



**2019/2028(BUD)**

1.10.2019

# **OPINION**

of the Committee on Foreign 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: Michael Gahler

PA\_NonLeg

## SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Notes with concern the decrease of over EUR 1 billion in commitment appropriations for Heading 4 (Global Europe), which would result in a budget for external action lower than during any of the three preceding years; believes that in the current international context, the EU in cooperation with its Member States needs to assume more, not less responsibility and that it must be endowed with the necessary financial resources in view of the numerous challenges in the European Neighbourhood and further afield; calls for the margin of over EUR 200 million in Heading 4 to be allocated, including for crisis response, conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis preparedness;
2. Believes that a further increase in funding for the Western Balkan countries under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), especially in the areas of functioning of democratic institutions, rule of law, good governance and public administration is needed; notes that the Commission recommended opening accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia; stresses that it is important to keep that promise and start accession negotiations already in 2019; in this regard, disapproves of the proposed reduction of the funds dedicated to supporting political reforms and alignment with the *acquis* in the Western Balkans and asks for a substantial increase instead;
3. Notes that the allocations for Turkey remain at a reduced level and believes that this is justified by the serious and persistent deficits in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in Turkey; calls on the Commission to closely monitor the situation and, if deemed necessary, to adjust financial support, while keeping bridges with the citizens of Turkey; welcomes the increased focus on support for civil society, notably in the area of democracy and the rule of law, and the continuing shift towards direct management and encourages the Commission to further expedite that rebalancing;
4. Emphasises the need to prioritise the stability of the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood of the EU; highlights in particular the need to support key countries, such as Ukraine, Moldova, Tunisia and Georgia, which have all shown significant progress that should be acknowledged and supported; recalls the importance of maintaining a high level of support and involvement of the EU for a stable European Neighbourhood, while taking into account the commitment of partner countries towards their comprehensive reform agenda, especially in the fields of democracy, rule of law and human rights; further recalls that given the persisting security threats and the deterioration in the security environment at the EU's Eastern borders it is important to continue confidence building with the Eastern partners and provide sufficient funding to support stability and democracy building in the region, in particular as regards Ukraine and the persisting conflict situation created by Russia in Eastern Ukraine; supports a strengthened and more visible role for the EU's Monitoring Mission in Georgia, in light of increased Russian aggression towards Georgia; underlines that in the case of Moldova, the EU should build on the political momentum and ensure a strong financial support in order for the necessary democratic, economic and social reforms to take place;

5. Calls for increased funding dedicated to counter disinformation campaigns threatening democratic processes in the Union's Neighbourhood;
6. Recalls that the countries in the Southern Neighbourhood are facing enormous pressure as a result of tumultuous developments in the region, including the conflicts in Syria and Libya, the rise of extremism and the related refugee and migrant movements, and believes that more efforts and funding for confidence building measures could be a way to address the current problems; calls for reversing the proposed budget cuts for the countries in the Southern Neighbourhood under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI); reiterates that contributions from ENI to the Syria pledge and the EU Trust Fund for Africa must not come at the expense of the ENI core priorities and calls for these additional commitments to be fully offset by reinforcements;
7. Welcomes the pledges made at the Brussels III Conference “Supporting the future of Syria and the Region” and highlights that beyond the allocated EUR 560 million, the EU must commit to a long and stable involvement in the region; underlines the efforts by organisations working on evidence gathering in Syria and calls for the evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all sides to the conflict to be preserved as a fundamental priority;
8. Calls for enhanced EU support for the viability of a two-state solution, the Palestinian Authority, civil society in both Israel and Palestine and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); notes with concern the recent allegations of abuse of power within the UNRWA leadership and expects a full and transparent investigation and external scrutiny into these matters; remains concerned by the continued destruction and confiscation of EU-funded humanitarian assistance in the West Bank;
9. Calls for the reinstatement of the mandate of the EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean, leading EU engagement with the region and providing heightened EU visibility;
10. Asks for more funding for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR); reiterates its strong support to human rights defenders, in particular those most at risk, including through the Human Rights Defenders Mechanism (ProtectDefenders.eu);
11. Emphasises the need to support and protect the LGBTI+ community around the world; calls for the allocation of EU funds to support LGBTI+ communities in countries where their rights are threatened;
12. Highlights the important role of the EU’s Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs) in strengthening democratic institutions and building public confidence in electoral processes, thus promoting stability and reinforcing other foreign policy objectives, including peace building; points to the importance of enhancing EOMs and of increasing their funding; notes that the proposed increase should especially aim at strengthening support to local civil-society based election observation organisations, with up to 25 % of the total EIDHR budget to be devoted to the funding of EOMs; encourages the Commission to foster more competition between service providers as a way to increase effectiveness and efficiency;

13. Stresses the importance of a progressive framing of the EU's common defence policy and the need to support further funding to ensure its implementation; reaffirms its strong support to the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) and welcomes the EUR 255 million allocated in the Draft Budget; recalls the important role the European Defence Fund (EDF) must play in future budgets, notably the next multiannual financial framework; calls on Member States to make increased use of these funding opportunities;
14. Reiterates its view that the funding of the administrative and operating expenditures of the European Defence Agency and of permanent structured cooperation from the Union budget is the only option under the Treaties;
15. Believes that more funds should be dedicated to civilian conflict prevention, mediation, and reconciliation efforts especially in the EU Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood;
16. Highlights the consequences that climate change will have on the EU's external action; stresses the need to match the climate emergency with a substantial increase in the number of funds dedicated to climate objectives and climate diplomacy;
17. Stresses the responsibility of the EU to support the protection of the Arctic; underlines the importance of investing into a more coherent EU Arctic policy;
18. Stresses the critical need to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence, by addressing their widespread and systemic use as a weapon of war; calls for the use of EU funds to support victims of gender-based violence and the rights of women around the world to access safe and legal abortion;
19. Calls for increased funding for projects focussed on supporting refugees from Venezuela who have fled to the neighbouring countries including Member State territories in the Caribbean;
20. Is dismayed by the low percentage of women in middle management and senior management positions in the EEAS (25 % and 13 % respectively); calls on the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to make a written commitment regarding the presence of women in management positions, including the target of 50 % women as Heads of Delegation by 2024;
21. Points to the fact that unforeseen crises require flexibility and room for manoeuvre in the budget and hence recalls the need to be prepared and capable of action in a swift and effective way if required;
22. Recalls that the current budget proposal is based on a budget with full contributions by the United Kingdom throughout 2020.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	1.10.2019
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 42 -: 12 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Maria Arena, Petras Auštrevičius, Traian Băsescu, Phil Bennion, Lars Patrick Berg, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Tanja Fajon, Michael Gahler, Giorgos Georgiou, Nathan Gill, Raphaël Glucksmann, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Sandra Kalniete, Stelios Kouloglou, David Lega, Nathalie Loiseau, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Jaak Madison, Claudiu Manda, Thierry Mariani, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Sven Mikser, Francisco José Millán Mon, Javier Nart, Demetris Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Giuliano Pisapia, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Sergei Stanishev, Hermann Tertsch, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, Irina Von Wiese, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Željana Zovko
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Attila Ara-Kovács, Vladimír Bilčík, Loucas Fourlas, Neena Gill, Markéta Gregorová, Roman Haider, Sergey Lagodinsky, Hannah Neumann, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Tineke Strik, Mick Wallace
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Michael Bloss, Liudas Mažylis, Philippe Olivier

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

42	+
ECR	Hermann Tertsch
NI	Fabio Massimo Castaldo
PPE	Traian Băsescu, Vladimír Bilčík, Loucas Fourlas, Michael Gahler, Sandra Kalniete, David Lega, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Liudas Mažylis, Vangelis Meimarakis, Francisco José Millán Mon, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Željana Zovko
RENEW	Petras Auštrevičius, Phil Bennion, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Irina Von Wiese
S&D	Attila Ara-Kovács, Maria Arena, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Tanja Fajon, Neena Gill, Raphaël Glucksmann, Claudiu Manda, Sven Mikser, Demetris Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Giuliano Pisapia, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos
VERTS/ALE	Michael Bloss, Reinhard Bütikofer, Markéta Gregorová, Sergey Lagodinsky, Hannah Neumann, Tineke Strik, Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel

12	-
ECR	Bert-Jan Ruissen
GUE/NGL	Giorgos Georgiou, Stelios Kouloglou, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, Mick Wallace
ID	Lars Patrick Berg, Anna Bonfrisco, Roman Haider, Jaak Madison, Thierry Mariani, Philippe Olivier
NI	Nathan Gill

1	0
S&D	Sergei Stanishev

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention