

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2006/2018(BUD)

15.9.2006

OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2007
(C6-0000/2006 - 2006/2018(BUD))

Section III – Commission

Draftswoman: Ona Juknevičienė

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

General remarks

1. Notes that the budgetary procedure 2007 is the first seven-year Financial Framework following the adoption of the new Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management (Interinstitutional Agreement)¹;
2. Is, however, alarmed at the fact that, despite the increase in the number of Member States of the European Union, the rapid restructuring of the world economy, the alarming scale of unemployment and the challenges faced by the international community owing to the technological revolution, the Community budget continues to be limited;
3. Believes that it is important to allow the Commission the possibility to prepare properly for the lifecycle of new and renewed programmes and activities; notes, however, that, extra-preparatory actions or pilot projects, if launched in 2007, should be carefully evaluated as to their necessity in 2007 and that priority should be given to employment, social and technological sectors;
4. Notes that the vast majority of our budget lines is fixed by a binding multi-annual financial envelope, adopted by codecision, and that only shifts within specific programmes, or from year to year, are possible; takes note that the "free-to-decide" budget lines are those covering social dialogue (040302; 04030301; 04030302; and 04030303), mobility (040305 and 040304), the agencies (Bilbao; Dublin; Cedefop; and Turin), and studies on the social situation and demographic change (040307);
5. Believes that, concerning the budget lines on administrative expenditure and the budget lines on the agencies, any changes should be agreed between all the committees concerned, and expects the Committee on Budgets to avoid any horizontal actions, such as cutting, increasing, or putting in reserve certain budget lines, which undermine particular committees' competences and policy coherence;

The 0402 budget lines - the European Social Fund (ESF)

6. Believes that the ESF and, in particular, all activities financed through the ESF to support vocational training and to increase the qualification of the EU citizens, has the potential of being a good catalyst for meeting certain Lisbon targets;
7. Welcomes every effort to render the activities of the ESF and the Structural Funds more transparent, in order to avoid any abuse or overlap with other funds, such as the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGAF);
8. Agrees with the amount foreseen in the Preliminary Draft Budget (PDB) for the payment appropriations as long as it represents a realistic view of the economic and social problems of the Member States, naturally also in relation to their absorption capacity;

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1.

The 0403 budget lines Working in Europe: social dialogue and mobility

9. Welcomes the increase in the budget lines covering the social dialogue activities, which will enable the social partners, and in particular those from the new Member States, to participate closely in the initiatives taken by the Commission;
10. Welcomes the increase of the European Employment Services (EURES) budget line, at the level of 2005; proposes a further increase which would a) allow adequate monitoring and evaluation of the success of the European Year of Workers' Mobility, b) take into account the need for Romania and Bulgaria to join the network of European Employment Services and c) allow the education and training of staff dealing with issues of international mobility;

0404 budget lines - Employment and Social Solidarity

11. Welcomes the fact that, following the IIA, the Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS) is to receive further EUR 100 million for the duration of the Financial Framework; notes that the budgetary procedure was initiated in the Annual Policy Strategy (APS) and the PDB proposal before the adoption of the Interinstitutional Agreement; points out that therefore this increase is not reflected in the PDB;
12. Notes that financial allocation for the section gender equality within PROGRESS is less than in 2006 and that it represents 9.17 % of the global envelope rather than 12 %, as agreed between the institutions;

The agencies

13. Endorses the PDB proposal as regards the four agencies within competence of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs – Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), and the European Training Foundation (ETF) – in order to allow them to fulfil their mandate and agreed priorities, taking into account the need for them to intensify their activities following enlargement of the EU;
14. Calls on the Council and the Commission to come to an agreement with the Parliament in due time for the Gender Institute to start its work at the beginning of 2007; believes that the amount of money allocated for 2007 is sufficient; points out that the future increases in the financing of the institute will depend upon its needs and its performance;

The EGAF

15. Notes that the EGAF is under discussion and will not be adopted before the end of the year at the earliest; points out, nevertheless, that the Interinstitutional Agreement has already fixed the budgetary procedures foreseen for the fund: a EUR 500 million reserve, which will be activated step by step once the funding projects are decided;
16. Proposes that the reserve be put in place by way of amendment to the Draft Budget (DB) in order to follow the decision of the IIA and not to delay the procedures once the regulation comes into force.

PROCEDURE

Title	Draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2007 - Section III - Commission
Procedure number	2006/2018(BUD)
Committee responsible	BUDG
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	EMPL
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary	
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Ona Juknevičienė 14.12.2005
Previous drafts(wo)man	
Discussed in committee	11.7.2006
Date adopted	13.9.2006
Result of final vote	+: 38 –: 1 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Jan Andersson, Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, Jean-Luc Bennahmias, Emine Bozkurt, Iles Braghetto, Philip Bushill-Matthews, Milan Cabrnoch, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Luigi Cocilovo, Harald Ettl, Richard Falbr, Carlo Fatuzzo, Ilda Figueiredo, Joel Hasse Ferreira, Roger Helmer, Stephen Hughes, Karin Jöns, Ona Juknevičienė, Jan Jerzy Kułakowski, Sepp Kusstatscher, Jean Lambert, Raymond Langendries, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Mario Mantovani, Jan Tadeusz Masiel, Maria Matsouka, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Siiri Oviir, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Jacek Protasiewicz, José Albino Silva Peneda, Kathy Sinnott, Jean Spautz, Anne Van Lancker, Gabriele Zimmer
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Mihael Brejc, Richard Howitt, Jamila Madeira, Leopold Józef Rutowicz, Gabriele Stauner, Patrizia Toia
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	
Comments (available in one language only)	...