



2019/2028(BUD)

9.8.2019

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

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: Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová

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SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Recalls that effective and carefully considered employment policy enhancements reflecting demographic and automation challenges, accompanied by well-targeted investment strategies and responsible fiscal policies, continue to be an important precondition for sustainable growth which is the key factor leading to quality employment and boosting upward social convergence;
2. Highlights that the 2020 budget should contribute towards achieving the Europe 2020 targets in the social and employment area, which seem to be within reach as regards the employment rate target but remain far from being achieved as regards the target of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion; stresses, in this regard, the need for comprehensive policy reforms and integrated approaches that combat youth and long-term unemployment and the often neglected issue of elderly employability;
3. Recognises the crucial role of the European Social Fund (ESF), the Youth Guarantee (YG), the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD); highlights, in this regard, that the activities implemented in these areas should always result in strategic measures with clearly defined objectives and targets and that efficient and effective spending is equally as important as the total budget ceilings;
4. Acknowledges the forthcoming rationalisation of the current ESF, the YEI, the FEAD, the EaSI and the European Health Programme under the ESF+ as of 2021; calls on the Commission to present financial information in a manner that makes it comparable with performance information; expresses concerns on the substantial decrease (by EUR 5 million) proposed by the Council on the PROGRESS axis of EaSI; stresses, in this regard, that all legislative and budgetary revisions should be based on evidence, understanding of their impacts and in line with the better regulation agenda, as well as related recommendations of the European Court of Auditors;
5. Underlines that, in the context of ongoing budgetary constraints, it will be critical to make the best use of the 2020 general budget, including future skills policies and measures to support labour market transition and better adjustment to demographic change, particularly by improved integration of potentially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the labour market;
6. Emphasises the importance of budgetary accountability and prioritisation when delivering true value for money for Union citizens, including a stronger focus on evidence-based policymaking and special attention to social, regional and territorial disparities;
7. Welcomes the policy developments in the area of employment and social affairs during the 8th legislature, but emphasises that the policy initiatives need proper and timely funding to become operational;
8. Highlights the important contribution of the agencies in dealing with a wide range of

employment, social issues and data collection; stresses that their tasks are developing and hence they must be given the necessary resources to fulfil them; therefore calls for a thorough assessment of the new tasks assigned to the agencies and of their overall performance, with a view to ensuring appropriate and efficient budgetary allocations only;

9. Reiterates that pilot projects (PPs) and preparatory actions (PAs) are very valuable tools to initiate new activities and policies in the fields of employment and social inclusion and could be used for data and evidence collection in order to improve future Union employment policies;
10. Recalls that it is paramount for Parliament to be given regular updates on the various stages of the implementation of pilot projects and preparatory actions by the Commission, including proper evaluation of the results and their added value to the European citizens.