



2022/0000(BUD)

8.9.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Budgets

on General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2023 - all sections
(2022/0000(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Monika Vana

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas gender equality is a core value of the Union enshrined in Article 2 TEU; whereas Article 8 TFEU states that in all its activities the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, establishing the principle of gender mainstreaming;
- B. whereas the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 presented policy objectives and actions with a view to achieving significant progress towards a gender-equal Europe by 2025;
- C. whereas Parliament has repeatedly urged the Commission to promote and implement the use of gender mainstreaming in its actions, gender budgeting, and gender impact assessments in all Union policy areas; whereas budgets are never gender-neutral and therefore need to be established with the clear objective of anti-discrimination and the goal of reaching everyone and their specific needs; whereas Parliament strongly requested that gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting be implemented throughout the budgetary procedure;
- D. whereas the European Court of Auditors' special report 10/2021¹ confirmed that the Union's budget cycle does not yet adequately take gender equality into account and that the Commission has not yet implemented its commitment to include gender mainstreaming in the Union budget;
- E. whereas Parliament has repeatedly called for sufficient funding for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), for the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, and for the subsequent Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Programme², and for sufficient funding and prioritising of its Daphne strand, in order to enforce non-discrimination and gender equality;
- F. whereas Russia's unjustified war against Ukraine and the resulting humanitarian and energy crises are causing further increases in poverty, especially among women; whereas the Union budget should be equipped to react to growing insecurities; whereas specific measures and priorities should be considered to address the needs of women and girls, both as refugees as well as persons impacted by the consequences of the crisis;
- G. whereas the COVID-19 crisis is having a disproportionate impact on women and girls as well as exacerbating existing inequalities resulting in an increased risk of gender-based violence (GBV), especially during lockdowns, and higher rates of exit from the labour market linked to a higher burden of care tasks; whereas women constitute the

¹ European Court of Auditors, Gender mainstreaming in the EU budget: time to turn words into action. Special report No 10, 2021, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021.

² Established by Regulation (EU) 2021/692.

majority of those employed in sectors affected by the crisis;

- H. whereas women remain under-represented in leadership and decision-making positions, while being overrepresented in low-paid sectors such as care and service work, as well as in informal economy and in sectors with more precarious conditions; whereas it is vital to ensure that women have the right to jobs with guaranteed rights and the right to motherhood without being penalised for it; whereas examples of discrimination include pressure from employers on women at job interviews, along with growing economic and work-related pressure on female employees not to take maternity leave; stresses that, even taking into account the balance of personal, family and professional life, the Union budget should include an increase in investment in public services including high-quality health systems and a public social security system, ensuring its universality;
- I. whereas there is a gender imbalance in the digital economy and the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sectors in terms of education, training and employment; whereas resources supporting empowerment of all minority genders through digital inclusion could lead to advancing gender equality in the digital age;
1. Underlines that a gender perspective should be fully and adequately integrated at all levels of the budgetary process, particularly in the light of the gendered impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing backlash against women's rights and gender equality in several Member States; calls for gender budgeting and the inclusion of gender-related objectives in all Union programmes and the identification of relevant budget lines, the effective monitoring of the Union budget's contribution to gender equality and a gender-sensitive review of programmes with spending adjusted according to the conclusions;
 2. Welcomes in this context the Commission's ongoing commitment to developing a methodology to measure gender-relevant expenditure and its ongoing assessment of gender-related data collection; expects Parliament to be consulted throughout the assessment process; expects the Commission to fully implement its commitments and to report specifically on this to the budgetary authority;
 3. Stresses that with CERV being the only programme with gender-related spending targets, including on preventing and combating GBV, it is imperative to allocate sufficient financing, thus increase its budget as deemed appropriate to work towards combating inequalities that have been exacerbated by various crises including the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the backlash against women's rights, specifically Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), in several Member States, and in order to finally achieve substantial progress;
 4. Stresses the need for adequate funding to promote the key objectives of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, among others vis à vis ending GBV, challenging gender stereotypes, closing gender gaps in the labour market, and achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy;
 5. Strongly reiterates its demand to increase resources to combat GBV as well as its demand for adequately increased funding for gender equality and gender mainstreaming and the relevant organisations under the Daphne and Values strands, especially with

regard to the measurable increase in cases of violence against women since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic; stresses the need to increase public, financial and human resources in order to support groups at risk of poverty and to tackle situations posing a risk to children and young people, the elderly, people with disabilities and the homeless;

6. Calls in this context to split the budget line "Equality and rights" with the aim of ensuring transparency by dedicating a specific budget line to measures exclusively relating to gender equality; and to earmark funding for projects which contribute to implementing specific objectives to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming;
7. Recommends, in particular, increasing funding to promote the protection of maternity, paternity and early childhood through the appropriate programmes; calls, to that end, for maternal and child health to be given special importance in the Union's 2023 budget; further recommends that funds be guaranteed for the defence, promotion and support of breastfeeding, thereby contributing to efforts to achieve the World Health Organization's target of having 50 % of babies worldwide exclusively breastfed for the first six months of their lives by 2025, which would require, among other measures, ensuring maternity and paternity leave is long enough and sufficiently well remunerated;
8. Calls strongly for the rejection of establishing precarious jobs; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote collective agreements, wage appreciation, the promotion of open-ended contracts and the regulation of working hours; urges Parliament and the other Union institutions to tackle precarity by promoting collective agreements and work with rights and rejecting subcontracting, ensuring equal pay for equal work;
9. Stresses that SRHR are fundamental rights and a precondition of gender equality; reiterates the need to reinforce budgetary allocations under the EU4health programme that support actions ensuring the gender aspect of health, including Sexual and Reproductive Health, an integral part of health care that must be placed at the heart of health policy to ensure universal access, as well as quality of services, especially considering the backlash against women's rights and access to safe and legal abortion in several Member States, as well as the types of care and medicine that are essential to voluntary family planning and maternal and newborn health, and for research and treatment of gender-specific conditions such as fibroids, premenstrual syndrome and endometriosis with an intersectional perspective, in particular regarding diagnosis and treatment of black and minority ethnic women;
10. Stresses the need for the Union budget to play a more active role in efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals; calls, therefore, for the budget to be used to support measures and projects intended to eradicate female and child poverty, increase and improve integration into the labour market, eliminate wage and labour inequalities between men and women, improve access to and the provision of health care, and combat violence against women, children and young people;
11. Stresses the crucial work of EIGE in raising awareness of the extent and causes of gender inequality in the Union, which has been reflected in an increase of tasks allocated to it, and is particularly important in the light of ongoing crises; fears that a

further downscaling of EIGE's activities endangers the political priorities of the Union on gender equality; therefore requests the allocation for 8 Contract Agents to enable EIGE to effectively fulfil its mandate as a fundamental agency in developing, analysing, evaluating and disseminating methodological tools to support the integration of gender equality into all Union policies and the resulting national policies;

12. Regrets the gender gap in digital skills, as well as in STEM careers, in industrial leadership, and in entrepreneurship; calls on the Commission to strengthen the instruments available and to develop synergies; calls for the Union budget to encourage women's participation in the digital economy and STEM sectors and careers through Union programmes, for example in research, innovation and technology;
13. Stresses the importance of using European Structural and Investment Funds such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) to promote gender equality, women's employment and access to the labour market, lifelong learning and training, childcare and long-term care facilities, particularly in the light of the Union's 14% average gender pay gap, and to tackle systemic challenges to labour market participation, including the gender care gap, stereotypes, norms, roles and traditions;
14. Stresses that the general objective of the EaSI strand of the ESF+ is to promote employment, equal access to the labour market, education and training, gender equality and social inclusion by providing financial support for the Union's objectives, thus, that support should also address the needs of Ukrainian women and children refugees, as far as the aid to the regions hosting them is concerned; calls therefore on the Commission and the Council to increase budget allocations under the ESF+, "Equality and rights" and Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) programmes to civil society organisations, shelters and service providers that support women in Ukraine as well as civil society organisations in the EU supporting refugees from Ukraine, including survivors of sexual violence as a weapon of war; furthermore, calls for additional allocations under the AMIF to support Member States' efforts against trafficking in human beings and protect women and children from this form of organised crime;
15. Calls on the Commission and the Council to increase budget allocations to civil society organisations that promote women's rights, especially those working on promotion of SRHR, such as the global initiative SheDecides, and LGBTI+ rights in the context of the backlash against women's rights, especially in terms of SRHR, and to ensure that Union funds cannot be accessed by anti-gender and anti-choice organisations.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	8.9.2022
Result of final vote	+: 21 -: 3 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Christine Anderson, Robert Biedroń, Annika Bruna, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Frances Fitzgerald, Heléne Fritzon, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Radka Maxová, Karen Melchior, Andżelika Anna Możdżanowska, Maria Noichl, Sandra Pereira, Samira Rafaela, Terry Reintke, Diana Riba i Giner, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Christine Schneider, Sylwia Spurek
Substitutes present for the final vote	Cindy Franssen, Marina Kaljurand, Predrag Fred Matić, Monika Vana, Pernille Weiss
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Giuliano Pisapia

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

21	+
PPE Group	Isabella Adinolfi, Frances Fitzgerald, Cindy Franssen, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Christine Schneider
Renew Group	Karen Melchior, Samira Rafaela, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos
S&D Group	Robert Biedroń, Heléne Fritzon, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Marina Kaljurand, Predrag Fred Matić, Radka Maxová, Maria Noichl, Giuliano Pisapia
The Left Group	Sandra Pereira
Verts/ALE Group	Terry Reintke, Diana Riba i Giner, Sylwia Spurek, Monika Vana

3	-
ECR Group	Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID Group	Christine Anderson, Annika Bruna

2	0
ECR Group	Andzelika Anna Mozdzanowska
PPE Group	Pernille Weiss

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention