



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Budgets

2011/0412(COD)

11.7.2012

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide
(COM(2011)0844 – C7-0496/2011 – 2011/0412(COD))

Rapporteur: María Muñoz De Urquiza

PA_Legam

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

Respect for human rights and democratic principles are among the founding values of the EU (Article 2 TEU). Article 21 TEU further stipulates that the Union's external actions should be guided by the principles that inspired its own creation, which places the promotion of democracy and human rights at the heart of EU external action.

The EIDHR is a horizontal instrument aiming to promote democracy and human rights and strengthen the role of civil society by making it an effective actor in political reform and successful defendant of human rights. Elections observation missions are a central element of the EIDHR as well.

Another particularity of the EIDHR is that due to its independence of action from the consent of third country governments and public authorities it is a powerful tool for adding complementarity to all external assistance financing instruments. Being a horizontal instrument, the EIDHR should remain interlinked and consistent with the goals of all other external action instruments.

Budgetary aspects

The Commission has proposed EUR 1400 mln (constant prices 2011) for the period 2014 – 2020 for the EIDHR. This represents a nearly 20% increase in real terms for the next MFF compared to the amount available for this instrument in 2007 – 2013 (EUR 1148 mln, constant prices 2011) but this increase is below the increase foreseen for the average of heading 4. It should be noted however that this is only an indicative amount and the final budgetary allocation available for this instrument will only be known after the completion of negotiations on the next MFF.

In this opinion, the Rapporteur would like to emphasise the need to ensure easier access to finance for beneficiaries of the EIDHR. This could be done through simplification and acceleration of the procedure and reduced administrative burden. To this end the package of proposals for external instruments of the Commission is a step in the right direction as it contains elements of simplification by making all Union external instruments subject to the rules of the general implementing Regulation, providing for more flexible procedures in urgent cases, through the possibility of ad-hoc actions through direct grants or low value grants for human rights violations and consistency with the Financial Regulation.

Nevertheless, the Rapporteur believes that the Commission proposal has some significant drawbacks and would like to introduce amendments ensuring the complementarity and coherence of EU and MS assistance, as well as financing from regional, local and international donors, in order to avoid any potential overlaps. The Rapporteur would further like to underline that the creation of any potential additional instruments, such as the European Endowment for Democracy, should not take away from the resources available for EIDHR and should have their separate budgetary allocations.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Amendment 1

Draft legislative resolution

Paragraph 1a (new)

Draft legislative resolution

Amendment

1a. Points out that the financial envelope specified in the legislative proposal constitutes only an indication to the legislative authority and can not be fixed until agreement is reached on the proposal for a regulation laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020;

Amendment 2

Draft legislative resolution

Paragraph 1b (new)

Draft legislative resolution

Amendment

1b. Recalls its resolution of 8 June 2011 on "Investing in the future: a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for a competitive, sustainable and inclusive Europe"¹; reiterates that sufficient additional resources are needed in the next MFF in order to enable the Union to fulfil its existing policy priorities and the new tasks provided for in the Treaty of Lisbon, as well as to respond to unforeseen events; challenges the Council, if it does not share this approach, to clearly identify which of its political priorities or projects could be dropped altogether, despite their proven European added value;

Amendment 3

Draft legislative resolution Paragraph 1c (new)

Draft legislative resolution

Amendment

1c. Regrets that the proposed increase in the financial reference amount for EIDHR in the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework is below the average increase proposed for heading 4 (external relations) as a whole;

Amendment 4

Proposal for a regulation Recital 10

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(10) In order to address these issues in an effective, transparent, timely and flexible manner after Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 expires, there is a continued need for specific financial resources and a ***specific*** financing instrument that can continue to work in an independent manner.

(10) In order to address these issues in an effective, transparent, timely and flexible manner after Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 expires, there is a continued need for specific financial resources and a ***separate*** financing instrument that can continue to work in an independent manner, ***whilst remaining mutually complementary with the other instruments for the Union's external policies.***

Amendment 5

Proposal for a regulation Recital 16 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(16a) The new challenges in the Union's Neighbourhood and beyond call for a more flexible, efficient and targeted

approach to the financing of the Union's external policies in the field of promoting democracy and human rights, in line with the principles guiding the present review of the Union's external instruments. To that end, the establishment of the European Endowment for Democracy will allow the Union to provide context-specific, timely and bottom-up assistance for democracy support. Its funding and programming should be complementary to the other external instruments of the Union, including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the Instrument for Stability, maximising the overall coverage, coherence and sustainability of the Union's policies in favour of democratisation.

Amendment 6

Proposal for a regulation Recital 16 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(16b) The relevance and scope of Union assistance in promoting democracy and human rights are such as to require the Commission systematically to inform and consult the European Parliament and the Council on the strategic choices under this instrument, especially where the Union's financial resources are concerned. This includes entering into a regular dialogue with the European Parliament and taking due account of its position before and when implementing the strategies.

Amendment 7

Proposal for a regulation Recital 16 c (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(16c) Union assistance under this Regulation should be sufficiently accessible for beneficiaries through the use of faster, more flexible procedures that should lead to a reduction of the administrative burden, especially where a need for urgent protection of human rights is at stake.

Amendment 8

Proposal for a regulation Recital 17

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(17) The implementing powers relating to the programming and financing of the actions supported under this Regulation should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) N° 182/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers. Taking into account the nature of those implementing acts, in particular their policy orientation nature or their financial implications, the examination procedure should in principle be used for their adoption, except for technical implementing measures of a small financial scale.

(17) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission. The implementing powers relating to the programming and financing of the actions supported under this Regulation should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers. Taking into account the nature of those implementing acts, in particular their policy orientation nature or their financial implications, the examination procedure should in principle be used for their adoption, except for technical implementing measures of a small financial scale.

Amendment 9

Proposal for a regulation Article 3 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 3a

Coherence and complementarity of Union assistance

- 1. In implementing this Regulation, coherence shall be ensured with other areas and instruments of the Union's external action, as well as other relevant Union policies.*
- 2. The Union and the Member States shall coordinate their respective support programmes with the aim of increasing effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of support and policy dialogue in line with the established principles for strengthening operational coordination in the field of external support, and for harmonising policies and procedures. Coordination shall involve regular consultations and frequent exchanges of relevant information during the different phases of the support cycle.*
- 3. The Union shall take the necessary steps, in liaison with the Member States, to ensure proper coordination and cooperation with multilateral and regional organisations and entities, including, but not limited to, European financial institutions, international financial institutions, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, private and political foundations and non-Union donors.*

Amendment 10

Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – paragraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

2. Strategy papers shall set out the priority areas selected for financing by the Union during the period of validity of this Regulation, the specific objectives, the expected results and the performance indicators. They shall also give the indicative financial allocation, both overall and per priority area; this may be given in the form of a range, where appropriate.

Amendment

2. Strategy papers shall set out the priority areas selected for financing by the Union during the period of validity of this Regulation, the specific objectives, the expected results and the performance indicators. They shall also give the indicative financial allocation, ***without prejudice to the powers of the budgetary authority***, both overall and ***with an indicative breakdown of resources*** per priority area; this may be given in the form of a range, where appropriate.

Amendment 11

Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. Strategy papers shall be ***approved*** in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 15 (3) of the Common Implementing Regulation. When significant changes of circumstances and policy so require, strategy papers shall be updated in accordance with the same procedure.

Amendment

3. Strategy papers, ***and any revision or extension thereof***, shall be ***adopted*** in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 15(3) of the Common Implementing Regulation. When significant changes to the circumstances and policy so require, strategy papers shall be updated in accordance with the same procedure. ***Strategy papers shall be reviewed regularly, and at least once every three years, or ad hoc if necessary.***

PROCEDURE

Title	Establishing a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide
References	COM(2011)0844 – C7-0496/2011 – 2011/0412(COD)
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	AFET 17.1.2012
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	BUDG 17.1.2012
Rapporteur Date appointed	María Muñoz De Urquiza 6.2.2012
Discussed in committee	21.3.2012
Date adopted	20.6.2012
Result of final vote	+: 34 -: 2 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Richard Ashworth, Francesca Balzani, Reimer Böge, Zuzana Brzobohatá, Andrea Cozzolino, James Elles, Eider Gardiazábal Rubial, Jens Geier, Ingeborg Gräßle, Estelle Grelier, Lucas Hartong, Jutta Haug, Sidonia Elżbieta Jędrzejewska, Anne E. Jensen, Ivailo Kalfin, Sergej Kozlík, Giovanni La Via, George Lyon, Barbara Matera, Claudio Morganti, Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar, Nadezhda Neynsky, Dominique Riquet, Alda Sousa, László Surján, Helga Trüpel, Angelika Werthmann
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Alexander Alvaro, Franziska Katharina Brantner, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Jürgen Klute, Jan Mulder, María Muñoz De Urquiza, Georgios Papastamkos, Paul Rübig, Peter Šťastný, Theodor Dumitru Stolojan
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz