



2019/2028(BUD)

2.10.2019

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2020
(2019/2028(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Petra Kammerevert

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Recalls that the Erasmus+ programme is a strategic investment, primarily in Europe's young generation, that supports education and training opportunities across Europe, helps increase social cohesion and the building of a European sense of belonging and, therefore, is a crucial investment in the future of the Union; highlights the fact that, while its budget is relatively small, constituting 1, 8% of the current MFF, Erasmus+ is one of the best known Union programmes; reaffirms that a substantial budget increase for Erasmus+ is of vital importance in order to align it better with the high demand for the programme, as demonstrated by the volume of applications received, which exceeds by far the available funding; calls, therefore, for an increase of 10 % in the funding over the draft budget for 2020 across all Erasmus+ budget lines in order to fight the low success rates and give more people the opportunity to benefit from the programme; reiterates Parliament's support for a tripling of the budget for the Erasmus+ programme in the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) and its intention to stand up for that increase;
2. Strongly opposes the cuts proposed by the Council to the Creative Europe programme, which would further undermine its objective of supporting the Union's cultural and creative sectors and thus fostering a European sense of belonging, social cohesion, jobs and growth; insists that funding levels should match the ambitions of the programme and recalls that the programme has been chronically underfunded; consequently, in opposition to the cuts, asks for the budget lines corresponding to the Creative Europe programme to be increased by 10 % over the draft budget for 2020 in order to boost the efforts to reinforce the creative and cultural sectors; reiterates Parliament's support for a doubling of the budget of the Creative Europe programme in the next MFF and its intention to stand up for that increase; calls on the Commission to continue to support the multilingual offer of European quality cultural TV programming across Europe through the Creative Europe programme;
3. Acknowledges that the interinstitutional agreement on the funding of the European Solidarity Corps has been respected and an adequate budget for the functioning of the programme has been allocated; acknowledges that the volunteering strand of the programme has triggered great interests from participants and organisations;
4. Emphasises the value of the Europe for Citizens programme in enhancing citizens' understanding of the Union and fostering a sense of citizenship; therefore deplores the budget cuts proposed by the Council; asks to restore and reinforce the related budget lines in order to encourage civic engagement and democratic participation; stresses that the next Europe for Citizens programme needs proper funding in the next MFF covering the period 2021-2027, albeit under the framework of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme; considers that further strengthening should be devoted to European and global citizenship education in order to provide the information required to understand the institutional framework of the Union and to engage as active citizens in tackling world challenges and current international socio-political shifts;

5. Calls on the Commission to use the attention generated by the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage to build a coherent and sustainable long-term strategy on promoting and safeguarding cultural heritage in Europe, including through research, and to allocate the necessary funds for this purpose in 2020 and beyond; calls, in that regard, for dedicated funds to be made available through relevant MFF programmes;
6. Welcomes the fact that culture- and education-related projects and infrastructure are supported across a range of Union programmes and instruments, notably the ESI Funds, EFSI, and Horizon 2020; calls on the Commission once again to foster coherent synergies across Union programmes – such as Horizon 2020, the Connecting Europe Facility, Erasmus+, EaSI, Creative Europe and COSME, EFSI and ESI Funds – to enhance the support to projects in the fields of education, youth, and sport as well as in the cultural and creative sectors; insists that the synergies should not be interpreted as an endorsement by Parliament of any redeployments or budgetary cuts;
7. Considering that the Sport component of the Erasmus+ programme has been a successful endeavour, it calls on the Commission to also address the overseas territories of the Member States, in which more than five million European citizens are residing. In this regard, there is a need for realistic and adapted budget lines under the 2021-2027 MFF for the Sport chapter, including towards transnational meetings within the Erasmus+ Sport programme.
8. Calls on the Commission to improve its external communication and its outreach to citizens in order to tackle fake news and disinformation and to improve the information about Union activities; stresses the importance of multimedia actions in promoting a common European public sphere, as well as multilingualism; acknowledges that European societies need strong and independent journalism that provide them with information from a European perspective; urges the Commission, therefore, to secure and increase the draft budget for 2020 for multimedia actions; calls in that regard for a 5 % increase in the multimedia action budget line over the draft budget for 2020 to secure the crucial work of Euranet Plus for the remainder of the MFF; at the same time, urges the Commission to increase transparency and accountability in the use of the budget for multimedia actions, in particular by creating specific budgetary lines related to the different actions, as well as to conduct a full scale review of the budget used for multimedia actions;
9. Is alarmed by the conclusions of the Rapid case review of the European Court of Auditors on Euronews, which highlights that Euronews is now 85 % owned by private investors and only 15 % by Union and non-Union broadcasters and local public authorities, that Union financial support to Euronews lacks transparency and accountability, that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are insufficiently robust and that Euronews is not accessible to most Union citizens; is particularly concerned by the finding that, following the 2018 revision of the Financial Regulation, which removed the reference to the notion of bodies pursuing a general Union interest, grants for Euronews are provided under points (c) and (f) of the first paragraph of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation (bodies with a de facto monopoly/specific technical competence) and not under Article 180 (actions intended to help achieve a Union policy objective/bodies forming part of or supporting a Union policy), thus implying that Euronews no longer pursues a general Union interest; in light of the foregoing

considerations, urges the Commission to answer all the concerns raised by the Court of Auditors as part of its monitoring of the funds awarded to Euronews and to reassess its approach in cooperating with Euronews; furthermore, in the event that the framework contract with Euronews is extended beyond 2020, requests that the duration of the contract not exceed two years; moreover, encourages the Commission to consider new ways of providing independent and comprehensive information on Union affairs to European viewers, taking into consideration new technological developments and changes in consumer habits; calls therefore, on the Commission to invest in a diversified mix of information instruments which could include Euronews.

10. Points to the potential of Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions (PPPAs); believes that the pre-assessment of PPPAs by the Commission leaves very limited time for opinion-giving committees in the European Parliament to address the ratings and comments; regrets, furthermore, that in some instances the ratings and comments provided by the Commission are not entirely objective, and appear to have been influenced by institutional or personal preferences; recalls that failure to enact a PPPA inside the Commission can never be a reason for a low assessment grade; calls therefore on the Commission to consider revising the procedure on pre-assessment in order to give the committee adequate time to address the Commission pre-assessment results; furthermore, invites the Commission to provide feedback on the implementation of the committee PPPAs with a focus on successful and unsuccessful projects.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	1.10.2019
Result of final vote	+: 25 -: 4 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Isabella Adinolfi, Christine Anderson, Andrea Bocskor, Judith Bunting, Gianantonio Da Re, Laurence Farreng, Claire Fox, Romeo Franz, Catherine Griset, Irena Joveva, Petra Kammerevert, Niyazi Kizilyürek, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Predrag Fred Matić, Dace Melbārde, Shaffaq Mohammed, Niklas Nienaaß, Peter Pollák, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Andrey Slabakov, Massimiliano Smeriglio, Michaela Šojdrová, Sabine Verheyen, Julie Ward, Salima Yenbou, Milan Zver
Substitutes present for the final vote	Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Ibán García Del Blanco, Iuliu Winkler

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

25	+
ECR	Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Dace Melbārde, Andrey Slabakov
GUE/NGL	Niyazi Kizilyürek
NI	Isabella Adinolfi
PPE	Asim Ademov, Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Andrea Bocskor, Peter Pollák, Michaela Šojdrová, Sabine Verheyen, Iuliu Winkler, Milan Zver
RENEW	Judith Bunting, Laurence Farreng, Irena Joveva, Shaffaq Mohammed
S&D	Ibán García Del Blanco, Petra Kammerevert, Predrag Fred Matić, Massimiliano Smeriglio, Julie Ward
VERTS/ALE	Romeo Franz, Niklas Nienaf, Salima Yenbou

4	-
ID	Christine Anderson, Gianantonio Da Re, Catherine Griset
NI	Claire Fox

1	0
S&D	Domènec Ruiz Devesa

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention