



2015/2132(BUD)

3.9.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

for the Committee on Budgets

on the Council position on the general budget of the European Union for the
financial year 2016
(2015/2132(BUD))

Rapporteur: Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz

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 into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that the responsibility of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection in the budget procedure covers budget lines in titles 2 (Internal market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs), 14 (Taxation and customs union) and 33 (Justice and consumer protection);
2. Recalls that the Single Market (SM) is a key driver for the creation of jobs and growth, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); notes, however, that this potential remains untapped in many respects, such as the Digital Single Market; calls, therefore, for more efficient spending of the budget through the establishment of a clear set of financing priorities for the advancement of the SM and the consequential development of the economy;
3. Welcomes the significant increase in the amount allocated to budget line 14 02 01 on 'Supporting the functioning and modernisation of the Customs Union'; supports the achievement and application of the programme's goals via the furthering of existing modernisation initiatives, particularly the electronic customs project, and by developing a strategy for commonly managed and operated IT systems in customs related areas, as well as by improving appropriate coordination between Member States, promoting the exchange of best practices, timely implementation and monitoring the correct application of Union legislation;
4. Considers that consumers are at the core of the new digital economic model and is convinced that the budget for this policy area should reflect this; notes therefore that it is important to secure funding for updating consumer policy to ensure sound adjustment to rapid technological and economic change;
5. Asks for the financing of a new pilot project entitled 'Consumer Empowerment and Education on the safety of products and market surveillance in the Digital Single Market (DSM)', as an appropriate follow-up project to the one-year pilot project entitled 'Training SMEs on Consumer Rights in the Digital Age' proposed by the IMCO Committee for 2015, contributing to a large public education campaign to help consumers and businesses understand the complex rules and regulations associated with e-commerce;
6. Stresses that this should help citizens and SMEs comply with consumer protection law in the online environment; emphasises that, in a truly connected DSM, every consumer should be able to benefit from the same quality of services and products purchased online and receive sufficient information for the purchase in a transparent manner;
7. Finds it important that relevant authorities have the ability to stop the products and make the companies recall or withdraw the products from the European market; considers that the simplification and unification of rules and standards would reduce potential compliance problems, and consequently benefit both consumers and traders; considers, in this regard, that traders should also receive information on how to settle their taxes from

cross-border transactions within the Union through the efficient use of the VATMOSS system;

8. Recalls the need to finance the multilingual tool for the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform; emphasises that well-functioning ODR systems across the Union will encourage consumers to seek solutions to the problems they encounter when buying products and services in the SM and will boost online purchases; recalls that more online and cross-border trade in the Union will also broaden consumer choice and provide businesses with new opportunities, give access to new markets and help generate more economic growth;
9. Acknowledges the importance of the ‘Single Market Forum’; recalls that 2015 is the final year of the preparatory action and, for that reason, a new legislative proposal should be urgently launched by the Commission in order to secure the continuation of this essential event;
10. Emphasises that SOLVIT has a good record of customer satisfaction when resolving problems affecting citizens; believes that more could be done to improve how governance tools operate together, to improve the awareness of such tools and to maximise value from the resources allocated to them; invites further reflection on the possibility for consolidation of these tools in future budgetary proposals; notes its support for budget line 02 03 04 on internal market governance tools; believes that the European Consumer Centres Network should also be given appropriate funding allowing it to continue its mission of educating citizens on their consumer rights in Europe;
11. Believes that supporting the real economy should be the key priority for the Union for job creation and sustainable growth; urges that SMEs be better informed of this option so that the uptake of this financial support especially by SMEs be maximised; **strongly calls** for the making available of sufficient financing for a transition to a resource-efficient, circular economy;
12. Points out the need to secure adequate financing for the COSME programme and for the Enterprise Europe Network in 2016 in order to foster growth of SMEs and help them to overcome challenges related to access to the single market as well as the global market through better access to information about opportunities outside their own Member State as well as beyond the Union’s borders; emphasises that securing good access to finance, and increasing the uptake of digital tools, are crucial for keeping undertakings competitive;
13. Welcomes the increase in budget line 02 04 02 03 ‘Increasing innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)’ and budget line 02 03 ‘Internal market for goods and services’, and suggests that the Commission monitor the effectiveness of the projects financed in order to increase innovation for SMEs;
14. Is concerned at the drastic reduction in budget lines 02 02 01 ‘Promoting entrepreneurship and improving the competitiveness and access to markets of Union enterprises’ and 02 02 02 ‘Improving access to finance for small and middle-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the form of equity and debt’ as part of the COSME programme;
15. Highlights that standards are important tools for the competitiveness of undertakings whose participation in the standardisation process is essential for technological progress as

well as for the comparability of material and product quality in the Union; therefore, agrees that payments under budget line 02 03 02 01 aimed at supporting standardisation activities performed by CEN, CENELEC and ETSI should be raised in accordance with the Commission proposal.

16. In light of the adoption of the eCall Regulation, calls for proper funding to be given to the European GNSS Agency in order to fully implement the regulation.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.9.2015
Result of final vote	+: 26 -: 5 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Dita Charanzová, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Daniel Dalton, Nicola Danti, Dennis de Jong, Pascal Durand, Vicky Ford, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Evelyne Gebhardt, Maria Grapini, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Robert Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Margot Parker, Eva Paunova, Jiří Pospíšil, Virginie Rozière, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Igor Šoltes, Catherine Stihler, Mylène Troszczynski, Anneleen Van Bossuyt
Substitutes present for the final vote	Lucy Anderson, Birgit Collin-Langen, Kaja Kallas, Jens Nilsson, Marc Tarabella, Lambert van Nistelrooij
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Andrey Novakov, Adam Szejnfeld