

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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2009

Committee on Foreign Affairs

2006/2020(BUD)

21.4.2006

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2007 budget: the Commission's annual strategic priorities
(2006/2020(BUD))

Draftsperson: István Szent-Iványi

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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. Insists that, whatever the framework in which it is established, the 2007 budget should adequately cover the Union's ambitions and commitments towards our international partners, particularly those with a membership perspective, those in the immediate neighbourhood and those to which the EU gives priority, the Union's contribution towards stable and sustainable development and its role, in a multilateral context, in re-establishing and maintaining peace, security, democracy and respect for human rights throughout the world;
2. Takes the view that the allocation of Community spending in the external relations area should better reflect the policy priorities established in the resolutions of the European Parliament, and expects the Commission to take greater account of these when drawing up its Annual Policy Strategy and in the subsequent phases of the budgetary process;
3. Reaffirms the need to earmark sufficient budgetary resources for implementing the Union's Thessaloniki Agenda and facilitating the gradual European integration of the Western Balkan countries;
4. Reiterates its request to be fully informed and duly consulted on any decision to grant candidate status to applicant countries, so that the budgetary impact of such decisions can be duly taken into account;
5. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to pay greater attention to reforms carried out by partner countries in the field of human rights and democracy, and to closer electoral observation; reminds the Commission of its consistent view that, in order to maintain the visibility and transparency of EU activities in the area of democracy and human rights, the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights should be reformed, without it being merged into other policy-driven instruments;
6. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to reinforce EU aid effectiveness in the Union's external action; recalls in this regard the relevant provisions of the general budget for the financial year 2006 stating that, with the exception of humanitarian aid, assistance to governments will be provided on condition that the beneficiary country has an improving record as regards the values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms;
7. Recalls the latest annual report of the Court of Auditors and requests the Commission to take appropriate steps to ensure the Court's right of access to projects managed by UN agencies, or otherwise reconsider the principles and amount of EU assistance provided to these agencies;
8. Anticipates a fruitful and constructive outcome from the dialogue with the Austrian Presidency, which will focus on the priorities for CFSP action in 2007 and on ways of better targeting available resources, in the light of current implementation;

9. Expects in this respect strict compliance with the provisions of the Joint Declaration of 30 November 2005 which foresees as of 2006 at least quarterly consultation and information meetings on the CFSP in the presence of the Chairman of the Political and Security Committee, and looks forward to enhancing this practice in the light of the experience gained through its application;
10. Expects the Council and Commission to keep Parliament fully informed about the preparations for the future Union mission in Kosovo; urges them to use CFSP/ESPD mechanisms and Community resources in a coordinated and coherent fashion so as to optimise their impact;
11. Emphasises the need to pay greater attention to the external dimension of EU internal policies; points out in this respect the impact which EU visa requirements have on neighbouring countries, particularly in the Western Balkans, in the context of accession negotiations and the extension of the Schengen area;
12. Believes in this respect that Community resources should be provided to help the Western Balkan countries to achieve the standards required for visa liberalisation, notably in the field of (integrated) border management and cooperation in the fight against organised crime.

PROCEDURE

Title	2007 budget: the Commission's annual strategic priorities
Procedure number	2006/2020(BUD)
Committee responsible	BUDG
Committee asked for its opinion Date announced in plenary	AFET
Enhanced cooperation	No
Draftsperson Date appointed	István Szent-Iványi 7.12.2005
Discussed in committee	22.2.2006 19.4.2006
Date suggestions adopted	20.4.2006
Result of final vote	for: 51 against: 3 abstentions: 2
Members present for the final vote	Angelika Beer, Panagiotis Beglitis, Bastiaan Belder, Monika Beňová, André Brie, Elmar Brok, Paul Marie Coûteaux, Véronique De Keyser, Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos, Camiel Eurlings, Ana Maria Gomes, Richard Howitt, Jana Hybášková, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Jelko Kacin, Vytautas Landsbergis, Cecilia Malmström, Philippe Morillon, Pasqualina Napoletano, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Raimon Obiols i Germà, Alojz Peterle, Tobias Pflüger, João de Deus Pinheiro, Hubert Pirker, Paweł Bartłomiej Piskorski, Michel Rocard, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Libor Rouček, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacek Emil Saryusz-Wolski, György Schöpflin, Gitte Seeberg, István Szent-Iványi, Konrad Szymański, Antonio Tajani, Paavo Väyrynen, Ari Vatanen, Karl von Wogau, Luis Yañez-Barnuevo García, Josef Zieleniec
Substitutes present for the final vote	Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Irena Belohorská, Carlos Carnero González, Alexandra Dobolyi, Hélène Flautre, Michael Gahler, Kinga Gál, Milan Horáček, Tunne Kelam, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Athanasios Pafilis, Inger Segelström
Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	