



2016/2047(BUD)

6.7.2016

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

for the Committee on Budgets

on the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2017 - all sections
(2016/2047(BUD))

Rapporteur: György Schöpflin

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Notes the Commission's proposed increase in appropriations for Heading 3 of 5,4 % in commitment appropriations and 25,1 % in payment appropriations as compared to the 2016 budget; notes that this increase is 1,8 billion above the initially programmed amount for the year to respond to the migration challenge; notes that the Commission leaves no margin in Heading 3 and proposes the mobilisation of the Flexibility Instrument for EUR 530 million and the Contingency Margin for commitments for an amount of EUR 1.164,4 million in order to respond to the current asylum and migration crisis;
2. Welcomes in particular the proposed increase in the 'Europe for Citizens' programme of 4,3 % in commitment appropriations and 10,7 % in payment appropriations as compared to the 2016 budget, as this programme helps foster civic participation and engage young people, as well as the elderly in the EU.
3. Notes that the Commission proposes an amount of EUR 840.000 in commitment appropriations for the separate budgetary line for the European Citizens Initiative (ECI), created last year, and points to the need of sufficient funding to promote the use of this instrument, as this is a valuable tool of participatory democracy;
4. Underlines the importance of further developing tools to promote digital citizenship at EU level to help citizens exercise EU citizenship rights, notably in the context of ECIs;
5. Welcomes the increase in funding for communication of the Commission Representations, Citizens' dialogues and 'Partnership' actions with appropriations for 2017 amounting to EUR 17,036 million in commitment appropriations and 14,6 million in payment appropriations, as these concern initiatives to reach out to European citizens, gain their trust and foster their understanding of Union politics and policies.