georgiou, Sunčana Glavak, Raphaël Glucksmann, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Márton Gyöngyösi, Sandra Kalniete, Karol Karski, Dietmar Köster, Stelios Kouloglou, Andrius Kubilius, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Nathalie Loiseau, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Lukas Mandl, Thierry Mariani, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Sven Mikser, Francisco José Millán Mon, Javier Nart, Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor, Urmas Paet, Demetris Papadakis, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Manu Pineda, Kati Piri, Giuliano Pisapia, Diana Riba i Giner, Jérôme Rivière, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Andreas Schieder, Radosław Sikorski, Sergei Stanishev, Tineke Strik, Hermann Tertsch, Hilde Vautmans, Harald Vilimsky, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Charlie Weimers, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Salima Yenbou, Željana Zovko
Substitutes present for the final vote	Nikos Androulakis, Nicolas Bay

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

51	+
NI	Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Márton Gyöngyösi
PPE	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Traian Băsescu, Michael Gahler, Kinga Gál, Sunčana Glavak, Sandra Kalniete, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, David McAllister, Lukas Mandl, Vangelis Meimarakis, Francisco José Millán Mon, Gheorge-Vlad Nistor, Radosław Sikorski, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Željana Zovko
Renew	Petras Auštrevičius, Katalin Cseh, Klemen Grošelj, Bernatd Guetta, Ihan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Hilde Vautmans
S&D	Nikos Androulakis, Maria Arena, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Tanja Fajon, Raphaël Glucksmann, Dietmar Köster, Sven Mikser, Demetris Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Kati Piri, Giuliano Pisapia, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Andreas Schieder, Sergei Stanishev
Verts/ALE	Alviina Alametsä, Reinhard Bütikofer, Diana Riba I Giner, Tineke Strik, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz, Salima Yenbou

14	-
ECR	Anna Fotyga, Katol Karksi, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Hermann Tertsch, Jan Witold Waszczykowski, Charlie Weimers
ID	Lars Patrick Berg, Anna Bonfrisco, Susanna Ceccardi, Thierry Mariani, Jérôme Rivière, Harald Vilimsky, Nicolas Bay
NI	Kostas Papadakis

5	0
GUE/NGL	Giorgos Georgiou, Stelios Kouloglou, Manu Pineda, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz
PPE	Antonio López-Istúriz White

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention