



Plenary sitting

B8-0189/2018

13.4.2018

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the need to establish a European Values Instrument to support civil society organisations which promote fundamental values within the European Union at local and national level
(2018/2619(RSP))

Claude Moraes

on behalf of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

European Parliament resolution on the need to establish a European Values Instrument to support civil society organisations which promote fundamental values within the European Union at local and national level (2018/2619(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
 - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights,
 - having regard to its resolution of 25 October 2016 on the establishment of an EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights¹,
 - having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, and to the conventions, recommendations, resolutions and reports of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Committee of Ministers, the Human Rights Commissioner and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe,
 - having regard to the Commission report of 24 January 2017 on ‘Strengthening Citizens’ Rights in a Union of Democratic Change – EU Citizenship Report 2017’ (COM(2017)0030),
 - having regard to the report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights entitled ‘Challenges facing civil society organisations working on human rights in the EU’, published in January 2018,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2018 on ‘The next MFF: Preparing Parliament’s position on the MFF post-2020’²,
 - having regard to the report of the European Economic and Social Committee on ‘Financing of Civil Society Organisations by the EU’ adopted on 19 October 2017,
 - having regard to the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the shared European fundamental values enshrined in Article 2 of the TEU, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0409.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0075.

respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and the principles of pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men, cannot be taken for granted and need to be continuously cultivated and protected, as their deterioration in any Member State can have detrimental effects for the EU as a whole;

- B. whereas an active and well-developed civil society in all EU Member States constitutes the best protection against an erosion of these values;
- C. whereas many civil society organisations (CSOs) continue to promote these values despite being faced with growing difficulties in securing the necessary funding to develop and perform their activities independently and effectively;
- D. whereas the EU provides direct funding to CSOs operating in third countries to foster these values, but the funding possibilities for CSOs pursuing this goal within the EU are very limited, in particular as regards CSOs operating at local and national level;
 - 1. Reiterates that CSOs are vital for upholding and promoting the values enshrined in Article 2 of the TEU, i.e. respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and play a crucial role in promoting active citizenship in the EU, as well as in facilitating informed public debate as part of a pluralist democracy;
 - 2. Stresses the need for the EU to develop new and effective ways to protect and promote these values within the Union;
 - 3. Believes, in this regard, that the EU should provide targeted financial support to CSOs which are active at local and national level in promoting and protecting these values;
 - 4. Calls for the EU to set up a dedicated funding instrument – which could be called the European Values Instrument – for the promotion and protection of the values enshrined in Article 2 of the TEU, especially democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, within the EU budget under the next, post-2020 multiannual financial framework (MFF), with a funding level corresponding to at least that of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, which serves similar purposes beyond the Union’s borders; recommends that this instrument’s structural priority should be to create a healthy and sustainable CSO sector at national and local level with the capacity to fulfil its role in safeguarding these values;
 - 5. Considers that the instrument should provide CSOs which are engaged in the promotion and protection of these values within the EU with operating grants (core funding as well as grants for projects and initiatives);
 - 6. Stresses that the instrument should be managed by the Commission and that it should ensure fast and flexible grant-making procedures; recommends in particular that the application procedure should be user-friendly and easily accessible for local and national CSOs;
 - 7. Considers that the instrument should specifically target projects and initiatives promoting European values at local and national level, such as civic participation

projects and advocacy and other watchdog activities, and that transnational projects and initiatives should play only a subsidiary role; believes that particular emphasis should be placed on building the capacity of CSOs to engage with the general public so as to increase its understanding of pluralistic and participatory democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights;

8. Stresses that the instrument should be complementary to already existing European and national instruments and activities promoting and protecting these values, and should therefore not come at the expense of other European or national funds and activities in this area;
9. Underlines that financial accountability as laid down in the Financial Regulation must be ensured in the management of the new instrument, notably as regards compliance with legal obligations, full transparency on the use of resources, sound financial management and prudent use of resources;
10. Recommends to the Commission that it draw up an annual report on the performance of the instrument and publish a list of the organisations and activities that it has funded;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Council of Europe.