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REPORT

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015
(12608/2014 – C8-0144/2014 – 2014/2040(BUD))

Part 1: Motion for a resolution

Committee on Budgets

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Published separately

– Decisions taken by the Committee on Budgets at its meetings of 29 September to 1 October 2014 on the draft amendments to the draft general budget

Part 2 – A8-0014/2014

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015 (12608/2014 – C8-0144/2014 – 2014/2040(BUD))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 106a of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,
- having regard to Council Decision 2007/436/EC, Euratom of 7 June 2007 on the system of the European Communities' own resources¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002²,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020³ (MFF Regulation),
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management⁴ (IIA of 2 December 2013),
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2014 on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2015 budget, Section III - Commission⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2014 on Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2015⁶,
- having regard to the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, which the Commission adopted on 24 June 2014 (COM(2014)0300),
- having regard to the position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015, which the Council adopted on 2 September 2014 and forwarded to Parliament on 12 September 2014 (12608/2014 – C8-0144/2014),
- having regard to Letter of amendment No 1/2015 to the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2015 presented by the Commission on 15 October 2014,

¹ OJ L 163, 23.6.2007, p. 17.

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

³ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

⁴ OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p.1.

⁵ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0247.

⁶ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0450.

- having regard to the Bureau deliberations of 15 September 2014 and the revised note of the secretary general of 17 September 2014 on the EP reading on its draft budget for 2015,
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 15 April 2014 on the draft regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending the Protocol on the Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Union by increasing the number of Judges at the General Court¹,
- having regard to the cooperation agreement of 5 February 2014 between the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,
- having regard to Rule 88 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets and the opinions of the other committees concerned (A8-0014/2014),

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0358.

Section III

General overview

1. Recalls that, in its resolution of 13 March 2014, the Parliament underlined the need to reinforce strategic investment in actions with European added value in order to help put the European economy back on track, generating competitiveness, sustainable growth and employment, in particular youth employment, while aiming to increase economic and social cohesion;
2. Highlights that Heads of States and Governments agreed once more in June 2014 (reiterated at the special meeting of the European Council in August 2014) on the need to invest and prepare Member States' economies for the future by addressing overdue investment needs in transport, energy and telecom infrastructure (including the completion of the digital single market by 2015) of Union significance as well as in energy efficiency, innovation and research, and skills; recalls the unquestionable role of the European Union budget in achieving these political objectives;
3. Recalls, once more, that the Union budget should in no way be perceived and evaluated simply as a financial item added as a burden to national budgets but, on the contrary, is to be understood as an opportunity to gear up those initiatives and investments that are of interest and of added value to the Union as a whole, most of them co-decided by Parliament and the Council;
4. Reiterates the complementary nature of the Union budget to national budgets and the impetus it creates to promote growth and jobs and underlines that given its very nature and limited size it should not be checked and curbed by arbitrary reductions but on the contrary targeted areas need to be reinforced;
5. Notes that the Draft Budget 2015 (DB) 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); highlights that the overall volume of the payment appropriations in the DB represents a moderate 1,4 % increase over the 2014 Budget (taking into account AB 1 and DAB 2-4/2014), and is still EUR 2 billion lower than the implemented 2013 budget; notes that the Commission proposed to leave a total margin of EUR 1 478,9 million in commitment appropriations under the ceilings in its DB;
6. Underlines the importance of decentralised agencies, which are vital for the implementation of Union policies and programmes; stresses the need to provide them with appropriate financial means and staff so that they can properly fulfil the tasks assigned to them by the legislative authority;

Council's position

7. Deplores that the Council, in its reading, reduced commitment appropriations by EUR 522 million and payment appropriations by EUR 2,1 billion, thus setting the Union budget for 2015 at EUR 145 077,4 million in commitments and EUR 139 996,9 million in payments; points out that the EUR 2,1 billion cut in payments would represent a reduction of -0,18 % as compared to 2014 Budget (including AB 1/2014 and DAB 2-4/2014); is especially concerned about the severe cuts in the payment appropriations of the funds for competitiveness for growth and jobs under Heading 1a, that represent an egregious breach of the Council's commitment to overcome the crisis and to reinvigorate economic growth;
8. Disapproves of the Council's reading on the 2015 Budget which disregards the multiannual character of the Union's policies, and which would instead of tackling the issue further aggravate payments shortages and slowdown further the implementation of Union programmes;
9. Underlines once more that the Council's approach of fixing the level of payments in accordance with the inflation rate totally disregards the nature and function of the multiannual character of Union policies and renders the MFF totally irrelevant; notes in this regard that the growing gap between payment and commitment appropriations exacerbates the problems with the backlog of outstanding commitments; underlines the negative impact that this approach has on the perception of the Union by its citizens; most of all reiterates that, in order to overcome the economic crisis, the Union should increase its investments;
10. Deplores the arbitrary cuts proposed by the Council to the administrative and support lines financing the implementation of key Union programmes which could be detrimental to the successful start of new programmes as a lack of administrative capacity entails a serious risk of hampering the implementation of Union policies;
11. Is deeply concerned about the Council's use of double standards as regards the Union budget, where, on the one hand, it calls for an increase in Union funds in areas which can generate sustainable growth and, on the other hand, proposes major cuts in key areas such as research, innovation, space, infrastructures, SMEs and energy;
12. Welcomes the point of view expressed by 13 Member States that they are convinced that the Council's agreed level of payment appropriations may not be sufficient and could lead to great pressure with regard to the timely fulfilment of the Union's legal obligations and the meeting of commitments already made; recalls that, according to Article 323 of the Treaty, 'the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission shall ensure that the financial means are made available to allow the Union to fulfil its legal obligation in respect of third parties';

13. Considers that, due to its failure, year after year, to gather a qualified majority within its ranks to secure a level of payments allowing the Union to cover undisputed payment needs, the Council holds a strong political responsibility for the very tense situation in payments; denounces the fact that this has progressively led to the creation of a structural deficit in the Union budget, which contradicts the Treaty provisions and which puts at risk the ability of the Commission to meet its legal obligations;
14. Notes at the same time that the current design of the Union budget, where payment appropriations are linked to national contributions, can bolster adverse choices among Member States, especially in times where the importance of balanced national budget is at the centre of the discourse; stresses, however, that such level of payments is the direct outcome of a corresponding level of commitments, which the Council formally adopted with the necessary qualified majority in the context of annual budgetary procedures;
15. Regrets the innate conflict between the Council on the one hand and the Parliament and Commission on the other hand; calls for ways to convert this tension in a more productive exchange of opinions; hopes that the openness to new attitudes and proposals will ultimately lead to structural changes that foster a balanced budget deal that reflects the ambitions and concerns of both the Parliament and the Council;

Parliament's reading

16. Emphasizes that besides implementing the political agreement reached in the negotiations of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 as regards frontloading of appropriations for specified policy objectives, the Commission did not propose additional efforts to accommodate priorities not only outlined by the Parliament, but also agreed by the Heads of State and Government in the European Council; decides therefore to reinforce financial resources for the Union political objectives and strategic priorities, in a number of areas;
17. Decides to concentrate its reinforcements on the programmes which are at the core of the Europe 2020 strategy aimed at fostering growth, competitiveness and employment, namely Horizon 2020, COSME, Erasmus+, the Digital Agenda, Progress and the Social Agenda (including EURES and the Microfinance Facility) as these programmes are exemplary as to how the Union contributes to an innovative and prosperous economy across the continent; furthermore reinforces programmes that are instrumental to the delivery of the Union's external policy agenda, such as the Neighbourhood Policy, Development and Humanitarian Aid; insists on the need to also increase the financing of important programmes and policies to fight against inequalities, such as FEAD, Europe for Citizens, and the promotion of gender equality;
18. Sets the overall level of appropriations for 2015 at EUR 146 348,9 million and EUR 146 416,5 million in commitment and payment appropriations respectively;

Addressing the recurrent payment crisis

19. Supports the Commission's proposal to make full use of resources available under the 2015 payment ceiling thereby leaving no margin under the 2015 payment ceiling; restores all of the Council's cuts in payments on the basis of current and expected implementation patterns;
20. Highlights however, that even the full use of the 2015 payment ceiling is not sufficient to adequately address the Union's ongoing payment problems that have erupted since the 2010 Union budget; notes, particularly, the huge backlog in payments of the past years leading to the unprecedented level of EUR 23,4 billion at the end of 2013 for cohesion policy alone and fears that it may be of a similar magnitude at the end of 2014; stresses, therefore, that the recurrent problem of shortage of payments needs to be effectively addressed without further delay; hence, decides to go beyond the Commission's proposals in payments by EUR 4 billion for a number of budget lines, including the main "2007-2013 completion lines" of the Union structural funds and research programmes, where the situation in payments is very critical;
21. Calls accordingly on the Commission to stand ready to put forward relevant proposals for the mobilisation of the flexibility mechanisms included in the MFF Regulation; reiterates its intention not to accept any restricted interpretations of the provisions on flexibility and special instruments included in the MFF Regulation and IIA of 2 December 2013, which were successfully negotiated by the Parliament;
22. Insists once again that all payments appropriations mobilised through the use of special instruments must be entered in the budget over and above the MFF payment ceiling;
23. Recalls the striking example of the dramatic shortage of payment appropriations for humanitarian aid, experienced at the end of 2013 and in the first quarter of 2014, that could only be solved thanks to short term and temporary solutions in the form of transfers within the adopted budget; is extremely worried that such situation is likely to occur also in other policy fields such as Research/Development and innovation;
24. Stresses the fact that, in order to clearly identify the 2015 needs stemming from previous years, the negotiations on the additional 2014 payment needs should be finalised before the conciliation on 2015 Budget; reiterates that DABs 2, 3 and 4/2014 should be considered as a package and that the Council cannot expect to benefit from the unexpected revenue resulting from the budgetisation of the surplus and fines without delivering on the additional payment needs presented in DAB 3/2014; recalls that DABs 2, 3 and 4/2014, taken altogether and unamended, represent an overall budgetary impact of only EUR 106 million additional GNI contributions that have to be made available by the Member States in order to secure enough payment appropriations in 2014 to cover the Union's existing legal obligations;

25. Underlines that the level of appropriations, especially in payments, voted by the Parliament in its reading are based on the assumption that all pending DABs for 2014 are adopted in full;
26. Stresses that in order to ensure adequate resources for the Union wide investment plans (as mentioned in the June 2014 European Council and highlighted as a major political priority of President-elect Juncker in his political guidelines¹), continuation of the Youth Employment Initiative, notably the European Youth Guarantee as of budget 2016, and in order to address the persistent problem of payment appropriations, the post electoral revision of the MFF 2014-2020, as provided for in Article 2 of the MFF Regulation, should be launched as soon as possible by the new Commission;

Heading 1a

27. Notes that Heading 1a bears the largest share of Council's cuts both in commitments (EUR -323,5 million as compared to the DB) and in payments (EUR -1 335 million), despite the fact that the European Council again in June 2014 set growth, competitiveness and the creation of jobs at the top of its political agenda; highlights that some of these cuts are not in line with the agreement on the MFF 2014-2020, in so far as they heavily decrease Horizon 2020 (by EUR 190 million in commitments against the DB) that was significantly frontloaded by EUR 200 million in 2014, as well as the ITER programme (EUR -11,2 million), which should instead be frontloaded in 2015 to compensate its backloading in 2014;
28. Believes that, to further energy security, promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency is also essential in the context of Russian energy dependency, in particular in those Member States most dependent on Russian gas; calls for the alignment of the spending objectives of energy funds under Horizon 2020 with the commitments made during the legislative process;
29. Contests the cuts applied by the Council to the Connecting Europe Facility programme (EUR -34,4 million), which come on top of the backloading of this programme for 2015 already taken into account in the DB following the MFF agreement; is concerned about the risks of an ineffective start to this strategic programme, which is of topical importance for the future telecommunication, transport and energy infrastructure investments that can further boost job creation in Europe;
30. Decides, therefore, as a general line to restore the level of the DB for 2015 for all cuts performed by the Council, both in commitments and in payments; furthermore increases a selected number of lines within the programmes which correspond to the Parliament's priorities under Heading 1a (Horizon 2020, COSME, Erasmus+, Digital Agenda, Social Agenda) by exhausting the margin (total increases above DB of some EUR 200 million);

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/about/juncker-commission/docs/pg_en.pdf

31. Deems furthermore necessary to increase above the DB the CEF-Energy lines by a total amount of EUR 34 million in order to partly mitigate the effect of the backloading of this programme for the second year in a row as a result of the MFF agreement; considers it also a priority to reinforce investments in the digital agenda and the broadband and consequently increases CEF-Telecommunication networks by EUR 12 million above the DB;
32. Is of the view that boosting the financial support to SMEs is essential to enable the Union economy to renew with growth and exit the crisis, thereby contributing to the fight against unemployment; believes that the role of SME innovation for Union competitiveness is often emphasised but support for it is underfinanced; decides, accordingly, to increase above DB by EUR 26,5 million the commitment appropriations in favour of SMEs and entrepreneurship; requests the Commission to ensure a genuine bottom-up approach to its implementation; furthermore invites the Commission to dedicate sufficient resources for the implementation of actions foreseen under its Green Action Plan for SMEs;
33. Increases above DB in commitments the three supervisory agencies (EBA, EIOPA and ESMA) for a total amount of EUR 6,1 million;
34. Is concerned by the increasing number of cases in which the effects of the payment shortage under Heading 1a have become apparent, especially under Horizon 2020, where pre-financing is reduced and a considerable number of projects are blocked and a disruption of payments in the Erasmus+ program is looming; is alarmed by the numerous programmes that have almost exhausted all available funds for 2014 months before the deadline for submitting the bills has expired;
35. Welcomes the first steps towards the reform of EFRAG, but highlights the need to fully implement the Maystadt recommendations, including the demand to limit its work to IFRS standards and to phase out its work on small and medium size enterprises and on tax matters;
36. Emphasises the role of SMEs innovation for driving the Union's economic recovery; expects the Commission to fulfil its legal and budgetary commitments with regard to the SME Instrument in Horizon 2020 and calls upon the Council to enable this by providing an appropriate budget; requests the Commission to establish as of 2016 a unique budget line for the SME Instrument, in order to allow clearer budgetary oversight and control, and ensure a genuine bottom-up approach to its implementation;
37. Welcomes the circular economy package published by the Commission on 2 July 2014²; calls for adequate resources to be allocated for the implementation of its activities;

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 2 July 2014: Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe (COM(2014)0398).

Heading 1b

38. Is deeply concerned that the Council, while maintaining the level of commitment appropriations at the DB level (EUR 49 227 million), has decreased the payment appropriations by EUR 220 million, setting the level of payments at EUR 51 382 million;
39. Underlines that Heading 1b bears the biggest part of the current outstanding commitments which is impeding reimbursement for resources already spent by the beneficiary Member States and regions; highlights that this practice caused serious consequences for Member States and regions mostly affected by crisis; deplores that the Council seems to completely ignore this issue; stresses that, in a period when most Member States face challenges in identifying financing sources for projects that can lead to job creation, the Union regional policy is an essential tool to overcome such shortages;
40. Decides to restore the DB in payments for budget lines dedicated to the new programmes, cut by the Council, and to exceed the DB in payments for a number of lines notably concerning the completion of the 2007-2013 MFF programmes;
41. Decides to go above the level of the DB by an amount of EUR 20,2 million for the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and PP/PAs; intends to amend the Commission proposal for the mobilisation of the Flexibility Instrument to complement the financing of the Cypriot Structural Funds programmes under Heading 1b up to the full amount of EUR 100 million, after the conclusion of negotiations with the Council;
42. Strongly believes that Union funding, particularly that under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), should not be used to subsidise national approaches, but should be used to provide additional support to young people in a way that complements and enhances national programmes;
43. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make full use of the funds dedicated to the support of the unemployed youth population; recalls the political agreement linked to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 about the frontloading of the funds under the Youth Employment Initiative, as well as the corresponding amounts programmed within the European Social Fund in order to provide the necessary help in the first years of the programming period; welcomes that the Commission and the Council respect this agreement with regard to the proposed figures; expresses its concerns about the absorption capacity of some Member States with regard to the YEI; recalls that, according to the MFF Regulation,, margins left available below the MFF ceilings for commitment appropriations for the years 2014-2017 shall constitute a Global MFF Margin for commitments, to be made available over and above the ceilings established in the MFF for the years 2016 to 2020 for policy objectives related to growth and employment, in particular youth employment;

Heading 2

44. Welcomes the increase proposed by the Commission in commitment appropriations for the new LIFE programme for the Environment and Climate Action and expects this PROGRAMME to be fully in place in 2015, including a first set of financial instruments; deploras, however, that smaller programmes such as the LIFE programme as well as the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) bear the most significant cuts by the Council under this heading, both in commitments and payments, thereby affecting the achievement of their agreed objectives; also regrets the unjustified Council's cuts to the school fruit and school milk schemes; restores, therefore, the DB on all lines cut by the Council;
45. Agrees that additional support is needed to alleviate the impact of the Russian ban on the import of certain Union agricultural and fisheries products; welcomes the emergency support measures taken by the European Commission as a first response to this crisis; increases, therefore, the Union co-financing for promotion measures in the Common Agricultural Policy by 30 million in order to help producers find alternative sales opportunities, while providing EUR 5 million additional support to fishermen via the EMFF; also decides to increase the amount available for the school fruits scheme by EUR 7 million and school milk scheme by EUR 4 million above the draft budget of the Commission;
46. Notes that, taking into account all amendments under this heading including EUR 2,9 million for pilot projects and preparatory actions, the total amount for Heading 2 is EUR 59,3 billion, leaving a margin of 293,4 EUR million below the ceiling;

Heading 3

47. Underlines that, while representing only 1,5 % of the Union budget and thereby being the smallest heading of the MFF in terms of financial allocation, Heading 3 covers issues of key concern to the European citizens as well as to the national governments, such as asylum and migration policies and internal security; calls therefore on the Commission and the Council to keep increasing financial and political efforts in this heading in the coming years;
48. Regrets that the DB decreases commitment appropriations by 1,9 % from EUR 2 171,998 to EUR 2 130,721 million compared to the 2014 budget leaving a margin of approximately EUR 115 million; deploras that the Council has cut the commitment appropriations by a further EUR 30,2 million compared to the DB and the payment appropriations by a further EUR 28,5 million compared to the DB (corresponding to -1,42 % in commitment appropriations and -1,51 % in payment appropriations); notes thereby that Heading 3 is one of the most affected by the Council's cuts;

49. Believes that the additional cuts proposed by the Council will jeopardise a proper implementation of programmes and actions in Heading 3; underlines the importance of maintaining the DB for the budget lines "Ensuring the protection of rights and empowering citizens" and "Promoting non-discrimination and equality", implementing the programme Rights, Equality and Citizenship 2014 – 2020; takes therefore the general approach to restore the DB on all lines under this heading; takes the decision, furthermore, to increase a selected number of lines above the DB mainly within the programmes Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens and Multimedia Actions, as well as Common Asylum System (for a total of EUR 53,2 million in commitment appropriations above DB including agencies and pilot projects and preparatory actions);
50. Recalls the Joint Declaration of the three institutions that the annual budgetary procedures applied for the MFF 2014-2020 will integrate, as appropriate, gender-responsive elements; points out the need for further efforts in this regard and for a common approach between the three institutions in order to ensure an effective gender mainstreaming in the annual budgetary procedures; reiterates its call that gender analysis should be an integral part of the Union's budgetary procedures and that it should actively involve all actors at all levels of the process in order to advance the Union's commitment towards gender equality;
51. Recalls that a fair and transparent distribution of funding between the different objectives of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund was a priority for the Parliament during negotiations leading to the adoption of that fund; calls accordingly on the Commission to increase the number of budget lines under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to facilitate better readability and transparency in respect of how the financial resources allocated to the different objectives, and thus to those budgetary lines, will be spent;
52. Agrees that additional support is needed for European Citizens' Initiatives; decides therefore to create a new line in Heading 3: "Implementation of European Citizens' Initiatives and other instruments of participatory democracy" with EUR 1 million in commitment appropriations;
53. Stresses the need for and the importance of continuous evaluations of how all funds and programmes are implemented and their resources used in order to detect possible shortcomings at an early stage as well as their effectiveness;

Heading 4

54. Deplores the Council's cuts to Heading 4 (-0,83 % in commitment appropriations and - 5,24 % in payment appropriations), which makes it the heading most severely affected by the Council's cuts to payment appropriations; reiterates the fact that although it takes up less than 6 % of the total Union budget, Heading 4 is the projection of Union engagement abroad and it should therefore ensure enough resources for the Union to play its role as a global actor;

55. Strongly condemns the Council's cut to commitment appropriations for humanitarian aid which cannot resolve the problem of carrying over backlogs of unpaid invoices from previous years and is jeopardising the smooth implementation of this policy, putting the lives of its beneficiaries in threat; stresses that the level of payment appropriations for the Emergency Aid Reserve should correspond to the level of commitment appropriations and must be entered in the budget over and above the MFF payment ceiling ;stresses the gap between commitment and payment appropriations in Humanitarian aid should be reduced in order to take account of the short spending cycles in this area and to break the habit of carrying over backlogs of unpaid invoices from previous years; strongly rejects the adverse effects that payment cutbacks, including postponed payment and delayed operations, that are a consequence of inadequate budgeting, pose for humanitarian aid,, and that are especially ill-fated when so many people are affected by the increasing instability in the periphery; thinks these events serve as a sad but strong alarm signal for the necessity for a more realistic way of budgeting;
56. Recalls the international commitment made by the Union and its Member States to increase their official development assistance (ODA) spending to 0,7 % of GNI and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and therefore calls for an increase in the appropriations for thematic areas covered by the Development Cooperation Instrument, in view of getting closer to the attainment of the Post-2015 Global Development commitments;
57. Emphasises its support for the Middle East Peace Process and its determination to ensure a sufficient amount of funding to UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority by increasing the level of commitment appropriations by EUR 35,5 million above DB; is astonished that the Council has once again reduced the DB payment appropriations for UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority by EUR 2,4 million without clear justification and considers this line under-budgeted already in the DB;
58. Underlines the need to ensure support for countries in the Union's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood that are facing huge challenges with regard to democratic transition and consolidation, economic and social development, immigration and stability; highlights the additional efforts needed to respond to the situation in Ukraine; calls, therefore, for additional EUR 203,3 million above DB to be allocated to the European Neighbourhood Instrument to enable the Union to meet its responsibility in its Eastern and Southern neighbourhood;
59. Considers the Council's cuts to the priority lines of the Parliament unacceptable and proposes to restore the DB on the lines decreased by the Council and to even exceed the DB in commitment appropriations for some lines of strategic importance for the Union's external relations by a total of EUR 400,55 million (Humanitarian Aid, European Neighbourhood Instrument, Development Cooperation Instrument, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy Instrument

for Stability and PP/PAs); notes that these increases exhaust the Heading 4 margin, as well as an additional EUR 66 million that results from decreased appropriations from lines moved to the EEAS budget;

60. Deems it necessary to increase appropriations for the Turkish Cypriot line, in order to ensure the continuation of Union financial support for the work of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus and of the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage;
61. Approves the transfer of the budget lines for the EUSRs to the EEAS budget in order to support their better integration into the EEAS, in accordance with the proposal made by the HRVP in the EEAS Review, Parliament's recommendations of 13 June 2013 and the Court of Auditors' special report n° 11/2014; expects that the transfer will be completed by 1 January 2016;

Heading 5

62. Recalls that the DB reflects the latest Staff Regulation Reform including changes in the calculation of the salary and pension adjustments and the continuing staff reduction;
63. Notes with regret that, despite this, the Council has decreased the appropriations in Heading 5 by EUR 27,6 million, of which EUR 16,7 million is from the Commission's administrative budget for expenditure related to officials and temporary staff, as a consequence of increasing the standard flat rate abatement;
64. Considering that the Commission is reducing its overall number of human resources for the third year in a row and that its staff vacancies forecasts should be considered reliable and should be based on actual institutional expectations, views this increase of the standard flat rate abatement (up to 4,5 % for the Commission's headquarters and 6 % for delegations) as arbitrary;
65. Notes moreover the Council's statement annexed to its position, concerning "the importance of monitoring closely the appropriations for all categories of external staff, against the backdrop of the additional capacity built up by the increase of working time", and the parallel cuts brought to support expenditure in various policy areas, amounting to EUR 20,8 million; besides the already mentioned threats posed by this type of cuts considers them to be ill justified; recalls that according to the IIA of 2 December 2013, that supposed additional capacity was to be already neutralised by rendering 5 % of the official staff over five years; notes in this respect that Commission already over complies with its commitments as it is reducing staff of all categories, whether financed from heading 5 or from other headings;
66. Restores, therefore, the DB on all the lines of the administrative and support expenditure and on all the lines in Heading 5 decreased by the Council;

67. Decides to hold some appropriations in reserve until the Commission modifies the rules on expert groups and ensures their full implementation within all DGs;

Agencies

68. Endorses, as a general rule, the Commission's estimates of the budgetary needs of agencies; notes that the Commission had already considerably reduced the initial requests of most agencies;

69. Considers, therefore, that any further cuts proposed by the Council would endanger the proper functioning of the agencies and would not allow them to fulfil the tasks they have been assigned by the legislative authority;

70. Cannot accept, however, the Commission's approach to staff, according to which the establishment plans of the agencies are not only to be reduced by 1 % on the basis of the political agreement on the MFF, which applies to all institutions and bodies, but are also to contribute another 1 % to a "redeployment pool";

71. Emphasises the fact that the staff reduction agreed upon shall be based on the existing staff and tasks as on the reference date of 31 December 2012 and that any new tasks of existing agencies or the set-up of new agencies have to be accompanied by additional resources;

72. Underlines that the agreed 5% reduction target needs to be achieved by the end of 2017, and that agencies should have some flexibility with regard to the years when exactly they implement these cuts to allow them to make use of natural staff fluctuation in order to minimise costs for the Union unemployment scheme and other costs related to the early termination of employment contracts;

73. Modifies therefore a number of establishment plans of agencies in such a way as to implement the agreed 1 % reduction, to treat fee-financed posts differently or to align staffing with additional tasks;

74. Decides to increase the 2015 budget appropriations for the three financial supervisory agencies; believes that those appropriations should reflect the needs to fulfil the required tasks, as more regulations, decisions and directives have been and are being adopted to overcome the current financial and economic crisis which is strongly linked to the stability of the financial sector;

75. Decides to also increase the appropriations for European Maritime Safety Agency and the Fisheries Control Agency as well as a number of agencies in Heading 3 due to the additional tasks that have been entrusted to them (Frontex, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the European Asylum Support Office);

Pilot projects and preparatory actions (PP-PAs)

76. Having carried out a careful analysis of the pilot projects and preparatory actions submitted – as regards the rate of success of the on-going ones and excluding initiatives already covered by existing legal bases, and taking fully into account the Commission's assessment of the projects' implementability, decides to adopt a compromise package made up of a limited number of PP-PAs, also in view of the limited margins available;

Other sections

77. Recalls that the administrative expenditure of all institutions, pensions and European Schools is covered by Heading 5 of the MFF; notes that the total expenditure of the heading in 2015, as proposed in the DB, is estimated at EUR 8 612,2 million (+2,5 % compared to 2014 budget), which leaves a margin of EUR 463,8 million under the ceiling, while the total administrative expenditure of all institutions combined in 2015 is estimated at EUR 6 893,1 million (+1,6 % increase over 2014 budget), leaving thus a sub-margin of EUR 457,9 million;

78. Takes note of the Council position on the DB, which horizontally decreased, without any differentiation, the level of 2015 administrative expenditure of the institutions to EUR 6 865,6 million (or by -EUR 27,5 million or - 0,4 %), thus artificially increasing the sub-margin to EUR 485,4 million;

79. Is surprised that once again this year the Council proposes linear cuts to the administrative expenditure for the institutions; reiterates that the budget of each Union institution, due to its specific mission and situation, should be treated individually, without 'one-size-fits-all' solutions, taking into account the particular development stage, operational tasks, management goals, human resources needs and building policies of each institution; strongly disagrees with the Council's approach which horizontally inflates the vacancy rate by one percentage point, thus artificially increasing the margin; underlines that this increase, in addition to the posts already suppressed by the 1 % staff reduction, would force certain institutions, already impacted by the above mentioned staff reduction, to freeze recruitment to vacant posts, thus hampering their functioning;

80. Notes that the DB includes the adjustments of 0,8 % for the 2011 and 2012 staff remunerations and pensions for all institutions and bodies and the freeze for 2013 and 2014; welcomes the fact that most of the institutions have already adjusted them in their estimates;

81. Stresses that the three institutions, the Commission, the Council and the Parliament should, out of mutual respect, accept the two arms of the budgetary authority's budget estimates without further amending them;

82. Maintains that the Parliament and the Council, while supporting all possible savings and gains of efficiency stemming from the constant re-evaluation of on-going and new tasks, should set a sufficient level of appropriations to ensure the smooth functioning of the institutions, respect for internal and external legal obligations and the provision of a highly professional public service to Union citizens; recalls that new tasks deriving from the Treaty of Lisbon had to be implemented without any additional means;
83. Commends all other institutions on the savings and efficiency gains which they have already incorporated into their draft budgets; underlines that an accurate, efficient, transparent and accountable use of Union resources is one of the essential means of reinforcing the trust of the Union citizen; welcomes the efforts made by the institutions to continue to promote transparency, administrative efficiency, good financial management and prioritisation; considers that high transparency requirements should continue to be applied equally in all Union institutions;
84. Reinstates the level of abatement rates, as initially requested by the Court of Justice, Court of Auditors, European Economic and Social Committee and the European External Action Service modified horizontally by the Council and restores the DB on the respective budget lines;

Section I – European Parliament

85. Recalls that the Parliament's estimates for 2015 were set at EUR 1 794 929 112, corresponding to an overall rate of increase of 2,24 % over 2014; stresses, however, that 0,67 % of this increase is linked to the legally binding exceptional transitional allowance for the end of the Members' mandate and 0,4 % to the agreement on the adjustment of the remunerations and pensions for 2011-2012; underlines that the level of other expenditure therefore increased by only 1,18 % over 2014;
86. Stresses that the Parliament and the Council, in order to create long term savings in the Union budget, must address the need for a roadmap to a single seat, as stated by the Parliament in several previous resolutions;
87. Welcomes the revised note of the Secretary General of 17 September 2014, which proposes to translate into the budget the Bureau's recent decisions and technical adjustments; points out that these modifications have a budgetary neutral impact; approves these adjustments to its estimates;
88. Reduces the establishment plan of the Parliament in order to comply with the staff reduction agreed in the framework of the reform of the Staff Regulations;
89. Stresses that the activities of the political groups do not correspond to their administrative work; notes that political groups have frozen their staff resources since 2012 and that their needs were only partially covered in the preceding budgetary years; insists that the total level of staff in political groups in 2015 and the following years should not be lower than

the current level; recalls that such a decision has already been taken by the Parliament in the previous legislature³;

90. Takes note that the target cost of the KAD project is estimated at EUR 441,27 million in current prices (EUR 406,22 million in constant prices) and that, for 2015, the financial needs for KAD would correspond to EUR 128,91 million (or 29 % of the overall cost); underlines that, including budgetary resources already made available and not yet used, the remaining financial needs in 2015 are estimated at EUR 84,8 million; considers that this amount may be reduced considerably by a transfer at the year-end 2014 and that the remaining part should be financed by using loans; recalls that, due to construction of the KAD building, the total payments per year in the future will be much lower than the rental expense of comparable property;
91. Decides to increase the appropriations for funding of the European political foundations by EUR 3 million to ensure that political foundations can also fully execute their activities in respect of the full range of political groups, as well as to intensify their research and advocacy activities in order to communicate and put forward ideas to advance the process of European integration; stresses that this increase will be budgetary neutral as it will be offset from the contingency reserve; sets therefore the overall level of its budget for 2015 at EUR 1 794 929 112; points out that this will correspond to a 0 % increase over the level of its estimates, adopted in the Plenary Session of 17 April 2014;
92. Welcomes the decision of the Joint Working Group to recommend to Members to use economy class flights for short journeys; asks the Secretary General to present an assessment of the outcome of this recommendation by the end of 2015 the latest;
93. Welcomes the outcome of the Joint Working Group on the evaluation of possible savings in relation to the expenditure on vehicles and drivers; expects that these savings will materialise in the next years budgets;

³ European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2013 on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2014 (P7_TA(2013)0437).

Section IV – Court of Justice

94. Underlines that, notwithstanding the unprecedented increase in caseload, the Commission decided to remove from the DB of the Court of Justice 12 new posts aimed at preventing any bottleneck and limiting as much as possible the risk of failure to deliver judgment within a reasonable time; stresses that by doing so the Commission has put in risk the productivity of the three Courts in the context of the continuous and unprecedented increase in new cases and thus created a severe risk for the budget;
95. Approves the creation of 12 new posts, as initially requested by the Court of Justice; increases accordingly the related budget lines and adjusts the establishment plan of the Court of Justice plan as presented in its budget estimates;
96. Readjusts the standard abatement rate to its initial level of 3 % in order to ensure that the Court of Justice can deal adequately with the ever-increasing workload and allow the full use of its establishment plan; emphasises that the decrease proposed by the Council is fully in contradiction with the 98 % staff occupancy (98% - the highest possible figure if one considers the unavoidable effect of staff movement during the year) and with an outturn rate for remunerations of close to 99% in 2013;
97. Underlines that the General Court, in spite of its substantial efforts, can no longer handle the growing workload; stresses that this general upward trend is fully confirmed by the data observed so far in 2014 and will continue given, inter alia, the changes made by the Treaty of Lisbon (which will extend the jurisdiction of the Court from 1 December 2014 in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice), and the accession of Croatia;
98. Stresses that, despite the substantial productivity initiatives taken so far, the number of pending cases, continues to grow (+25 % in 2013, +6 % to the end of June 2014), while a risk of claims in respect of failure to deliver judgment within a reasonable time (in particular in cases filed in the General Court, where the level of caseload is now hardly bearable) has now materialised, with a first complaint filed on that ground in June 2014, with possible serious liabilities for the Union; underlines that delays in delivering judgments within a reasonable time in the General Court and in particular related to competition law, greatly undermine the functioning of the internal market and could lead to a considerable threat to the Union budget;
99. Recalls the agreement in principle between the Parliament and the Council according to which the number of judges must be increased; emphasises that in these circumstances it is urgent to find agreement as soon as possible on the nomination of the additional judges to the Court; puts EUR 2 million in reserve for the appointment of nine new judges and calls on the Court to present to the Council and the Parliament an updated evaluation of the additional financial needs for new judges and staff; expects that agreement in the Council will be reached as soon as possible and that the legislative procedure will be

finalised by 1 October 2015; insists that the need for additional staff corresponding to the nomination of nine judges should be evaluated in a prudent way;

Section V – Court of Auditors

100. Readjusts the standard abatement rate to its initial level of 2,1 % in order to allow the Court of Auditors to meet its needs in respect of the establishment plan;
101. Restores the DB for the budget lines related to the remuneration of other staff, in order to ensure that the Court of Auditors can fulfil its legal obligations towards its staff;

Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee and Section VII - Committee of the Regions

Implementation of the cooperation agreement between the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

102. Recalls that, in accordance with the cooperation agreement of 5 February 2014, up to 80 posts would be transferred from the two Committees to the Parliament and that a reinforcement of appropriations for the increase of their political activities and additional needs for the externalisation of translation has been agreed;
103. Acknowledges that a minimum of 60 posts are expected to be transferred to the Parliament and that this transfer will be implemented in two phases, the first phase from 1 October 2014 and the second phase later in 2015; includes in the budget the adjustments related to the transfer of 42 posts (30 posts from the EESC and 12 from the CoR) corresponding to the implementation of the 1st phase, and places the half of appropriations corresponding to the transfer of the expected additional posts (a minimum 6 from the EESC and a minimum of 12 from the CoR) in the reserve, to be released once the final decision on the remaining transfer is taken; expects that the final transfer will be completed by July 2015;
104. Welcomes the on-going cooperation between the two Committees in administrative matters and encourages them to further strengthen this cooperation, as further common goals and savings can be achieved; invites the EESC and the CoR to explore how their structural and organisational reforms could be pursued in a coordinated manner by deepening their bilateral cooperation;

Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee

105. Readjusts the standard abatement rate at its initial level of 4,5 % to allow the European Economic and Social Committee to cope with the continued reduction of staff;

Section VII – Committee of the Regions

106. Underlines that for the Committee of the Regions (CoR) the 2015 budget will be marked by an increase in its political activities, since the new (6th) CoR political mandate will start in February 2015 and will be the first year where the full effect of the instalment of the 5th political group in the CoR (ECR group) is included in the budget;
107. Strongly disagrees with the Commission's cuts of the expenditure linked to the political activities of the CoR and associated expenditure or to the information and communication activities; increases, in the light of the start of the new CoR mandate, the concerned budget lines;

Section VIII – European Ombudsman

108. Notes that the Council has decreased the draft budget of the Ombudsman by 1,7 %; underlines that this reduction will impose a major burden on the very limited budget of the Ombudsman and will have a major impact on the implementation of the new Ombudsman strategy and the institution's capacity to serve European citizens efficiently and effectively; restores therefore all the budget lines cut by the Council in order to enable the Ombudsman to fulfil his/her mandate and commitments;

Section IX – European Data Protection Supervisor

109. Recalls that without taking into consideration the unavoidable legal obligations such as expenditure relating to the end of mandate of the EDPS Members or salary adjustments, the main increase over the 2014 budget is linked to the creation of the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) task-force as well as the new specific activities identified for the 2014-2020 period;
110. Restores the DB for the budget lines related to the new EDPS mandate, the creation of the EDPB task-force and those ensuring the proper functioning of the institution, notably in light of its new 2014-2020 strategy; underlines that horizontal cuts of expenditure may be extremely detrimental and counterproductive, especially for such a small institution;

Section X – European External Action Service

111. Reminds the Council that the Member States agreed to the creation of the EEAS and that it needs sufficient resources to execute its activities; invites the Member States to further explore synergies between national embassies and the EEAS such as the use of common building infrastructure, security and cooperation in administrative matters;

112. Readjusts the standard abatement rates to their initial level of 5,3 % for the EEAS Headquarters (HQ), 2,7 % for the delegations and 2 7% for the military SNEs and restores the appropriations as requested in the draft budget; stresses that such an increase of the abatement rates will imply a reduction in staff beyond the mandatory 1% cut in the establishment plan and will, respectively, hamper its functioning and impede its development as a new body with growing tasks;
113. Restores the DB on all budget lines cut by the Council, notably those relating to the appropriations for security of the EEAS communications in order to allow the High Representative and its senior staff to participate efficiently in highly sensitive negotiations;
114. Urges that the EEAS communications systems are protected against intrusions and that the communication systems between the EEAS and the Member States on the one hand, and headquarters and delegations on the other hand, are safe and modern;
115. Supports the proposal of the High Representative to include in the EEAS budget the appropriations needed to open a new delegation in the Gulf area, where the Union is under-represented⁴; increases therefore the concerned budget lines, as requested by the EEAS in its estimates;
116. Transfers from Section III (Commission) to Section X (EEAS) of the budget the appropriation of “common administrative costs” for the Commission staff in delegations; underlines that this transfer is budgetary neutral and has no other impact on the administrative appropriations of the Commission nor on the working conditions of Commission staff in delegations and will respond to the simplification in the management of the administrative expenditure of the EU delegations requested by the EEAS, the Council and raised in a recent Court of Auditors report; insists that the transfer shall be implemented in good cooperation between the EEAS and Commission; calls on the Council to respect the budgetary neutrality of this agreement;

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117. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the other institutions and bodies concerned and the national parliaments.

⁴ European Parliament resolution of 3 April 2014 on the EU strategy towards Iran, Texts adopted, P7-TA(2014)0339.

ANNEX

JOINT STATEMENT

Dates for the budgetary procedure and modalities for the functioning of the Conciliation Committee in 2014

A. In accordance with Part A of the annex to the interinstitutional agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agree on the following key dates for the 2015 budgetary procedure:

1. A trilogue will be called on 10 July before the adoption of the Council's position;

[The Commission will endeavour to present the Statement of Estimates 2015 in early June.]

2. The Council will endeavour to adopt its position and transmit it to the European Parliament by week 36 (first week of September), in order to facilitate a timely agreement with the European Parliament;

[The Commission will formally adopt the Draft Budget on 24 June, and the DB 2015 will be available on line in all languages on 25 June.]

3. The European Parliament's Committee on Budgets will endeavour to vote on amendments to the Council's position by the end of week 41 (mid-October) at the latest;

[BUDG committee meetings scheduled for 29/9-1/10 and 6-7/10]

4. A trilogue will be called on 15 October before the reading of the European Parliament;

5. The European Parliament's Plenary will vote on its reading in week 43;

[Plenary session of 20-23 October]

6. The Conciliation period will start on 28 October. In agreement with the provisions of point c of Article 314(4) TFEU, the time available for conciliation will expire on 17 November 2014;

[Part E, point 13 of the annex to the IIA, states that: "The letter convening the Conciliation Committee shall be sent at the latest on the first working day of the week following the end of the parliamentary part-session during which the plenary vote was delivered, and the conciliation period shall start on the following day."]

It is necessary to send the letter on 27 October, i.e. the latest possible day, to ensure the

joint text can be adopted by both arms of the Budgetary Authority within 14 days of its agreement, noting that the relevant plenary session is in week 48.]

7. The Conciliation Committee will meet on 6 November hosted by the European Parliament and on 14 November hosted by the Council; the sessions of the Conciliation Committee will be prepared by trilogue(s). A trilogue is scheduled on 11 November. Additional trilogue(s) may be called during the 21-day conciliation period.
- B. The modalities for the functioning of the Conciliation Committee are set out in Part E of the annex to the above-mentioned interinstitutional agreement.
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03.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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: Zigmantas Balčytis

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. Welcomes the increase in commitment and payment appropriations in Heading 4 compared to the current year as urgently necessary after severe cuts but notes that the increase is still insufficient to match the EU's needs; stresses that it is of vital importance to ensure appropriate funding for the EU's global activities if it is to live up to the ambitious goals set out in the Lisbon treaty;
2. Notes with special concern the reductions applied to the European Neighbourhood Instrument, which follow on similarly severe reductions applied last year; while acknowledging that this is in line with the multiannual programming of the ENI, stresses that the current situation in the Neighbourhood, both Eastern and Southern, does not allow for a weakening of the EU's engagement and strongly urges to substantially increase the amount of funds allocated to both regions;
3. Notes, in particular, that once again insufficient funding has been budgeted for the Middle East Peace Process, Palestine and UNRWA; stresses that in light of the on-going humanitarian crisis, the increase in the number of refugees, the situation on the ground and the destruction of vital infrastructure in the Gaza Strip an increase of funds is needed;
4. Stresses the worrisome situation with regard to payment credits in Heading 4, which, despite the substantive increase compared to the current year foreseen by the Commission, may not satisfy requirements on the ground; notes, however, with approval the decision to equalise commitments and payments for the humanitarian aid instrument;
5. Notes with particular concern the severe cuts in payment appropriations for the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (ISP) which is suffering from a substantial shortfall in payment appropriations already limiting the EU's capacity to respond to urgent crises in the current year; notes that this situation can only be exacerbated by the new cuts; stresses

that the ISP is a vital tool for the EU's crisis management and conflict resolution activities, for example in Ukraine;

6. Emphasises the importance of providing the Commission service for Foreign Policy Instruments with adequate resources to carry out the implementation of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, CFSP operations, the Partnership Instrument and the election observation missions under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
7. Rejects the considerable cuts to Heading 4 proposed by the Council which would only exacerbate the already critical situation, in particular with regard to payments; strongly opposes any potential linkage between the negotiations on the 2015 budget and those on Draft Amending Budget 3;
8. Stresses the importance of providing the EEAS with sufficient funds to prepare for a possible opening of an EU delegation in Iran in case the negotiations are concluded successfully and in line with the resolution of the European Parliament of 3 April 2014 on the EU strategy towards Iran;
9. Takes note of the European Court of Auditors' recent special report on the establishment of the EEAS published on 30 June 2014 and its recommendations to enhance the EEAS's added value and efficiency, such as working with the Commission to mitigate the impact of the rigidity of its financial and staff regulations on the efficiency of EU delegations in order to devote more resources to political tasks;
10. Reiterates the importance of transferring the budget line for EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) to the EEAS budget in order to support their better integration into the EEAS, in accordance with the proposal made by the HRVP in the EEAS Review, Parliament's recommendation of 13 June 2013 and the European Court of Auditors' Special Report 11/2014;
11. Welcomes the on-going effort of the EEAS to update its IT systems and strengthen its information security capabilities; remains concerned about the disproportionate number of senior posts in the service;
12. Urges the Commission, following the example of the EEAS, to provide annually updated data about the number of Commission staff in delegations, both internal and external, broken down by country and directorate-general and with an indication of what budget line they are funded from to enable the budgetary authorities to better assess the Commission's global activities.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 51 -: 10 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Lars Adaktusson, Michèle Alliot-Marie, Petras Auštrevičius, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Mario Borghesio, Elmar Brok, Klaus Buchner, James Carver, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Lorenzo Cesa, Javier Couso Permuy, Andi-Lucian Cristea, Mark Demesmaeker, Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, Eugen Freund, Michael Gahler, Iveta Grigule, Richard Howitt, Pablo Iglesias, Sandra Kalniete, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Tunne Kelam, Andrey Kovatchev, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Arne Lietz, Barbara Lochbihler, Sabine Lösing, Andrejs Mamikins, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, David McAllister, Tamás Meszerics, Francisco José Millán Mon, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Demetris Papadakis, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Vincent Peillon, Alojz Peterle, Tonino Picula, Kati Piri, Andrej Plenković, Cristian Dan Preda, Jozo Radoš, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Joachim Starbatty, Charles Tannock, Eleni Theoharous, Ivo Vajgl, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Geoffrey Van Orden, Boris Zala
Substitutes present for the final vote	Zigmantas Balčytis, Bodil Ceballos, Neena Gill, Ana Gomes, Andrzej Grzyb, Norbert Neuser, Helmut Scholz, György Schöpflin, Dubravka Šuica, Traian Ungureanu
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Eva Kaili

24.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

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: Paul Rübige

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Recalls the EU Member States' collective and individual commitments to raise the level of Official Development Assistance to 0,7% by 2015;
2. Underlines that the primary objective of EU development cooperation shall be the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty and recalls that, according to the Regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation⁵, countries most in need shall be given priority in the resource allocation process;
3. Expresses deep concern about the underfinancing of 'completion budget lines' (payments for lines from the previous MFF) in particular, and fears that the increase in deficits carried over from one budget year to the next will result in the loss of credibility and reliability vis-à-vis partner countries and implementing organisations, and will reverse progress made in terms of management and aid effectiveness; calls therefore for the reinforcement of these completion budget lines, in particular for the thematic programmes (food security, human development, non-state actors, and environment and energy);
4. Welcomes the establishment of payment and commitment appropriations at equal levels for humanitarian aid budget lines, thereby helping to avoid the disruption to humanitarian aid that was witnessed during 2013 and 2014; stresses that it is paramount that no payment deficit is carried over from 2014 into 2015 and that all needs must be addressed instead by amending budgets during 2014; stresses also the cost-effectiveness of investment in disaster prevention and preparedness;

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 (OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 44–76).

5. Calls for an increase in funding to humanitarian agencies, such as UNHCR, UNRWA, Médecins sans frontières, in times of conflict; and in this line, urges greater budgetary support in particular to deal with the crises in Iraq, Syria and Gaza, helping to maintain a strong emphasis on refugee necessities, primarily medical intervention, basic utilities and education, as well as to address West African countries affected with the Ebola virus;
6. Given the dramatic situation in the field of humanitarian aid, insists, as a matter of priority, that the level of payments of the emergency aid reserve must be substantially increased to cope with unforeseen events, recalls that payments from the emergency aid reserve are financed outside the MFF, as a special instrument;
7. Considers that cuts proposed by the Council cannot be accepted, as EU development assistance needs reasonable financing that is reliable for partners.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	23.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 24 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Louis Aliot, Kostas Chrysogonos, Ignazio Corrao, Doru-Claudian Frunzulică, Nathan Gill, Charles Goerens, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Heidi Hautala, Maria Heubuch, Hans Jansen, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Arne Lietz, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Maurice Ponga, Cristian Dan Preda, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Elly Schlein, György Schöpflin, Davor Ivo Stier, Paavo Väyrynen, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Anna Záborská
Substitutes present for the final vote	Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, Paul Rübig, Kathleen Van Brempt

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

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: Reimer Böge

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on International Trade calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

;

1. Stresses that it should be ensured that the budgetary line devoted to the Union's trade policy area provides for sufficient appropriations for the Commission to efficiently and effectively pursue its ambitious trade agenda, contributing directly to sustainable and ecological development, growth and jobs across all EU Member States as well as to properly monitor the implementation of trade policy, and in particular the trade agreements in force and their impact on the economy of the EU and its partner countries; for this purpose considers that the appropriations should be complemented by adequate reallocation and redeployments of staff, if necessary;
2. Welcomes the increase in appropriations for the Instrument for Macro-Financial Assistance after a sharp decrease in the previous budgetary exercise;
3. Urges the Commission to step up its efforts to engage with the general public and all stakeholders about on-going negotiations and DG Trade's activities, especially with regards to TTIP; therefore deplores that the budgeted expenditure related to information and communication has been cut compared to previous years;
4. Deplores the decrease in the appropriations for the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI); points out that such a decrease will undermine the EU's capacity to stabilise and

assist its neighbouring countries, including those with whom the Union has already concluded deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DCFTAs) as well as with those it is currently negotiating;

5. Notes the slight increase in the appropriations for the Development Cooperation Instrument, including Aid for Trade, and the increase in the modest appropriation in Aid for Trade - Multilateral action;
6. Recalls that Parliament introduced an additional credit of €1 million in 2009 specifically for actions related to Fair Trade in the budgetary line aimed at financing projects in the area of external trade and calls on the Commission to consider re-introducing this budget line in 2015 to finance actions related to Fair Trade, as defined by the Commission Communication of 5 May 2009⁶;
7. Believes that more emphasis should be put on policy coherence, especially with regard to conditionality in trade agreements; stresses that the internal cooperation between the EEAS, DG Development and DG Trade should be enhanced in order to work in an effective way. Urges therefore, that this need for cooperation and policy coherence is duly reflected in the budget;
8. Supports the extension into 2015 of the Preparatory Action "Euromed innovation entrepreneurs for change" but calls on the Commission to provide an evaluation of this Preparatory Action for 2013 and 2014;
9. Expresses some concerns on the effectiveness and the added value of the business centres in India, China and Thailand and the manner in which they carry out their activities in particular in terms of outreach to SMEs, sustainability and complementarities with existing public and private structures of the EU and of member states; calls on the Commission to commission an independent assessment of activities of these business centres and transmit its results to the Parliament; insists that the Commission takes full account of the outcome of this evaluation in the planning of the future activities of these centres;

⁶ (COM(2009) 215 final)

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+ : 31 - : 2 0 : 4
Members present for the final vote	William (The Earl of) Dartmouth, Tiziana Beghin, David Borrelli, David Campbell Bannerman, Daniel Caspary, Salvatore Cicu, Santiago Fisas Ayxelà, Yannick Jadot, Ska Keller, Jude Kirton-Darling, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, Bernd Lange, Jörg Leichtfried, Marine Le Pen, David Martin, Emmanuel Maurel, Emma McClarkin, Anne-Marie Mineur, Ionel-Sorin Moisă, Alessia Maria Mosca, Franz Obermayr, Artis Pabriks, Franck Proust, Viviane Reding, Olli Rehn, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Tokia Saïfi, Marietje Schaake, Helmut Scholz, Joachim Schuster, Adam Szejnfeld, Iuliu Winkler, Jan Zahradil, Kosma Tadeusz Złotowski
Substitutes present for the final vote	Bendt Bendtsen, Reimer Böge, Klaus Buchner, Dita Charanzová, Nicola Danti, Georgios Epitideios, Seán Kelly, Fernando Ruas, Joachim Starbatty, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Amjad Bashir

9.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETARY CONTROL

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: Markus Pieper

SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas in a situation in which resources are scarce on account of the economic and financial crisis, the institutions of the Union and the Member States should fully cooperate in order to efficiently implement the general budget of the European Union and adequately protect it by preventive and corrective actions;
- B. whereas the main objective of the 2015 draft budget will be to ensure that the Union budget is provided with the required means so that it can fully deliver its reinforced contribution to growth and jobs and to providing solidarity between Member States and regions;
- C. whereas the dialogue between the Parliament and the Commission provided for in Article 318 TFEU should stimulate the culture of performance inside the Commission;
- D. whereas, while not putting into question its decision to grant discharge to the Commission for the budget execution in the financial year 2012, Parliament, in its discharge resolution of 3 April 2014⁷, stressed its reservations as regards the budget execution of certain Member States and the Commission in the agricultural and regional policy areas;

⁷ OJ L 266, 5.9.2014, p. 32.

- E. whereas the Parliament called on the Commission to make a binding commitment on actions as specified in the abovementioned discharge resolution⁸ in order to redress the situation;
1. Recalls its deep concern about the fact that the Commission finds it increasingly difficult to honour all payments requests in the year within the limits of the payment appropriations originally voted and stresses that one reason for this situation is that commitment appropriations have been close to the ceiling defined while payment appropriations have been kept to a minimum during each period; calls on the Commission to provide information on when resulting delays in payments are likely to occur;
 2. Fears that the Council will keep following its strategy during the 2014-2020 period to cut the level of payments, without taking into consideration real needs for which a sustainable solution must be found; calls on the Commission to identify which programmes do not provide EU added value and have not performed efficiently in order to discontinue them and free up resources to be used efficiently;
 3. Stresses that this practice requires that the budgetary authority adopts amending budgets and deplores that this practice infringes the budgetary principles as laid down in the Financial Regulation;
 4. Notes that the implementation of financial corrections imposed by the Commission on Member States that fail to implement sound systems and recoveries amounted to about EUR 3 362 million in 2013 which is a drop from 2012 (EUR 4 419 million)⁹;
 5. Asks the Commission to clearly indicate which amounts recovered in 2013 have been registered as revenue in the accounts of the Union or have been off-set and the extent to which financial corrections and recoveries decided in 2013 may impact on payment needs for the 2014 and the 2015 budgets;
 6. Recalls that it depends on many factors whether in the new programming period 2014-2020 net financial corrections will be imposed in the event of serious deficiencies in the implementation of the cohesion policy and asks the Commission to submit without delay a proposal on limiting if not banning replacement projects all together;
 7. Asks the Commission to take the necessary measures and if needed to directly audit the projects in order to ensure that the level of risk and error in regional funding appropriations is not underestimated;
 8. Reiterates its request to the Commission to reach binding bilateral agreements with Member States which have attracted particular attention, along the lines of the European Semester;
 9. Welcomes the programme statements of operational expenditure accompanying the 2015 draft budget which constitute the main instrument for justifying the appropriations proposed by the Commission in the draft budget and points out that these statements are

⁸ See in particular paragraphs 56 and 57.

⁹ See Commission's communication of 11 June 2014 entitled 'Synthesis of the Commission's management achievements in 2013' (COM(2014)0342), point 4.1.

coherent with the corresponding legal bases and provide details on the resources which are dedicated to each spending programme;

10. Welcomes in particular that, as requested by Parliament in its resolutions accompanying its decisions on the Commission discharge for 2011¹⁰ and 2012¹¹, each statement includes numerical data related to EU added value and contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy (Headline targets, Flagship initiatives);
11. Insists that when providing Parliament and the Council with the evaluations of the performance of the Union foreseen by Article 318 TFUE the Commission should report on the results achieved with the operational expenditures as presented in the programme statements;
12. Welcomes the fact that the Commission decided to continue to examine and report on the commitments which each year fall under the definition of "potentially abnormal" with the objective of eliminating all unjustified outstanding commitments (RAL) from the accounts and enabling the Commission to proceed to recoveries where appropriate and to accelerate the settlement of old on-going commitments.

¹⁰ OJ L 308, 16.11.2013, p. 27.

¹¹ OJ L 266, 5.9.2014, p. 32. See in particular paragraphs 310 and 315.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	8.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 20 -: 1 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Louis Aliot, Inés Ayala Sender, Ryszard Czarnecki, Dennis de Jong, Martina Dlabajová, Jens Geier, Ingeborg Gräßle, Rina Ronja Kari, Bernd Kölmel, Bogusław Liberadzki, Fulvio Martusciello, Georgi Pirinski, Petri Sarvamaa, Igor Šoltes, Bart Staes, Michael Theurer, Marco Valli, Derek Vaughan, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes present for the final vote	Markus Pieper, Julia Pitera, Patricija Šulin, Marco Zanni
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Ulrike Trebesius

5.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

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: Nils Torvalds

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the preference of the Commission to put strong emphasis on innovation, competitiveness, growth and jobs by making subheading 1.1 – which covers key policies to promote positive developments in those fields – highly prioritised in its draft budget;
2. Recalls that the European Parliament has strongly supported and very actively contributed to the creation of the European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs) and believes that the Union needs to further improve the quality of supervision across the Union; believes that, besides the ECB, the ESAs are a cornerstone of fully functioning financial markets in the Union and are essential for the economic recovery and the creation of jobs and growth in Europe, as well as for the prevention and handling of future crises in the financial sector;
3. Bearing in mind the Europe 2020 targets and the aims of stimulating economic growth and development and resolving the problem of unemployment, especially among young people, calls on the Commission to lay emphasis in the partnership agreements with Member States and in operational programmes upon development projects and drivers of growth, one such measure being to open up sources of financing to small and medium-sized enterprises, thereby channelling budget resources with a view to bringing about an innovative, creative, and competitive Europe;
4. Given that the European Semester was established for the purpose of coordinating the Member States' economic policies at EU level and that, to that end, the Commission produces a detailed analysis of their economic and structural reform programmes and issues recommendations agreed with them, believes that, as the European Semester

proceeds, Member States can learn from each other's experiences, enabling them to reach the targets more quickly and to more successful effect; considers it important, therefore, that the EU budget be used to promote human capacity-building programmes through which to exchange knowledge and experience related to public finances, the financial system, structural reforms, employment, and social policy; calls on the Commission, together with the Member States, to encourage investment in analysis and scientific research and innovation in the above areas and the exchange of knowledge and experience through projects financed under European structural and investment funds;

5. Given that sound financial management is central to the implementation of the EU budget as well as of national budgets, since it increases the effectiveness of expenditure, reduces the possibility of error and fraud, and enhances budget transparency, considers it important that the EU budget be used to promote programmes aimed at developing the Member States' statistical, reporting, and accounting systems, auditing and supervisory procedures, and the enforcement of financial management and control systems; calls on the Commission, therefore, to make rapid and effective use of the Anti-Fraud Information System (AFIS) and the European statistical programme (ESP) and, in cooperation with the Member States, to channel European structural and investment funding towards capacity building and the exchange of knowledge and experience among Member States in the field of financial management and reporting;
6. Bearing in mind that recommendations to Member States for the purposes of the European Semester relate most often to strengthening of the tax collection system, the prevention of tax evasion, sound revenue management, and the calculation of tax expenditures, the main object being to enhance competitiveness, which implies a need for a stable, predictable tax system and for better management and greater efficiency in the existing tax system, considers it essential for Member States to exchange knowledge and experience in the field of tax administration; calls on the Commission, therefore, to make rapid and effective use of the Fiscalis and Hercules III programmes and, in cooperation with the Member States, to channel European structural and investment funding towards capacity building and the exchange of knowledge and experience among Member States with a view to achieving a high standard of tax policy implementation;
7. Stresses that the additional tasks entrusted to the ESAs, in particular the monitoring of proper implementation of new EU law and compliance with new legal acts and the new mandates stemming inter alia from the banking union legislation, as well as future tasks envisaged in tabled legislative proposals, will require appropriate budgetary means in order to fulfil their supervisory and regulatory role as provided for in the ESA regulations;
8. Expresses therefore its concerns with respect to the Commission proposal for a considerable decrease in appropriations for the three ESAs, in comparison to their respective budgets for 2014 as well as the Commission proposal to keep the number of establishment plan posts of the ESAs stable at the level of 2014 in 2015; cannot see any reasonable logic in the Commission's approach in this case of reducing the budgets of authorities placed in the "new tasks" category;
9. Regrets that the Council has chosen the same overly restrictive line as the Commission regarding the appropriations for the ESAs;

10. Stresses that the ESAs need the appropriate human resources in order to fulfil their supervisory and regulatory role in a satisfactory manner; underlines that increases in human resources should always be preceded and/or accompanied by rationalisation efforts such as reallocation to achieve efficiency gains; points out that such rationalisation must not affect cooperation with scientific institutions, the conduct of research and analysis, or education and training and that, on the contrary, investment and the number of activities in these areas need to be increased; points out that the ESAs have difficulties in employing staff members of a certain seniority and are restrained from fulfilling their mandates by the fact that staff and other available resources do not reflect the tasks required to be carried out, in particular the highly resource-intensive and time-constrained work of delivering the single rulebook;
11. Maintains that, in the short term, the three ESAs can and must substantially boost their human capacity, quantitatively and qualitatively, so as to ensure that they perform all the tasks assigned to them under the regulations;
12. Notes that the Chair, Executive Director and the members of the Board of Supervisors and Management Boards should be in a position to act independently, objectively and in the interest of the Union as a whole; considers that compulsory contributions of the competent authorities of the Member States could conflict with the independence of the ESAs; believes that the current financing arrangements of the ESAs based on a mixed and nationally oriented financing system have not been fully utilised and do not allow enough flexibility for periods of high short term need that will not be necessary on an on-going basis which would be best filled by seconded national experts;
13. Calls therefore on the Commission, if proven by the Commission's assessment, to propose a financing system by 2017 that:
 - is solely based on the introduction of fees by market participants, or
 - combines fees by market participants with basic funding from a separate budget line in the general EU budget;
14. Stresses, in this context, that such a new financing system must be designed in a way which fully safeguards the integrity of the ESAs vis-à-vis the actors in the financial sector;
15. Underlines that it is crucial, not least for the enhancement of the coordinated fight against tax fraud and evasion, that the Fiscalis 2020 programme gets off to a good start; notes that the relatively modest appropriations proposed by the Commission in this area could be seen as acceptable; stresses, however, that the reductions from the Commission level suggested by the Council could undermine planned Fiscalis 2020 activities and should therefore not be accepted;
16. Emphasizes that the resources allocated to statistics must continuously reflect the heavy workload and high quality demands in this policy area, not least when it comes to the delivery of crucial economic and financial data; stresses that the relevant appropriations in the 2015 budget must not be any smaller than what has now been proposed by the Commission; disagrees, therefore, with the Council line of taking key appropriations down from the Commission level;

17. Calls therefore upon the Commission to consider within the course of the wider review of the ESAs, how to allow more flexible employment conditions within the ESAs that are best able to include the considerable expertise of supervisors within Member States on a temporary basis, as well as encourage recruitment of high quality staff on a permanent basis;
18. Recalls the need to further ensure funding for capacity building of civil society in the field of financial services;
19. Welcomes the first steps towards the reform of EFRAG, but highlights the need to fully implement the Maystadt recommendations, including the demand to limit its work to IFRS standards and to phase out its work on small and medium size enterprises and on tax matters;
20. Considers it vital to maintain the funding of Eurostat at the level proposed by the Commission.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 41 -: 13 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Gerolf Annemans, Burkhard Balz, Hugues Bayet, Pervenche Berès, Udo Bullmann, Esther de Lange, Fabio De Masi, Anneliese Dodds, Markus Ferber, Jonás Fernández, Sven Giegold, Neena Gill, Sylvie Goulard, Roberto Gualtieri, Brian Hayes, Danuta Maria Hübner, Othmar Karas, Georgios Kyrtzos, Alain Lamassoure, Philippe Lamberts, Werner Langen, Bernd Lucke, Olle Ludvigsson, Ivana Maletić, Notis Marias, Costas Mavrides, Bernard Monot, Luděk Niedermayer, Patrick O'Flynn, Stanislaw Ożóg, Dimitrios Papadimoulis, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Dariusz Rosati, Alfred Sant, Molly Scott Cato, Peter Simon, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan, Kay Swinburne, Paul Tang, Sampo Terho, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Ernest Urtasun, Marco Valli, Cora van Nieuwenhuizen, Johan Van Overtveldt, Jakob von Weizsäcker, Steven Woolfe, Pablo Zalba Bidegain, Marco Zanni, Sotirios Zarianopoulos
Substitutes present for the final vote	Philippe De Backer, Bas Eickhout, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Marian Harkin, Ramón Jáuregui Atondo, Thomas Mann, Siegfried Mureșan, Tibor Szanyi, Antonio Tajani, Nils Torvalds

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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: Maria Arena

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises that the 2015 budget has to play a key role in enhancing the Union's contribution to growth and jobs, with a particular focus on the creation of jobs to address the persisting issue of youth unemployment in the Union;
2. Notes the overall year-on-year increase proposed by the Commission and the Council in the appropriations of heading 1 – Smart and inclusive growth; notes further the proportionally even higher increases in heading 1a – Competitiveness for growth and jobs;
3. Notes that the commitment appropriations in heading 1b – Economic, social and territorial cohesion are to be increased up to the level of margin according to the Commission proposal; regrets however the decrease in payment appropriations in this heading worsened by even further cuts proposed by the Council;
4. Strongly believes that EU funding, particularly that under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), should not be used to subsidise national approaches, but should be used to provide additional support to young people in a way that complements and enhances national programmes;
5. Considers that EU funding should be directed to areas that help SMEs, micro-enterprises and business growth; acknowledges at the same time that small enterprises especially need a reduction in national regulations; considers that EU programmes should not lead to the postponement of necessary national structural reforms;

6. Urges the Commission to arrange for the prompt payment of the unpaid claims resulting from the completion of the European Social Fund (ESF) programmes, in order to ensure that 2015 commitments will fund new ESF projects and to avoid that the backlog has a disincentive effect on national pre-financing of new operations in the Member States;
7. Underlines the importance of sufficient funding and good budgetary management of the programmes within the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, which aim to address unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, such as the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), the different axis of the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD); for the latter taking into account the appropriations finally adopted in the Amending Budget No 3/2014.
8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make full use of the funds dedicated to support the unemployed youth population; reminds of the political agreement linked to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 about the frontloading of the funds under the Youth Employment Initiative as well as the corresponding amounts programmed within the European Social Fund in order to provide the necessary help in the first years of the programming period; welcomes that the Commission and the Council respect this agreement in the proposed figures; expresses its concerns about the absorption capacity of some Member States with regard to the Youth Employment Initiative; recalls that according to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013¹², margins left available below the MFF ceilings for commitment appropriations for the years 2014-2017 shall constitute a Global MFF Margin for commitments, to be made available over and above the ceilings established in the MFF for the years 2016 to 2020 for policy objectives related to growth and employment, in particular youth employment;
9. Underlines the fact that in order to implement long term and effective changes in the labour market, it is necessary to ensure the hospitable conditions to create and develop the SMEs, which create 65% of all the employment in the EU and therefore calls on the Commission and the Member States to assure the efficiency of financing of the programmes supporting SMEs, including social economy enterprises, the social entrepreneurships and financing start-ups;
10. Calls on the Commission to adopt, without any delay, FEAD operational programmes prepared by the Member States and to present delegated and implementing acts in the framework of FEAD;
11. Calls for an increase in the financing of EURES as this instrument plays an important role in cross-border employment mobility and can therefore contribute to the fight against unemployment in Europe;
12. Proposes to launch a pilot project on European worker's e-card to investigate the benefits of introducing, and – if appropriate – to make available, a forgery-proof European electronic document containing social security details of the worker; the scope of this card is distinct from the European Health Insurance Card and it should not be mixed; as a foundation for the pilot project and to establish the necessary knowledge for the pilot

¹² 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).

project the Commission should initiate a comparative analysis on the different social security systems within the EU-28 Member States;

13. Proposes to launch a pilot project on Fuel/Energy poverty with the aim to assess the impact of the economic and financial crisis on energy poverty in the Union, with a particular view to those Member States where this issue has not yet been examined and/or addressed by policy measures up to date;
14. Proposes to launch a preparatory action entitled Toward asbestos-free workplaces in the European Union to provide tools to screen and register asbestos-containing materials in accordance with Article 11 of Directive 2009/148/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council¹³ and to design a roadmap for total eradication of asbestos in the workplaces, whilst ensuring public awareness of the risk and of the need for actions also at the level of workplaces; the action should feed into a prospective strategy for banning all forms of asbestos and all uses of asbestos fibres, including appropriate export requirements in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁴ and taking into account the principle of proximity as laid down in Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁵, since asbestos remains responsible for a substantial number of diseases related to exposure to asbestos fibres;
15. Proposes to launch a preparatory action on Supporting active inclusion of disadvantaged migrants with the aim to assess benefits and test possibilities to create local centres for social and economic integration.

¹³ Directive 2009/148/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work (OJ L 330, 16.12.2009, p. 28).

¹⁴ Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2006 on shipments of waste (OJ L 190, 12.7.2006, p. 1).

¹⁵ Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3).

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 36 -: 9 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Guillaume Balas, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Mara Bizzotto, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, David Casa, Ole Christensen, Jane Collins, Corina Crețu, Martina Dlabajová, Lampros Fountoulis, Elena Gentile, Arne Gericke, Marian Harkin, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Agnes Jongerius, Ádám Kósa, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Zdzisław Marek Krasnodębski, Kostadinka Kuneva, Jérôme Lavrilleux, Jeroen Lenaers, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Javi López, Thomas Mann, Dominique Martin, Anthea McIntyre, Joëlle Mélin, Georgi Pirinski, Marek Mirosław Plura, Terry Reintke, Sofia Ribeiro, Claude Rolin, Anne Sander, Sven Schulze, Siôn Simon, Jutta Steinruck, Romana Tomc, Ulrike Trebesius, Ulla Tørnæs, Marita Ulvskog, Renate Weber, Tatjana Ždanoka, Jana Žitňanská
Substitutes present for the final vote	Maria Arena, Mircea Diaconu, Tamás Meszerics, Csaba Sógor

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

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 1311/2013¹⁶ and with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management¹⁷ 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;

¹⁶ 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).

¹⁷ OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

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;
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 Council¹⁸ 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;

¹⁸ 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).

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.

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 Rodríguez-Rubio, Annie Schreyer-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

25.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

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: Jerzy Buzek

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Is deeply concerned by the significant cuts in the Commission Draft Budget 2015 proposed by the Council notably in such strategic key areas as innovation, including innovation of a social nature, research, space, infrastructures, SMEs and energy, particularly energy security, which requires a high level of investment in energy infrastructure, energy efficiency, interconnections, and renewable energy production; firmly believes that instead of cuts, it is the time for a significant and brave increase beyond the draft budget proposed by the Commission in order to leave the economic crisis behind as soon as possible; considers the proposed cuts to be potentially detrimental to the EU's competitiveness and growth;
2. Is concerned by the fact that already now considerable sums - which had previously been agreed by Council in the MFF negotiations - are missing in the 2015 Budget for payments and that the proposed cuts will aggravate the situation even further, compromising the ability of EU programmes to function adequately; emphasises that all appropriate measures should be taken in order to meet the Union's legal obligations and avoid delays in payments to the important stakeholders such as researchers, universities, SMEs and entrepreneurs; calls therefore for full restoration of the Commission draft budget, and for providing more funding in areas strategically important for competitiveness, sustainability, growth and creation of jobs;
3. Is astonished that the Heads of State and Government keep announcing on every summit the importance of the EU budget in respect to growth and job creation, whereas at the same time the Council keeps cutting the EU budget in exactly these fields; reminds the

Council that it was agreed during the MFF negotiations to frontload funds for a number of programmes; is convinced that the severe cuts in Heading 1a commitment and payment appropriations are oppositional to the compromise agreed upon in the MFF;

4. Is alarmed by the Council's cut in Heading 1a of 1.85% in commitment appropriations and 8.57% in payment appropriations; finds this cut completely unacceptable since the margins of the MFF should be fully used to support the recovery of the economy and to pay all outstanding bills to the beneficiaries;
5. Considers it essential, given that they make up 99% of the EU's corporate fabric and account for 80% of jobs in the EU, to provide greater support to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in order to boost their competitiveness within a stable business environment, minimise the effect of dominant market positions occupied by large companies and conglomerates, encourage the culture of entrepreneurship, and help SMEs to be set up and to grow;
6. Calls for an increase in resources for budget headings providing subsidies for MSMEs and cooperatives and for 40% of the amounts entered under those headings to be earmarked as direct support to promote solid growth and sustainable development of MSMEs and cooperatives in order to cope with rising production factor costs and keep pace with the evolving knowledge society and with development based on balanced economic growth, especially in Member States where the crisis has had a greater impact in terms of MSME closures;
7. Points to the importance of narrowing the gulf between entities considered to be excellent and those which are not, the object being to ensure that science and research can also be supported in institutes which, though not considered excellent, are progressing towards excellence or could be raised to that level in cooperation with others already considered to have attained it; believes that achieving a more even-handed share-out of Horizon 2020 appropriations is an aim that should continue to be pursued with a view to improving upon the status quo created under the earlier research framework programmes;
8. Recalls that multiannual programmes such as Horizon 2020, COSME, CEF and EaSI are crucial for achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and thus for securing a steady growth path for the EU; believes that proper functioning of the programmes is also essential for efficient absorption of funds from the whole MFF; points out that several of the crucial programmes are still in their starting phase and their scaling-up should be accelerated; highlights the added value EU programmes can bring; believes that the 2015 Budget will be decisive for the success of the new multiannual programmes for 2014-2020; underlines that the 2015 Budget should therefore provide for all necessary measures such as bringing forward investment by frontloading commitments to ensure that the programmes reach their full pace of operation without further delay;
9. Emphasises the role of SMEs innovation for driving EU economic recovery; expects the

Commission to fulfil its legal and budgetary commitments with regard to the SME Instrument in Horizon 2020 and calls upon the Council to enable this by providing an appropriate budget; requests the Commission to establish as of 2016 an unique budget line for the SME Instrument, in order to allow clearer budgetary oversight and control, and ensure a genuine bottom-up approach to its implementation;

10. Underlines the importance of key European space programmes such as Galileo and Copernicus as boosters for innovation, growth and competitiveness and future providers of daily services to the EU's citizens; points to the great potential of the space sector for SMEs;
11. Believes that the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, which is vital to achieving our climate goals whilst stimulating growth and jobs in the renewables and low-carbon technologies sectors, requires improved governance and closer coordination between the EU, the Member States and the regions and consultation with representatives of industry and research-based bodies; calls for the highest possible synergy between EU funds and industry- relevant and flexible financing instruments as well as between European and national expenditure;
12. Points out that reindustrialisation, combining competitiveness with social inclusion and sustainability, is essential for boosting growth and job creation and that industry should account for 20% of GDP by 2020, a goal to be achieved by improving the business environment, especially for SMEs, and supporting the development of a strong, sustainable industrial base capable of competing at global level; notes that EU funds can contribute to maintaining investment in European industry to promote Europe's reindustrialisation and recovery and therefore further cuts in research, innovation and infrastructure investments for European industry would seriously slow down the EU's economic recovery;
13. Highlights the importance of renewable energy and energy- and resource-efficient technologies by placing Europe at the forefront of research and innovation as well as production of such technologies while strengthening Europe's long-term competitiveness; stresses the importance of investing sufficiently in abovementioned technologies to help combat climate change which will also help to create in Europe new sustainable businesses and quality, well-paid jobs in high growth sectors;
14. Welcomes the circular economy package published by the Commission on 2 July 2014¹⁹; calls for adequate resources to be allocated for the implementation of its activities;
15. Calls for appropriate funding for all relevant EU bodies which contribute to Europe's

¹⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 2 July 2014: Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe (COM(2014)0398).

competitiveness and growth, for example the European Institute of Innovation and Technology amongst others, as well as for executive agencies to enable them to properly fulfil the tasks assigned to them by the legislative authority.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	25.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 50 -: 5 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Zigmantas Balčytis, Nicolas Bay, David Borrelli, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Philippe De Backer, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Pablo Echenique, Christian Ehler, Peter Eriksson, Fredrick Federley, Ashley Fox, Adam Gierek, Theresa Griffin, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, András Gyürk, Roger Helmer, Dawid Bohdan Jackiewicz, Eva Kaili, Krišjānis Kariņš, Jeppe Kofod, Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Janusz Lewandowski, Paloma López Bermejo, Ernest Maragall, Edouard Martin, Nadine Morano, Angelika Niebler, Aldo Patriciello, Morten Helveg Petersen, Herbert Reul, Algirdas Saudargas, Jean-Luc Schaffhauser, Neoklis Sylikiotis, Dario Tamburrano, Evžen Tošenovský, Vladimir Urutchev, Henna Virkkunen, Martina Werner, Anna Záborská, Flavio Zanonato, Carlos Zorrinho
Substitutes present for the final vote	José Blanco López, David Coburn, Jens Geier, Jude Kirton-Darling, Werner Langen, Olle Ludvigsson, Fulvio Martusciello, Ionel-Sorin Moisă, Dan Nica, Markus Pieper, Massimiliano Salini, Anne Sander, Maria Spyrali, Cora van Nieuwenhuizen
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Momchil Nekov

9.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNAL MARKET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

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: Catherine Stihler

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that the Single Market (SM) is a key policy and priority area for economic growth; considers that a stronger and integrated SM with an adequate budgetary allocation is essential to get the European Union (EU) out of the crisis;
2. Considers that consumer policy is a main priority for the EU; stresses that an adequate budget in this policy area should be foreseen and believes that it should be used toward increasing consumer confidence in a more transparent SM by: reinforcing consumer safety; enhancing knowledge as well as aligning consumer rights and policies to changes in society and in the economy;
3. Asks for adequate financial means aimed at supporting a strategy for smart and sustainable growth and employment;
4. Stresses the need of a balanced envelope to support the functioning of the customs union and the fight against fraud both to protect consumers and to guarantee financial recovery on own resources;
5. Acknowledges the importance of financing the "Single Market Forum" (SMF) and calls for an extension of its Preparatory Action to the year 2015; calls on the Commission to propose a legal base to be established in secondary legislation in order to secure the continuation of the SMF beyond 2015;

6. Stresses the need to promote and for Member States to allocate adequate funding for SOLVIT as both EU citizens as well as EU business can receive useful guidance on diverse issues such as business set up, visa and residence rights, trade and services as well as family benefits and many others;
7. Urges the Commission to update Parliament on the level of implementation of the pilot project "Your Europe Travel Application for mobile Devices"(YET); stresses the importance of increasing consumer awareness about these kinds of services; warmly welcomes the European Consumer Centres Network's former actions in this respect; points out that the application should be integrated into an on-going campaign at Union level to raise awareness about consumer rights and interests; recommends that funding be released upon a positive feasibility study outcome;
8. Points out the need to secure adequate financing for the COSME programme, as well as for the Enterprise Europe Network in 2015 in order to specifically take into account the difficulties encountered by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) due to the EU's economic and financial constraints;
9. Welcomes the improved commitment to finance increased innovation in SMEs under budget line 02 04 02 03 as it is convinced that SMEs have an important role to play in terms of modernisation, growth and employment generation and welcomes the SME instrument included in Horizon 2020, which is a novel company-focused and market-driven approach to support SMEs' innovation activities and have a positive economic impact;
10. Asks for the financing of a new pilot project entitled 'Training SMEs on Consumer Rights in the Digital Age'; stresses that this should help SMEs to comply with consumer protection law in the online environment; emphasises that surveys have shown that many SMEs lack essential knowledge of relevant EU legislation as transposed into national law; considers that better compliance with the rules would reduce consumer problems and benefit traders by avoiding problems with the enforcement authorities;
11. Highlights that standards are important tools for the competitiveness of undertakings and especially SMEs, whose participation in the standardisation process is essential for technological progress in the Union; therefore, considers it important to finance appropriately the initiatives aimed at supporting standardisation activities performed by CEN, Cenelec and ETSI;
12. Recalls the need to finance the multilingual tool for the online dispute resolution (ODR) platform; stresses that this multilingual facility was adopted in Regulation (EU) No 524/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2013 on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes (Regulation on consumer ODR)²⁰; emphasises that well-functioning ODR systems across the EU will encourage consumers to seek solutions to the problems they encounter when buying products and services in the SM and will boost online purchases, in particular from traders in other Member States; recalls that more online and cross-border trade in the EU will also provide businesses with new opportunities and help drive economic growth.

²⁰ OJ L 165, 18.6.2013, p. 1.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	8.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 32 -: 4 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Dita Charanzová, Carlos Coelho, Lara Comi, Nicola Danti, Pascal Durand, Vicky Ford, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Maria Grapini, Louis Ide, Robert Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Diane James, Gabriel Mato, Margot Parker, Marcus Pretzell, Robert Rochefort, Virginie Rozière, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Olga Sehnalová, Ivan Štefanec, Catherine Stihler, Richard Sulík, Róza Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein, Mylène Troszczynski, Matthijs van Miltenburg
Substitutes present for the final vote	Lucy Anderson, Pascal Arimont, Birgit Collin-Langen, Andrzej Sebastian Duda, Roberta Metsola, Jens Nilsson, Julia Reda, Marc Tarabella, Sabine Verheyen, Theodoros Zagorakis

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

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: Roberts Zīle

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Stresses that the transport sector is a backbone of the internal market and the basis for the free movement of people and goods, helping to boost the quality of services and facilitating territorial cohesion around the EU.
2. Points out that investment in transport is vital in order to strengthen the role and aim of the EU budget to stimulate growth, competitiveness and employment and to move towards the goals of the "Europe 2020 strategy", as well as to make travelling safer, thus reducing the number of accidents and related casualties, and therefore welcomes the fact that the CEF programme is placed as one of the key programmes of the budget Heading 1a "Competitiveness for growth and jobs".
3. Notes that 2015 will be the second year of the 2014-2020 MFF and that it would be important to ensure that implementation of TEN-T and CEF financial programme is decently put in place and runs smoothly after the take-off in 2014; notes furthermore that it is vital to provide necessary appropriations (both commitments and payments) for these new programmes to deploy key transport infrastructure without delay.
4. Draws attention, nonetheless, to the financial difficulties which some Member States are experiencing as a result of the economic crisis and which are making it extremely difficult for them to submit projects, as evidenced by the recent call for proposals issued in connection with the Trans-European Transport Network programme, and therefore, with a

view to ensuring more balanced participation, calls for greater flexibility in the implementation of the CEF programme.

5. Underlines that the EU budget should focus on infrastructure projects that will deliver high European added value, by removing bottlenecks and building/improving trans-border infrastructure, as well as upgrading existing infrastructure, such as rail links, in order to develop the EU's internal market and improve the competitiveness of the EU as a whole; notes that in the context of the current international situation on the EU's Eastern borders, it is of particular importance to connect Member States in the EU transport network with European technical parameters, including European standard gauge, so they can better integrate into the EU's common market; draws attention, at the same time, to the major interoperability problems still existing across the EU railway network, including rail gauge differences, and calls for efforts to be focused on harmonisation, with a view to building a genuinely interoperable European railway area, also stresses a need to develop intermodal connections of the railway with other transport modes;
6. Stresses a need to ensure that Member States eligible for financing from the Cohesion Fund through the Connecting Europe Facility are helped by the Commission to develop and prepare an adequate pipeline of projects of sufficient maturity and/or quality, and to make efficient use of EU funding; stresses therefore that it is important to implement programme support actions aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity and efficiency of the public administrations concerned, as well as to organise additional calls for proposals, in order to ensure the highest possible absorption of the transferred funds in Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund; furthermore, the calls for proposals organised by the Commission should address cross-border sections as a matter of priority as such sections are often underfunded although in many cases they constitute bottlenecks.
7. Reiterates the importance of using EU funding through the Connecting Europe Facility for projects and equipment of common interest that fulfil the cross-border interoperability facility.
8. Stresses the importance of the creation and effective functioning of a Single European railway area without frontiers by improving the level of interoperability and safety of railway systems, thus improving the competitive position of the railway sector; in this regard notes that the Fourth Railway Package foresees important new functions, tasks and responsibilities to be assigned to the European Railway Agency; considers that any resources of its own which the industry expends should be appraised realistically and should not, therefore, compromise the Agency's new tasks, which for their part should be based on clearly defined needs and according to the timescale agreed by co-legislators at the end of negotiations.

9. Stresses that EU agencies' budget allocations are far from consisting in administrative expenditure alone, but instead contribute to achieving the EU objectives, while aiming at making savings at national level and that their budget should have sufficient and adequate means to perform their tasks; recalls the importance of ensuring, within the Union, the highest level of safety, security and interoperability in the field of transport while ensuring better communication and coordination, which EASA, EMSA and ERA provide at EU level and which was handled before by 28 national administrations;
10. Draws attention to the crucial role played by the agencies whose main responsibility is to ensure the safety of the various modes of transport, and therefore rejects the proposed cuts in the agencies' operating budgets and does not agree with proposed cuts that could undermine transport safety.
11. Underlines that the EMSA must be equipped with the necessary means for controlling safety and preventing pollution from offshore oil and gas installations, as decided in the new Regulation on the Financing of EMSA;
12. Stresses, in connection with the EASA, that more than two-thirds of the agency's expenditure is covered by the charges and taxes levied on the industry and that no cuts should be made to the number of EASA certification staff, who do not come under the EU budget and have no impact whatsoever on that budget.
13. Stresses the importance of investing in the development of freight corridors in order to allow shifting freight from road to rail, to improve sustainability of rail freight by reducing existing noise generated by inadequate rolling stock and to enhance a low carbon transport economy.
14. Recalls the importance of the renewed NAIADES programme for 2014 - 2020 aiming at decreasing congestion and moving towards a low-carbon economy, by transferring freight to inland waterways transport, and believes that this programme should have adequate funding; stresses that well-structured policy with concrete achievable goals would help to ensure the best possible use of funding through the funds such as the 'Connecting' Europe Facility' and 'Horizon 2020';
15. Underlines that, according to Article 195 of the Treaty, the EU has additional competences on tourism policy; therefore considers that appropriate budget funds should be allocated to develop a genuine European tourism policy; calls on the Commission, therefore, to increase its involvement in the field and to promote the completion of major tourism projects, cycle routes networks such as EuroVelo, and the protection of natural, cultural, historical and industrial heritage; also notes that, with the aid of the resources provided through the COSME programme, the EU can respond swiftly and effectively to changes that occur in the tourism industry, but that there is a need for targeted programmes and experimental projects; observes that, by this means, economic growth may be achieved, while more – and sustainable – jobs will be created and the EU will be the prime destination in international tourism.

16. Emphasises the role of research and innovation in the transport and tourism sectors and points out that the timely development of intelligent transport technologies as well as eco-social knowledge, including sustainable urban mobility, SESAR and others, will notably contribute to economic, social, safety and environmental savings; therefore appropriate resources should be allocated to these transport technologies and knowledge under Horizon 2020 and CEF;
17. Stresses the need for accurate funding for the implementation of the components of SESAR in order to ensure the deployment of Air Traffic Management (ATM) functionalities that are considered essential for the improvement of the Union's ATM system performance.
18. Emphasises the importance of investing in regional airports as this will have a positive impact on a wide range of activities such as exports, business efficiency and productivity, inward investment, and therefore will boost EU market.
19. Notes that administrative and operating expenses in overall are gradually increasing; calls therefore on the Commission, in light of increased budgetary constraint, to ensure the concept of value for money is enshrined in all programmes so that expenditure should therefore be carefully analysed for viability, efficiency and effectiveness, and that EU taxpayers' money is spent on effective implementation and management of EU policies, concentrating resources on investment activities with the necessary operational capability and proper functioning of programmes;
20. Stresses the need of including in the Operational Programmes developed with the Member States the flagship projects for the development of the Danube Region; furthermore the Commission should ensure that the Operational Programs cover the financing of flagship projects aiming at developing inland water transport in the framework of the Danube Strategy.
21. Notes the importance of sustainable transport as part of the Europe 2020 wider climate change and energy sustainability targets; stresses that EU transport policy must incorporate ambitious climate protection goals; points out therefore that adequate transport funding is vital to help to ensure that environmental transport policies are implemented successfully.
22. Underlines that EU transport policy must delivery on equalities, most importantly through access to transport for disabled people and highlights that achieving this must be done through substantial investment in public transportation across the EU.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

Introduction

The draft budget 2015 would focus on support to employment, businesses, education and research. The Commission has proposed a budget amounting to EUR 145.6 billion in commitments and to EUR 142.1 billion in payments. This represents an increase of 2.1% in commitments and 1.4% in payments compared to 2014. The bulk of the commitments is for future projects whereas some 40% of the payments still cover EU funded projects from the 2007-2013 financial period. Also the Commission is proposing a further 1% reduction in its staff numbers.

The great share of payment appropriations goes to areas that boost Europe's economic growth and jobs (+29.5% compared to 2014) such as research (Horizon 2020), trans-European networks for energy, transport and ICT (Connecting Europe Facility) or the Youth Employment Initiative.

I. Transport budget

Title 6 - Mobility and transport of the Commission's draft budget for 2015 (DB) contains budget lines relating to EU transport policy. The DB proposes a 14 % increase in commitment appropriations (up from EUR 2 867 184 572 in 2014 to EUR 3 279 502 992 in 2015) and 107% increase in payment appropriations (up from EUR 1 003 421 856 in 2014 to EUR 2 075 861 835 in 2015). The increase in payments is mainly due to the needs for the new programmes "Connecting Europe Facility" and "Horizon 2020".

In particular, the Rapporteur would like to draw your attention to:

Connecting Europe Facility (06 02 01)

This is an essential budget line for transport. The commitment appropriations for CEF transport projects are set at EUR 2 844 million (+ 16% compared 2014) and payment appropriations at EUR 1 040 million (0 payments for new projects in 2014). CEF budget will be implemented through calls for proposals under the annual and multiannual work programmes. Moreover, it is also proposed to spend EUR 634 million in payments for completion of TEN-T programmes (06 02 51)

Support activities to the European transport policy and passenger rights including communication activities (06 02 05)

There is a decrease in the DB in commitment appropriations (down from EUR 20 019 000 in 2014 to EUR 12 363 000 in 2015) and increase payments (up from EUR 13 894 437 to EUR 17 447 683) for this line. It is intended to cover expenditure on information and communication, conferences and events promoting activities in the transport sector.

Transport security (06 02 06)

There is an increase in both, commitments (from EUR 2 510 000 to EUR 2 582 000) and payment appropriations (from EUR 1 514 026 to EUR 1 706 036). This appropriation is

intended in particular to cover expenditure on the establishment and operation of a corps of inspectors to check compliance with the requirements of Union security legislation of airports, ports and port facilities.

Horizon 2020 – Research and innovation related to transport (06 03)

DB for transport research amounts to EUR 234 117 242 (EUR 212 585 039 in 2014) in commitments and EUR 178 377 220 (EUR 27 847 732 in 2014) in payments. This appropriation covers, among others, SESAR and Shift2Rail joint undertakings.

Agencies

European Aviation Safety Agency (06 02 02)

The EU contribution to EASA budget would rise from EUR 34 174 000 to EUR 36 370 000, an increase of 6%. The overall EASA draft budget (EU contribution + other resources) amounts to EUR 149 532 000 (EUR 149 059 000 in 2014). Effects of the proposed amendments to the Single European Sky legislation have not been yet accounted for. Total number of staff would decrease to 797 in 2015 from 804 authorised in 2014 budget. Within that overall figure, EU financed staff would rise from 280 to 284. New staff would be assigned to approval of the third country operators and possibly certification of the remotely piloted aircraft systems.

European Maritime Safety Agency (06 02 03)

The draft EU contribution to EMSA budget represent an increase in commitment appropriations of 4.37%, up to EUR 52 656 000 and in payment appropriations of 1.09%, up to EUR 51 256 000. The overall EMSA draft budget (EU contribution + other resources) amounts to EUR 54 611 675 (EUR 52 410 475 in 2014) in commitments' and EUR 53 169 255 (EUR 52 669 145 in 2014) in payments appropriations. The increase is foreseen mainly for the development of databases and enhancement of IT tools. It is proposed to decrease number of staff from 258 authorised in 2014 budget to 255.

European Railway Agency (06 02 04)

It is proposed to rise EU subsidy to ERA to EUR 25 613 000 (EUR 25 007 400 in 2014), in both commitment and payment appropriations. The extra financial resources should cover costs related to the new Shift2Rail tasks. The overall ERA draft budget (EU contribution + other resources) amounts to EUR 26 379 500 (EUR 25 715 600 in 2014), in both commitment and payment appropriations. It is proposed to decrease number of temporary agents from 140 authorised in 2014 budget to 137, while the total of human resources including contractual agents and seconded national experts remains the same as in 2014 equal to 161 posts.

II. Tourism

Tourism budget falls under Title 2 - Enterprise. There is a specific tourism target in the Programme on Competitiveness and SMEs (COSME) for the programming period 2014-2020 (Regulation No. 1287/2013). It is proposed, within line 02 02 01, to spend EUR 11 000 000 for tourism projects, prizes, surveys, and events.

III. Pilot projects and preparatory actions

There are three on-going TRAN related projects and actions in the EU budget: LNG (liquefied natural gas) fuelled ships (EUR 0 in commitments, EUR 436 192 in payments), the role of rolling stock in European interoperability (EUR 0 in commitments, EUR 0 in payments), and General Aviation — Statistics and Key figures (EUR 0 in commitments, EUR 87 238 in payments). The preparatory actions on tourism reached their objectives and the tourism has been recognised in the EU budget. The Rapporteur would therefore not propose any new actions on tourism.

IV. Possible amendments

The Rapporteur calls for the adoption of a responsible, realistic, and result-oriented budget. At the same time, the Rapporteur stresses that the EU budget should represent an investment directed towards policies demonstrating EU added value and supporting economic growth and job creation. The overall level of the Commission's draft budget, including Agencies' funding seems to be proportionate to the need to implement EU policies and deliver EU added value.

As regards the three on-going preparatory actions, the Rapporteur underlines especially the importance of the preparatory action on LNG fuelled ships in the context of the new sulphur limits for maritime fuels in emission control areas (SECAs) entering into force on 1 January 2015.

Depending on the Council's position to the DB, the Rapporteur might consider restoring draft budget in individual budget lines in order to take into account the Parliament's priorities for action. It concerns especially budgetary lines on CEF, SESAR, and transport research.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014						
Result of final vote	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">+:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">41</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">-:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">0:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> </table>	+:	41	-:	4	0:	3
+:	41						
-:	4						
0:	3						
Members present for the final vote	<p>Daniela Aiuto, Lucy Anderson, Marie-Christine Arnautu, Inés Ayala Sender, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Deirdre Clune, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Andor Deli, Karima Delli, Isabella De Monte, Ismail Ertug, Jacqueline Foster, Syed Kamall, Georgios Katrougkalos, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Merja Kyllönen, Miltiadis Kyrkos, Bogusław Liberadzki, Peter Lundgren, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Georg Mayer, Gesine Meissner, Renaud Muselier, Jens Nilsson, Markus Pieper, Salvatore Domenico Pogliese, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Gabriele Preuß, Dominique Riquet, Massimiliano Salini, David-Maria Sassoli, Claudia Schmidt, Jill Seymour, Ana-Claudia Tapardel, Keith Taylor, István Ujhelyi, Peter van Dalen, Elissavet Vozemberg, Janusz Władysław Zemke, Roberts Zīle, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska</p>						
Substitutes present for the final vote	<p>Martina Dlabajová, Curzio Maltese, Georgi Pirinski, Franck Proust, Patricija Šulin</p>						

24.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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: Derek Vaughan

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Is of the opinion that the amounts entered in the Draft Budget (DB) 2015 for heading 1b to cover the minimum needs and objectives of cohesion policy as set by the Union in the Treaty and in the policy legislative framework for 2014-2020 should be restored;
2. Notes with concern the clear statement of the 6th Cohesion Report that regional disparities widened in particular during the crisis years 2008-2011, meaning that efforts of cohesion policy will have to be significantly increased in order to reach the goals of economic, social and territorial cohesion as stipulated in Article 174 TFEU;
3. Notes that 2015 will be the second year of implementation of the new ESI funds cycle; underscores the need for sufficient commitment and payment appropriations in order to ensure that the programmes reach the intended number of beneficiaries and thus impact;
4. Notes with concern the decrease in payment appropriations under heading 1b by 5,0% to EUR 51 601,9 million over 2014, while the so-called increase in commitment appropriations of +3,6% stems mainly from the proposed mobilisation of the Flexibility Instrument in 2015 to address the situation of Cyprus;
5. Notes with concern that, while the proposed level of payment appropriations will be mainly dedicated to covering outstanding commitments and the winding down of programmes, the Commission declares that the payments backlog will continue to grow

and is expected to reach around EUR 18 billion at the end of 2015, even if DAB No 3/2014 is approved;

6. Requests timely and precise information on the estimates regarding the evolution of payments claims in 2014 and further clarification on how the Commission intends to address the unsustainable level of outstanding payments already foreseen for the end of 2014 for heading 1b;
7. Notes with concern that the Commission seems to be unable to honour all payment requests, calls on the Commission to provide all necessary details if resulting delays in payments occur;
8. Asks the Commission what measures it intends to introduce in the future to prevent a permanent gap between commitment appropriations and payment appropriations, and thereby prevent regular payment backlogs.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	23.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 34 -: 3 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	José Blanco López, Franc Bogovič, Victor Boștinaru, Mercedes Bresso, Andrea Cozzolino, Rosa D'Amato, Tamás Deutsch, Bill Etheridge, Raffaele Fitto, Michela Giuffrida, Anna Hedh, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivan Jakovčić, Constanze Krehl, Andrew Lewer, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Martina Michels, Iskra Mihaylova, Younous Omarjee, Stanislav Polčák, Julia Reid, Liliana Rodrigues, Monika Smolková, Maria Spyrali, Olaf Stuger, Ramón Luis Valcárcel, Ángela Vallina, Monika Vana, Matthijs van Miltenburg, Derek Vaughan, Kerstin Westphal, Joachim Zeller
Substitutes present for the final vote	Salvatore Cicu, Andor Deli, James Nicholson, Jan Marian Olbrycht, Davor Škrlec, Iuliu Winkler, Milan Zver

8.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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: Peter Jahr

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that, given the ceiling imposed by the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for Heading 2, major categories of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) spending are likely, in practice, to be cut in 2015, including direct payments, market measures and rural development;
2. Notes that under the Draft Budget (DB) the Heading 2 budget will see a cut of 0,1% in commitments and a slight increase of 0,5% in payments respectively in 2015 relative to 2014;
3. Notes that under DB 2015 funding for rural development under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) will be cut by 0,8% in payments;
4. Insists, in this context, that the Council respect its promises to provide sufficient payment appropriations in the 2015 budgetary procedure to allow the Union to meet its outstanding commitments, if necessary via a third draft amending budget to be presented by the Commission;
5. Points out that the MFF allocation does not account for any inflation; asks that Heading 2 should be adjusted according to the deflator;
6. Reiterates that measures to bring the level of unpaid commitments under control are a precondition for making a successful start to the programming period for 2014-2020; strongly calls therefore on the Council and the Member States to adopt all necessary

steps to cover pending payment claims, in particular to adopt AB 3/14 in full; highlights that AB 3/14 has been proposed on the basis of the latest estimates of payment needs provided by Member States themselves;

7. Notes that, while the budget for direct payments and market measures under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) will be increased in 2015 by 0,2% relative to 2014, for both commitments and payments, the Commission must explain how to meet increased needs associated to the phasing-in of direct payments in Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia and the creation of the reserve for agricultural crises;
8. Regrets the cuts in the operational funds for producer organisations in excess of EUR 3,3 million in both commitments and payments and also in aid to producer groups for preliminary recognition of EUR 1 million; observes that due to the continuing power imbalance in the chain, the position of family businesses are under pressure; stresses that producer groups strongly improve the position of primary producers by joining forces; calls to guarantee an ambitious budget for the operational funds for producer organisations; insists that both cuts will be reversed; calls on the Commission to use such operational funds in excess for training programmes, building partnerships and exchange of good practices for producer organizations;
9. Regrets the cut of EUR 481 289 for the school milk programme and the cut of EUR 900 073 for the school fruit programme, as both programmes have proven to be useful and efficient within the Member States and considers this cut to be extremely inappropriate given the current crisis and levels of child malnutrition in the Union; asks to increase the fund for both programmes to at least the previous levels; asks that both programmes are designed to be less bureaucratic and more user friendly;
10. Is concerned that due to the application of the 'financial discipline' mechanism, farmers with payments above EUR 2 000 will suffer a cut in direct payments paid out in the 2015 financial year; regrets the presumed effect of the application of "financial discipline" mechanism which may not lead to more efficient and accountable spendings;
11. Calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure that funds allocated to the Reserve for crises in the agricultural sector in the 2015 budget which are subsequently left unspent are made available in full as direct payments in the following budgetary year;
12. Calls on the Commission and Member States to monitor the significant price volatility of agricultural products, which has adverse effects on farmers' incomes, and to react promptly and effectively when needed;
13. Regrets the cut in funds to support beekeeping, as Parliament has consistently viewed beekeeping as a priority for the future of agriculture and for conservation of biodiversity;
14. Points out, that resources provided must fulfil the objectives of increasing the competitiveness and sustainability of European agriculture;

15. Calls for the full alignment in sum of direct payments and rural development payments in the EU-28 as soon as possible; notes that the large difference of direct payments in different member states hinders competitiveness, therefore calls the Commission to consider the EU-28 as a whole on the global agricultural market;
16. Regrets the suggested cuts in rural development programmes. Asks the council to reconsider this given the current atmosphere given the ongoing increasing insecurity and depopulation in many rural communities;
17. Strongly deplors the proposal of the Council to make cuts in payments appropriations in the 2015 draft budget; is of the opinion that the draft 2015 budget of the Commission is a bare minimum to address the recurrent and lasting problem of growing RAL.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 19 -: 6 0: 8
Members present for the final vote	John Stuart Agnew, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Eric Andrieu, Richard Ashworth, Paul Brannen, Daniel Buda, Matt Carthy, Viorica Dăncilă, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Diane Dodds, Herbert Dorfmann, Norbert Erdős, Edouard Ferrand, Luke Ming Flanagan, Beata Barbara Gosiewska, Martin Häusling, Anja Hazekamp, Jan Huitema, Peter Jahr, Jarosław Kalinowski, Elisabeth Köstinger, Zbigniew Krzysztof Kuźmiuk, Philippe Loiseau, Nuno Melo, Giulia Moi, Ulrike Müller, James Nicholson, Marit Paulsen, Marijana Petir, Constantin-Laurențiu Rebegea, Bronis Ropé, Lidia Senra Rodríguez, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Marc Tarabella, Marco Zullo
Substitutes present for the final vote	Peter Eriksson, Maria Heubuch, Anthea McIntyre, Annie Schreijer-Pierik
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Ulla Tørnæs

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

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: António Marinho e Pinto

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Welcomes the decision adopted for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), notably 6.39 billion euros have been allocated to the fisheries sector and maritime policy for the period 2014-2020; points out nonetheless that, despite the importance of fishing to many coastal areas' economies, funding for fisheries policy - one of the few EU common policies - represents only 0.7% of the EU budget; these funds will help the fisheries sector to achieve sustainable fisheries, support coastal and island communities heavily dependent on fisheries to diversify their economies, improve the support hitherto given to small-scale fishing and to regions highly dependent on fishing, as a way to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.
2. Regrets the fact that, contrary to what had been approved by Parliament, the Council restricted the duration of possible EMFF support for temporary cessation of fishing activities during biological recovery periods, between 2014 and 2020, to a maximum of six months per vessel; takes the view that biological recovery periods are an important tool for the sustainable management of certain fisheries; argues therefore that the restriction should be abolished and that there should be sufficient appropriations to cover biological recovery periods;
3. Urges the Commission and the Member States to urgently prepare the necessary legal acts to speed up the Member States' operational programmes in order to implement the priorities of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) namely the economic and social sustainability of the fisheries sector, conservation of biological resources and sustainable exploitation of fisheries and aquaculture.

4. Underlines the importance of a rigorous and independent research to evaluate the accurate state of fisheries stocks to calculate the maximum sustainable yield, earmarks of sustainable fisheries, studies also being necessary into the socio-economic impact of the measures adopted for communities dependent on fishing; accentuates that the new basic regulation of the CFP adopted last year places a special emphasis on sustainability to obtain the maximum sustainable yield (MSY); reminds that this objective constitutes one of the core elements of the new CFP and implies an accurate and reliable knowledge of the state of stocks and of the social and economic implications of the measures adopted; takes the view that this research should be properly funded by the EU budget.
5. Underlines the need for an increase in funding for international and Member States scientific research organisations to accomplish the knowledge and evaluation of marine biological resources.
6. Recalls that control of the fisheries activity on board and in the ports is essential to accomplish the objectives of sustainable fisheries. Insufficient financial support could jeopardise the goals of the Reform. Recalls that the new CFP requires an increase of EFCA's operational undertakings to assist the Member States and the European Commission with the development of practical control and surveillance tools (operations related to fisheries governance, data management systems, landing obligations and fight against the illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries (IUU fisheries)).
7. Calls for an increase in the budget of the Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) for operational tools and human resources to properly ensure the implementation of CFP reform, and for controls, inspections, surveillance and cooperation at national level to be stepped up so that CFP rules are observed and applied effectively and coherently, providing a level playing field for the fishing industry, and that there is equal treatment for all parts of the sector.
8. Stresses that since more than 60% of the supply of fisheries products to the EU comes from international waters and the exclusive economic zones of third countries, adequate and reliable budgetary provisions must be calculated in the annual budget for 2015. The external dimension of the CFP requires the continued inclusion of specific budgetary measures aimed at reinforcing and developing the European Union's participation in regional fisheries management organisations and at funding the conclusion of bilateral agreements with third countries, namely taking into account the foreseen renewal of the protocols with Mauritania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Greenland, Cape Verde or Kiribati.
9. Regrets the fact that the Commission has reduced the amounts against the item for the pilot project on support measures for small-scale fishing (11 06 77 08); urges the Commission to reinstate the amounts approved; takes the view that that pilot project is of major importance and, in acknowledgement of the sector's importance and specific features, should be the basis for establishing an EU aid programme for small-scale fishing, as has been argued for in various Parliament resolutions on this issue.

10. Welcomes the provisions of the EMFF devoted to the Commission for direct actions in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, 647 million euros. Calls on the Commission to speed up the necessary measures to put in practice their own projects.

11. Deplores the cuts made within Title 11 by the Council in its reading of the draft budget; is concerned at the consequences for the measures funded under the budget heading concerned and at the adverse impact on pursuing the CFP and IMP objectives; points out, more specifically with regard to payment appropriations, that this year there is already a shortfall in them and that it is therefore essential to ensure a sufficient level of appropriations.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 20 -: 2 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Miguel Arias Cañete, Renata Briano, Alain Cadec, David Coburn, Richard Corbett, João Ferreira, Raymond Finch, Werner Kuhn, Isabella Lövin, António Marinho e Pinto, Gabriel Mato, Norica Nicolai, Ulrike Rodust, Remo Sernagiotto, Ricardo Serrão Santos, Isabelle Thomas, Ruža Tomašić, Peter van Dalen, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa
Substitutes present for the final vote	José Blanco López, Diane Dodds, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, Mike Hookem, Yannick Jadot, Francisco José Millán Mon

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

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: Silvia Costa

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in 2015, the multiannual programmes in the fields of education, training, youth, sport, culture, media and citizenship enter into their second year; underscores the need for sufficient commitment and payment appropriations in order to ensure that all programmes reach the intended number of beneficiaries; points out that – as a high number of citizens are directly concerned by these programmes – it is crucial for the EU not to reproduce stops of payments, which in recent years have already had a large impact, for example on Erasmus mobility grants;
2. Notes the modest increase in commitment appropriations for the Erasmus+ programme in comparison to 2014; points out that due to the high implementation rate of and demand for this programme, sufficient payment appropriations are essential to make the additional commitments count and guarantee the programme's smooth functioning, especially considering that the European Commission wishes to bring up students mobility up to 20% by the end of the decade; underlines that grants pertaining to the Erasmus+ programme should be exempt from taxation and social levies;
3. Recalls concerning the Student Loan Guarantee Facility that has been granted 3.5% of the budget, that it should be done "on favourable terms for students" "regardless of their social background" and that "this additional and innovative tool for learning mobility should neither replace any current, nor impede the development of any future, grant or loan system supporting student mobility at local, national or Union level";
4. Considers it regrettable that the Commission has proposed a lower level of commitment appropriations for the Creative Europe Programme than in 2014, despite its important role in supporting the cultural and creative industries and despite the necessity of

organising the future guarantee facility with promised measures as training of financial intermediaries; on this background, finds the further cuts proposed by the Council for both the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes and the guarantee facility unacceptable, as it will further jeopardise the effective implementation of the Programme; also recalls the European Parliament's first concerns on the merger of the Culture and Media strands and subsequent policy and funding equilibrium issues;

5. Recalls that the total financial envelope for the Europe for Citizens programme for 2014-2020 was cut by roughly 20% compared to 2007-2013; criticises the fact that the Commission Draft Budget 2015 provides for a lower level of commitment appropriations than those reached in 2014; recommends a special consideration of this programme which remains unique in the contact to the citizens and the support of their bottom-up actions; points out that the present level of funding is far too low and is even counterproductive to the image of the Union; is therefore deeply concerned about the Council's proposal to further cut the commitment and payment appropriations for the programme and deplors the sending of such a signal to Europe's citizens;
6. Underscores that the Union communication policy is should be improved in order to become an important tool to explain for citizens to better understand and participate in the Union's functioning, policies and processes to its citizens, in particular in view of the fact that, as the recent low participation to the European elections showed, EU citizens know worryingly little about EU legislation and programmes; therefore rejects the Council's proposals for cuts to the funding for communication actions; highlights the need urgency to foster cooperation between among the Union's institutions, national parliaments, and all other relevant parties in matters of communication in order to maximise the impact of the funds invested and to step up and provide support for cooperation between European multimedia networks, with a view to expanding the provision of news on Europe;
7. Points to the importance of digital platforms, such as Europeana, which help to digitise Europe's cultural and artistic heritage and carry out projects based on transnational networks and partnerships that broaden public access to the materials available, thus showcasing European culture and giving a boost to the cultural and creative industries;
8. Draws attention to the undertaking given by the Commission, at the prompting of Parliament, among others, to raise the profile of European volunteering and volunteer networks;
9. Stresses that greater attention should be paid to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions which support researchers' careers through mobility grants and therefore play a vital role in strengthening research in Europe; regrets that the Council proposes substantial cuts to both commitment and payment appropriations for this programme and is determined to restore the figures proposed by the Commission;
10. Requests the European Commission to inform the European Parliament of the division of the funds among the Member States for the programmes in the fields of education, training, youth, sport, culture, media and citizenship in order to improve the transparency and monitoring of the allocation of public funds;
11. Stresses the need to broaden the scope of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme, in

particular in the light of the recent tragic events in Ukraine, and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in culture; points out that the provision of financial support by the EU for joint cultural projects in which young artists from Eastern Partnership countries and EU Member States take part will raise the profile and increase the political significance of such projects and will bolster efforts to secure peace in Europe;

12. Notes that the Commission's Communication "Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" pays special attention to youth unemployment reaching 59.2% in Greece and 55.7% in Spain and that "the increasing share of young people neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs), at 13.2% in 2012, is another major source of concern"; points out that therefore, access to knowledge is a prerequisite to employment and growth and that social aspects and reduction of inequalities must be at the core of every policy implemented;
13. Points out that austerity measures destroying public services are jeopardising the possibility for education and training systems to contribute to economic recovery and that lifelong learning must be a high priority in order to fight poverty and inequalities;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	4.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 24 -: 4 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Dominique Bilde, Andrea Bocskor, Louise Bours, Silvia Costa, Mircea Diaconu, Damian Drăghici, Jill Evans, Giorgos Grammatikakis, Petra Kammerevert, Andrew Lewer, Svetoslav Hristov Malinov, Curzio Maltese, Fernando Maura Barandiarán, Luigi Morgano, Momchil Nekov, Michaela Šojdrová, Yana Toom, Giovanni Toti, Anders Primdahl Vistisen, Julie Ward, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Theodoros Zagorakis, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Milan Zver, Krystyna Maria Łybacka
Substitutes present for the final vote	Ernest Maragall, Emma McClarkin, Marlene Mizzi, Liliana Rodrigues, Algirdas Saudargas, Hermann Winkler

4.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

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: Tomáš Zdechovský

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Takes into account the decrease of 1,9% in commitments in Heading 3 on security and Citizenship compared to the 2014 budget, mostly due to the end of the Schengen Facility for Croatia, in accordance with its Treaty of Accession and welcomes the increase of 12,2% in payments, which will contribute to ensure that payment appropriations are sufficient to implement the policies in this area;
2. Recalls that the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice entered into a new phase following the adoption of the strategic guidelines at the European Council of 26-27 June 2014; underlines that the implementation of the guidelines could entail, in some very specific areas, the need to reinforce the financial means allocated to those areas; underlines that, in this event, the already allocated resources should not be put under pressure and expects the Commission to bring forward concrete proposals if a financial reinforcement is needed during 2015;
3. Insists that the Agencies under its responsibility should have adequate resources to fulfil their mandate and is aware of the inter-institutional Agreement to reduce staff levels by 5 per cent in the next five years; insists, however, that those cuts are implemented on a case-by-case basis respecting the resources needed by the Agencies to fulfil their assigned tasks;
4. Calls for a greater increase in the budget of EASO, as this Agency is crucial to address pressing asylum issues and will have a reinforced role in promoting the uniform

application of the Asylum package; therefore requests an appropriate budget increase in order to allow the Agency to effectively fulfil its tasks and operations, including the promotion of best practises and cooperation between Member States;

5. Welcomes the increase of the budget lines "Ensuring the protection of rights and empowering citizens" and "Promoting non-discrimination and equality", implementing the programme Rights, Equality and Citizenship 2014 - 2020;
6. Is not entirely satisfied with the increase in the budget of Frontex as it must reinforce its operational assistance in particular to Member States facing strong pressure at the external borders and to increase its reactivity to rapid evolutions in migration flows; considers that Frontex should have additional staff and resources to fulfil its tasks and implement the EUROSUR system;
7. Stresses the importance of an adequate EU budget in the field of asylum and migration and for the common management of the EU single external border and to face the challenges it poses, especially in relation to the current situation affecting the Southern border of the EU, and calls for a clear commitment of all Union partners in that direction;
8. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to increase Europol's annual budget, also in view of the new Europol Regulation to be adopted by the co-legislators; recognises that increases in agencies' budgets to enable them to properly fulfil their functions must be matched by an appropriate staffing level for those agencies; considers that the Agency's establishment plan should be adjusted to allow it to recruit additional temporary personnel in the light of the rising demand for support in the fight against cybercrime and serious international crime and terrorism and to reinforce the assessment and analysis of the these risks;
9. Supports the increase of the budget of eu.LISA in order to ensure secure and well-functioning IT systems in Home Affairs , namely SIS II, VIS and Eurodac systems under the management of the Agency as well as the implementation of the necessary evolutions foreseen for the respective systems; supports the further development of the Agency, in view of possible further tasks, which might be entrusted to it such as to design, develop and implement new systems;
10. Questions the existence of the budget line "Setting up new IT systems to support the management of migration flows across the external borders of the Union" even though the "Smart Borders" package has yet to be adopted by the co-legislators; underlines that no specific funding has been allocated to that budget line since its creation; calls on the Commission to establish budget lines for such actions only after the co-legislators have approved those actions through the appropriate legislative act;
11. Is disappointed by the decrease of the budget dedicated to EMCDDA as the Centre will have to deal with the possible adoption of the Regulation on new psychoactive substances (2013/0305 (COD)), which provides for additional tasks for the Centre;
12. Recalls that the fair and transparent distribution of funding between the different objectives of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund was a priority for Parliament during negotiations leading to the adoption of that fund; calls on the Commission accordingly to increase the number of budget lines under the Asylum Migration and

Integration Fund to facilitate a better readability and transparency of how the financial resources allocated to the different objectives and thus to those budgetary lines will be spent; calls, in particular, on the Commission to separate expenditure on enhancing fair and effective return strategies from expenditure on legal migration and promoting the effective integration of third-country nationals in all future draft budgets;

13. Stresses the need and the importance of continuous evaluations of how all funds and programmes are implemented and its resources used in order to detect possible shortcomings at an early stage as well as their effectiveness.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 44 -: 9 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Jan Philipp Albrecht, Heinz K. Becker, Malin Björk, Michał Boni, Caterina Chinnici, Ignazio Corrao, Rachida Dati, Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, Frank Engel, Cornelia Ernst, Laura Ferrara, Monika Flašíková Beňová, Kinga Gál, Ana Gomes, Nathalie Griesbeck, Sylvie Guillaume, Jussi Halla-aho, Monika Hohlmeier, Filiz Hyusmenova, Sophia in 't Veld, Eva Joly, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Barbara Kudrycka, Kshetu Kyenge, Marju Lauristin, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Vicky Maeijer, Barbara Matera, Roberta Metsola, Louis Michel, József Nagy, Péter Niedermüller, Soraya Post, Judith Sargentini, Birgit Sippel, Csaba Sógor, Helga Stevens, Valdemar Tomaševski, Traian Ungureanu, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Harald Vilimsky, Udo Voigt, Josef Weidenholzer, Cecilia Wikström, Kristina Winberg, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes present for the final vote	Marina Albiol Guzmán, Janice Atkinson, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Pál Csáky, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Rikke Karlsson, Miltiadis Kyrkos, Kati Piri, Josep-Maria Terricabras, Axel Voss

2.9.2014

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

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: Danuta Maria Hübner

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs 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 procedure for the adoption of the budget for 2015 presents specific characteristics stemming from the electoral recess period: the election of a new Parliament implies that the composition of one of the institutions of the budgetary authority will be substantially different²¹; the Commission that elaborated the draft budget is phasing out and the procedure will very likely be concluded already during the term of the current Commission;
2. Stresses that, on top of that, the procedure suffered a severe delay, as the Commission only presented the draft budget on 11 June 2014 and the Council, after having reached an agreement at COREPER level on 15 July 2014, will only formally adopt its position - by written procedure - by the beginning of September 2014;
3. Regrets that such a fundamental political decision as the adoption of the position of the Council on the draft budget for 2015 is taken by written procedure; considers this contrary to the transparency and openness that must constitute an essential characteristic of the budgetary decisions by all EU institutions;
4. Notes that the Council proceeded to make further cuts in Heading 3, Security and citizenship, for which the draft budget already carried out a decrease of 1,9%, in commitment appropriations, as compared to budget 2014 (from EUR 2 171,998 million in 2014 to EUR 2 130,721 million in draft budget 2015). Indeed, in Council's position

²¹ European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2014 on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2015 budget, Section III – Commission (P7_TA(2014)0247); and European Parliament resolution of 17 April 2014 on Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2015 (P7_TA(2014)0450).

heading 3 would be reduced by 3,3% in commitments as compared to 2014 budget. Recalls that the margin left by the Commission in Heading 3 was of EUR 115,3 million. Notes that in payments the Council reduced the increase proposed by the Commission for Heading 3 from +12,2% to + 10,5%;

5. Is aware that, despite some slight signs of recovery in the European economy already visible this year, many Member States still carry acute budgetary consolidation efforts, thus rendering more difficult investments in projects that could stimulate the recovery. Considers thus that European funds will be very important in 2015 in order to compensate for those difficulties. Considers naturally that it is also very important that adequate funding is provided for projects concerning citizens directly and destined to improve the quality of European public debate;
6. Stresses that the low turn-out at recent European elections shows the need to continue during all the parliamentary term, and not only when European elections are approaching, to invest in campaigns to inform citizens on the impact of the Union on their daily lives and of the role of the European Parliament; considers crucial to have an assessment of the recent Parliament's institutional communication campaign;
7. Takes the view that communications projects can struggle to demonstrate effectiveness when evaluated, primarily due to a lack of agreed or appropriate metrics upon which their performance can be judged;8. Believes in the importance of instruments of participatory democracy, as defined in the Lisbon Treaty, for citizens; regrets, in this context, the difficulties related to the implementation of the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) and emphasises the need for providing adequate funding not only for the initiatives themselves, but also for their communication, in order to improve the visibility and the trustworthiness of the ECI; underlines, subject to compliance with the treaties, that any such funding is independent of the subject matter of the ECI and all qualifying ECIs irrespective of their content are treated equally;
9. Stresses the need for adequate funding of the various instruments of e-democracy with a view to intensifying participatory democracy processes through the use of information and communication technology;
10. Considers that, in view of the entry into force of Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, adequate and fair funding is needed to enable its effective implementation;
11. Requests that budget lines concerning the European Parliament's infrastructure, expenses and other items which correspond to the Parliament's places of work are broken down to reflect where expenses occur (Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg);12. Notes the decrease in expenditure on relations between the EU institutions and national parliaments, and expresses regret that more is not done to prioritise the involvement of national legislatures;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.9.2014
Result of final vote	+: 17 -: 3 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Miguel Arias Cañete, Mercedes Bresso, Richard Corbett, Danuta Maria Hübner, Ramón Jáuregui Atondo, Georgios Katrougkalos, Constance Le Grip, Jo Leinen, Petr Mach, Morten Messerschmidt, Florian Philippot, Paulo Rangel, György Schöpflin, Francisco Sosa Wagner, Barbara Spinelli, Josep-Maria Terricabras, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski
Substitutes present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Max Andersson, Gerolf Annemans, Pervenche Berès, Sven Giegold, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Cristian Dan Preda, Marcus Pretzell, Viviane Reding, Siôn Simon
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Fernando Maura Barandiarán

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	7.10.2014
Result of final vote	+: 27 -: 8 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Nedzhmi Ali, Jonathan Arnott, Richard Ashworth, Jean-Paul Denanot, Gérard Deprez, Valdis Dombrovskis, José Manuel Fernandes, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Jens Geier, Esteban González Pons, Heidi Hautala, Monika Hohlmeier, Kaja Kallas, Bernd Kölmel, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Vladimír Maňka, Sophie Montel, Clare Moody, Victor Negrescu, Jan Marian Olbrycht, Pina Picierno, Paul Rübzig, Petri Sarvamaa, Patricija Šulin, Eleytherios Synadinos, Paul Tang, Indrek Tarand, Isabelle Thomas, Daniele Viotti, Marco Zanni
Substitutes present for the final vote	Tamás Deutsch, Ernest Maragall, Ivan Štefanec, Tomáš Zdechovský
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Laura Agea