



2014/2248(INI)

28.9.2016

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

on possible evolutions of and adjustments to the current institutional set-up of
the European Union
(2014/2248(INI))

Rapporteur: José Manuel Fernandes

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SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Underlines that the challenges identified by the Europe 2020 strategy persist and are likely to intensify in the coming years; points in particular to the overarching priority of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the targets set on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate / energy;
2. Believes that for the Union to meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and to address current and new challenges effectively it needs to be granted a budget that is proportionate to the mission it is called on to accomplish; considers that the current level of the EU budget, which corresponds to 1 % of the EU-28 GDP, is not sufficient to achieve these goals;
3. Is convinced that the EU budget needs to be endowed with a system of genuine own resources, with simplicity, fairness and transparency as guiding principles; considers the work of the High Level Group on Own Resources to be of primary importance and expects from it timely, effective and ambitious proposals; considers that such a system should reduce the share of GNI contributions to the EU budget with a view to abandoning the 'juste retour' approach of Member States; insists, in this context, on the phasing-out of all forms of rebates;
4. Underlines the need for the EU budget to be simple, clear and easily understood by EU citizens, and to be coordinated with national budgets; considers that these should be underpinning principles for both the expenditure and revenue sides of the EU budget;
5. Calls for an information campaign to ensure that citizens across Europe are better informed about the EU budget, thus making them aware of how the money is being spent and of the budget changes that might have an impact on them;
6. Recalls the numerous pronouncements in favour of a single seat for the European Parliament, given the symbolic value of such a move and the actual savings it would achieve;
7. Considers that the multiannual financial framework (MFF) should allow for maximum flexibility in order to respond to crises and evolving political priorities; underlines, in this regard, that an ambitious 2014-2020 MFF mid-term revision is indispensable; stresses, in this context, the need to make available in the budget all extraordinary revenue resulting from decommitments under the EU budget or competition fines;
8. Notes that the EU budget is often called on to finance extraordinary needs or new political priorities that were not anticipated at the time of adoption of the MFF; stresses that EU commitments should, however, be fully respected and that any new initiatives and needs should not be financed to the detriment of existing EU programmes and policies; considers that the MFF special instruments should be mobilised, as appropriate, for this purpose, and be counted over and above the MFF ceilings, both in commitment and payment appropriations;

9. Underlines the need to safeguard the principle of unity of the budget, and is concerned about the recent shift from the Community method to intergovernmental decision-making as observed in the setting-up of ad hoc satellite instruments outside the EU budget such as the Trust Funds; stresses the need to ensure parliamentary oversight over all EU expenditure;
10. Stresses the need to apply the ordinary legislative procedure for the adoption of the MFF Regulation, in order to align it with the decision-making procedure of virtually all EU multiannual programmes, including their respective financial allocations, as well as the EU budget; believes that the consent procedure deprives Parliament of the decision-making power that it exercises over the adoption of the annual budgets, while the unanimity rule in the Council means that the agreement represents the lowest common denominator, based on the need to avoid the veto of a single Member State.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	28.9.2016
Result of final vote	+: 28 -: 7 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Nedzhmi Ali, Jonathan Arnott, Richard Ashworth, Reimer Böge, Lefteris Christoforou, Jean-Paul Denanot, Gérard Deprez, José Manuel Fernandes, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Jens Geier, Esteban González Pons, Ingeborg Gräßle, Iris Hoffmann, Monika Hohlmeier, Bernd Kölmel, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Vladimír Maňka, Ernest Maragall, Siegfried Mureşan, Urmas Paet, Pina Picierno, Paul Rübig, Petri Sarvamaa, Patricija Šulin, Eleftherios Synadinos, Paul Tang, Indrek Tarand, Isabelle Thomas, Inese Vaidere, Monika Vana, Daniele Viotti, Auke Zijlstra, Auke Zijlstra
Substitutes present for the final vote	Andrey Novakov, Nils Torvalds, Marco Valli