



2021/0227(BUD)

8.9.2021

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2022 -
General Introduction - Total expenditure - General statement of revenue -
Statement of revenue and expenditure by section
(2021/0227(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Samira Rafaela

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that the Union, in all its activities, shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women, thereby promoting the principle of gender mainstreaming in all of its policies, including via gender budgeting at all levels of the budgetary process;
- B. whereas Parliament has repeatedly urged the Commission to promote and implement the use of gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and to conduct gender impact assessments in all the Union policy areas; whereas the Court of Auditors confirmed this has not been achieved;
- C. whereas Parliament has repeatedly called for sufficient funding for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), for the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme and for the subsequent Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Programme and for its Daphne strand in order to enforce non-discrimination, gender equality and gender mainstreaming instruments and to ensure adequate resources to support measures dedicated to preventing and combating gender-based violence; whereas cases of domestic violence have surged due to the COVID-19 pandemic and following measures such as the lockdown or teleworking¹;
- D. whereas women are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly women working in precarious employment, feminised sectors and the informal economy; whereas the Union budget for 2022 should play a key role in the economic recovery of the Union paying special attention to those sectors, heavily feminised, that have been essential during the pandemic or have been severely affected by the subsequent economic crisis;
- E. whereas women remain under-represented in leadership and decision-making positions, while being overrepresented in low-paid sectors such as care and service work; whereas they devote more time than men to unpaid housework and care responsibilities;
- F. whereas women remain under-represented in the digital economy and the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) sectors in terms of education, training and employment; whereas resources supporting women's and girls' empowerment through digital inclusion could lead to advancing gender equality in the digital age;
- G. whereas new strains of COVID-19 have been spreading through Europe imposing a threat of new lockdowns in the Member States; whereas, therefore, an on-going impact assessment framework on the consequences and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on

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[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/659333/EPRS_BRI\(2020\)659333_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/659333/EPRS_BRI(2020)659333_EN.pdf)

women is important to possibly alleviate the outcome of a new pandemic breakout;

1. Stresses that women's rights and a gender equality perspective should be integrated and ensured in all policy areas, particularly in light of the multiple gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's rights; reaffirms its strong request to implement gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting throughout the budgetary procedure; recalls the Court of Auditors report 2021 on Gender mainstreaming in the EU budget, which revealed that gender mainstreaming had not been adequately applied across the Union budget, and its main recommendations; underlines that some Member States used the pandemic to further restrict women's rights;
2. Calls for more funding from the Union for Member States to strengthen the protection of maternity and paternity in labour legislation, in particular by increasing corresponding leave and guaranteeing 100 % pay, as well as reducing working hours during the period of breastfeeding and taking steps to ensure this protection, but also investing in early childhood care and education services, and in long-term care services; notes that unavailability, prohibitive costs and lack of sufficient infrastructure to provide quality childcare services remain a significant barrier to women's equal participation in all aspects of society, including employment;
3. Expresses its concern at the interrelation between the attacks on the rule of law and the backlash on gender equality and women's rights; recalls that the budgetary conditionality applies in the context of women rights in the same way as in other policy areas; calls on the Commission to address this issue through the Article 7 procedure against Member States concerned;
4. Calls on the Commission to guarantee that Union funds do not support any projects, investments and programmes that contribute to segregation, discrimination or social exclusion;
5. Calls on the Commission, in the framework of the assessment of the national recovery plans, to provide specific recommendations, in line with the general goal of the Recovery and Resilience Facility to mitigate the social and economic impact of the crisis, in particular on women, stressing the need to ensure investments and reforms to address gender equality, to collect gender-disaggregated data and use gender-relevant indicators, and to facilitate women's full participation in the labour market in order to include a gender perspective in the response to the crisis to ensure benefits for everyone;
6. Reiterates the need for the Union budget to increase its funding to close the gender pay gap, strongly applying the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, not just through legislation and measures to combat pay discrimination, but in order to promote collective bargaining; calls, furthermore, for measures to combat discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion decisions; calls for measures to increase social protection in maternity, unemployment, illness, work accidents and occupational diseases;
7. Calls for the collection of gender disaggregated data and the use of gender-relevant indicators, and impact assessments to evaluate the measures included in the recovery plans;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that all budget appropriations under the 2021-2027 MFF respect the principle of equality between men and women and promote it in all Union policies;
9. Calls on the Commission to accelerate the introduction of a methodology, in close cooperation with Parliament, to measure relevant gender expenditure, as set out in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources²;
10. Calls on the Commission to ensure an adequate increase of the budget of the EIGE in order to promote gender equality across the Union, particularly in the light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, and to subsequently ensure adequate human resources to develop its tasks; underlines the EIGE's central role in collecting, analysing, processing and disseminating data and information as regards gender equality, particularly on the gender dimension of the COVID-19 crisis, in understanding the extent and obstacles for achieving gender equality in the Union, and in developing, analysing, evaluating and disseminating methodological tools to support the integration of gender equality into all Union policies and the resulting national policies;
11. Stresses that, in the last decade, with the onset of the economic and financial crisis, economic, social, labour and gender inequalities within and between Member States have become more acute; recalls the important role played by the EIGE in understanding the extent and causes of inequality between men and women in the Union; calls, therefore, for the budget, staff and independence to be strengthened, as well as for an increase in the budget under the heading "Promotion of non-discrimination and equality";
12. Reiterates its request to assign an independent budget line to the objective in the CERV Programme dedicated to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming and another one for the objective dedicated to prevent and combat gender-based violence; strongly reiterates its request to strengthen the Daphne initiative by increasing the resources for the Daphne strand and, in particular, to measures to combat gender-based violence and to properly support victims, especially following the escalation of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 crisis; stresses the need to reinforce budgetary allocations that support actions ensuring the gender aspect of health through the facilitation of exchange between Member States including on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); calls on the Commission to allocate additional resources to the EU4Health Programme, in particular for the Member States to ensure adequate provision of accessible SRHR services;
13. Reminds the requirement to allocate at least 40 % of the funds dedicated to the Equality, Rights and Gender Equality strand and to the Daphne strand to activities to prevent and combat at all levels all forms of gender-based violence and at least 15 % to activities promoting women's full enjoyment of rights, gender equality, including work-life

² OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28.

balance, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming;

14. Calls on the Commission to reevaluate the Daphne Initiative and dedicate the appropriate resources to this programme in order to properly support victims of violence and combat violence against women;
15. Stresses the need to increase Union funding so that Member States can provide public social services for victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation, with psychological and social support, staffed by specialised professionals, and implement policies social and economic policies aimed at helping vulnerable women and girls to leave prostitution, namely through the guarantee of jobs that effectively lead to their social inclusion;
16. Stresses the importance of using European Structural and Investment Funds such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) to promote gender equality, women's employment and access to the labour market, childcare and long-term care facilities; calls for further adequate use, an increase of resources, and a more strategic application of the ESF+ for promoting gender equality in the field of employment as women are more likely than men to be in temporary, part-time and precarious employment and the COVID-19 pandemic affected women's employment disproportionately, in particular in some heavily impacted and highly feminised sectors such as health, retail and care; asks the Commission to propose proactive measures through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development in order to support women's employment in rural areas;
17. Stresses that the Union budget should include an increase in investments in care infrastructures and care services for the provision of high-quality care; recalls that these investments are key for achieving economic recovery, coping with the social and health crises, building social resilience and combating inequalities;
18. Calls for the Union budget to encourage women's participation and interest in the digital economy and STEM sectors and careers through Union programmes, for example in the research, innovation and technology area, or participation in the European Research Area, including the Youth Employment Initiative;
19. Reiterates the need for the Union budget to play a more active role in the pursuit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially projects directed at eradicating poverty in the Member States; stresses that the COVID-19 pandemic aggravated already existing problems of women³ and child poverty⁴; calls, therefore, for the Union to support measures and projects aimed at eradicating female and child poverty, promoting greater and better integration in the labour market, eliminating labour and wage inequalities between men and women, improving access to and provision of health care, and combating violence against women, children and young people.

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[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/693183/IPOL_STU\(2021\)693183_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2021/693183/IPOL_STU(2021)693183_EN.pdf)

⁴ <https://eurochild.org/uploads/2020/12/2020-Eurochild-Semester-Report.pdf>

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	6.9.2021
Result of final vote	+: 24 -: 5 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Isabella Adinolfi, Christine Anderson, Simona Baldassarre, Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Annika Bruna, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Frances Fitzgerald, Cindy Franssen, Helène Fritzon, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Alice Kuhnke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Andżelika Anna Możdżanowska, Maria Noichl, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Samira Rafaela, Evelyn Regner, Diana Riba i Giner, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Christine Schneider, Sylwia Spurek, Jessica Stegrud, Isabella Tovaglieri, Ernest Urtasun, Hilde Vautmans, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Marco Zullo
Substitutes present for the final vote	Susana Solís Pérez

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

24	+
PPE	Isabella Adinolfi, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Frances Fitzgerald, Cindy Franssen, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Christine Schneider, Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska
Renew	Samira Rafaela, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Susana Solís Pérez, Hilde Vautmans, Marco Zullo
S&D	Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Heléne Fritzon, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Maria Noichl, Evelyn Regner
The Left	Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
Verts/ALE	Alice Kuhnke, Diana Riba i Giner, Sylwia Spurek, Ernest Urtasun

5	-
ECR	Andżelika Anna Mozdżanowska, Jessica Stegrud, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID	Christine Anderson, Annika Bruna

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ID	Simona Baldassarre, Isabella Tovaglieri

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention