



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2014/2040(BUD)

3.9.2014

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Budgets

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015
(2014/2040(BUD))

Rapporteur: Giovanni La Via

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that the EU Draft Budget for 2015 proposed by the Commission amounts to - including special instruments - EUR 145 599,3 million in commitment appropriations (CA) and EUR 142 137,3 million in payment appropriations (PA) and that the increase in CA amounts to + 2,1 % and in PA to + 1,4 % compared to the 2014 Budget as modified by the Draft Amending Budgets 2/14 and 3/14;
2. Recalls the recent agreement on the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework (MFF) including new flexibility instruments, which defines the main parameters for the annual budgets until 2020; expects that the Council will not attempt to impose restricted interpretations of specific provisions; underlines the fact that each annual budget must be in line with Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013¹ and with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management² and should not be considered an excuse to re-negotiate the MFF; is convinced that a high level of environmental protection in the European Union, health as a precondition for economic prosperity, food and feed safety and mechanisms to help protect against natural and man-made disasters are of core value to all European citizens;
3. Emphasises that, as the second year of the new MFF, 2015 will be important for the successful implementation of the new 2014-2020 multiannual programmes; underlines the fact that, in order not to hamper the implementation of key Union policies, all programmes need to be up and running and in full swing as soon as possible;
4. Highlights that climate and resource efficiency mainstreaming is of horizontal importance in all Union policies to achieve the goals set by the Europe 2020 strategy;
5. Is aware that 2015 will be important for the successful implementation of the new multiannual programmes (the third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020), the Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE), and the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (2014-2020)) under the responsibility of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety; consequently stresses that it is essential to provide the necessary appropriations to gain the full potential of those new programmes;
6. Points out that a proper balance between commitment and payment appropriations has to be found in order to meet all beneficiary requests;

¹ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014 - 2020 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884).

² OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

7. Notes that the available payment appropriation for LIFE represent, in comparison to figures in Budget 2014, an increase of EUR 23,3 million (+ 7,67%) for ENV and EUR 7,2 million (+7,13 %) for CLIMA; notes that, while the appropriations for CLIMA should be sufficient to cover the 2015 needs, the ENV lines could face a shortage of payment appropriations in October 2015; therefore expects the Commission and the Council to ensure that sufficient resources are made available in case of shortage in payments;
8. Stresses that it is necessary to help Europe recover from the crisis; notes that the spending plan seeks to encourage the implementation and integration of environment and climate objectives in other policies and establish a more environment-conscious Europe; is fully aware that these policies and financing instruments in the remit of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety are small and do not receive as much attention as other programmes and funds; is therefore alerted not to accept any further reduction of budget lines as the impact would not be tolerable; calls especially on Member States and regions to perceive the implementation of environmental and climate-friendly policies, actions and projects as a chance to foster growth and not as a burden;
9. Notes that the 2015 budget will be lower in real terms than the 2013 budget; urges, in this context, the Commission and the Member States to do their utmost to ensure the swift adoption of all partnership agreements and operational programmes, so as not to lose any additional time in implementing the new investment programmes; stresses the importance of the Commission's full support for national administrations at all stages of the process;
10. Recalls that Horizon 2020 will contribute to objectives in the remit of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety with research projects in the areas of climate, health, environment and in particular the production of renewable energy through innovative solutions; affirms its commitment to monitor the alignment of the projects with the corresponding objectives and the progress of the implementation;
11. Underlines the importance of decentralised agencies (European Food Safety Authority, European Medicines Agency, European Environmental Agency, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, European Chemicals Agency), which are vital for the implementation of Union policies and programmes; emphasizes the need to assess all agencies on a case-by-case basis in terms of budget and human resources and to provide them, in the 2015 budget and in the following years, with the appropriate financial means and staff to enable them to fulfil properly the tasks assigned to them by the legislative authority;
12. Believes that decentralised agencies have to bear their fair share of cost savings as do other institutions; fully supports the gradual reduction of staff by 5% until the end of 2017, starting with the voted establishment plans as of 1 January 2013 as reference date;

13. Points out that, the management of grants, a major part of the LIFE programme, will be delegated to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME); notes that the externalisation of this part of the LIFE programme (+/- EUR 206 million) is the object of a Memorandum of Understanding with EASME which is in the final stage of negotiation; underlines that once the Memorandum will be signed the corresponding operational appropriations will be delegated to the EASME;
14. Is aware that the 2015 Draft Budget indicates a Commission subsidy of EUR 5,5 million to European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) for activities in the area of biocides and PIC (legislation on import and export of dangerous chemicals) based on an assumption of EUR 3,25 million in fees received from the industry by ECHA; invites the Commission to ensure that sufficient resources are made available in case of shortage in fees appropriations for 2015; asks the interinstitutional working group on agencies to look into clear and transparent rules on the financing of agencies;
15. Notes, that the contribution to the European Medicines Agency for 2015, as requested by the Agency and as adopted by the Commission amounts to EUR 31,516 million; is aware that to this amount, the 2013 outturn of EUR 1,499 million needs to be added, reaching a total contribution of EUR 33,015 million in 2015; points out that the proposed contribution does not cover any additional contribution relating to the implementation of the Pharmacovigilance legislation, as the costs of this activity are to be covered by fees; recalls that Regulation (EU) No 658/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ entered into force in July 2014 and that the Agency will have to adapt its existing human and financial resources to cover the Pharmacovigilance activities; stresses that the European Medicines Agency is one of the industry-driven agencies which, in the last four years, has not received one additional post for the implementation of the Pharmacovigilance legislation resulting in a slow-down of handling files;
16. Stresses that Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions are valuable tools to initiate new activities and policies; reiterates that several ideas of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety have been implemented successfully in the past; will therefore make further use of those instruments; encourages the full use of margins available under each heading;
17. Is in general not convinced that the externalisation of services aiming at reducing staff in establishment plans will be more cost-efficient in the long-run as service contractors need supervision and guidance while looking for profit at the same time.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 658/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on fees payable to the European Medicines Agency for the conduct of pharmacovigilance activities in respect of medicinal products for human use (OJ L 189, 27.6.2014, p. 112).

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 50 -: 12 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Margrete Auken, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Lynn Boylan, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Nessa Childers, Alberto Cirio, Birgit Collin-Langen, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Jørn Dohrmann, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, José Inácio Faria, Karl-Heinz Florenz, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, György Hölvényi, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Iosu Juaristi Abaunz, Karin Kadenbach, Syed Kamall, Kateřina Konečná, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Miroslav Mikolášik, Massimo Paolucci, Gilles Pargneaux, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław Grzegorz Piecha, Frédérique Ries, Michèle Rivasi, Teresa Rodriguez-Rubio, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Dubravka Šuica, Tibor Szanyi, Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu, Glenis Willmott
Substitutes present for the final vote	Giorgos Grammatikakis, James Nicholson, Alojz Peterle, Christel Schaldemose