



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2013/2145(BUD)

5.7.2013

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Budgets

on the General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2014 - all sections
(2013/2145(BUD))

Rapporteur: José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Notes with grave concern the substantive cuts of 12,5% in commitments for Heading 4; emphasises that even in times of increased budgetary discipline and constraints, it is of vital importance to maintain appropriate funding for the EU's global activities to enable it to live up to its ambitions outlined in the Lisbon treaty; stresses that all efforts should be made to limit the deep cuts and their repercussions for the EU as a global actor;
2. Emphasises thus the importance of trying to as far as possible match the level of the 2013 budget in terms of commitments to the EU's major foreign policy financial instruments to ensure that the EU's international role is not unnecessarily weakened;
3. Notes with particular concern the especially severe reductions applied to the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), which could considerably endanger relations with the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood, one of the main priorities of the EU's external action; stresses that without adequate funding, the 'more for more' principle as core mechanism in the relevant financial instruments will be fundamentally undermined; strongly urges to restore a substantial amount of the cuts in commitments to the ENI;
4. Emphasises that in the Southern Mediterranean, there is an urgent need for the EU to play an active role and that it is in the EU's interest to support further democratic developments in the Eastern Neighbourhood; expresses its concern that with deep cuts in the relevant instruments, there would be little room to react to sudden developments and maintain the level of support required to help countries in transition which could fundamentally undermine the EU's policy objectives in the area;
5. Notes that the distribution of the decreases in commitments among the different instruments remains largely unexplained which is especially disconcerting given the enormous differences in the depth of the cuts; asks the Commission to provide further clarification on the reasons for this distribution of cuts;
6. Notes that the margin for Heading 4 has been once more considerably reduced this year and leaves little room for flexibility with regard to policy priorities; stresses that such thin margins are unacceptable as they undermine the role that Parliament can play in the budget negotiations;
7. Welcomes the savings the European External Action Service (EEAS) has been able to make in its budget but notes with concern rising costs and suggests steps should be taken towards the purchase of delegation buildings where economically sensible; similarly welcomes attempts made to reduce the number of senior level posts but emphasises that the efforts made so far are still insufficient; continues to believe that the special situation of the EEAS requires a partial exemption from the strict savings goals imposed on other institutions.