



2023/2129(DEC)

25.1.2024

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on the 2022 discharge: General budget of the EU - European Commission
(2023/2129(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Robert Biedroń

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SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. Whereas gender equality is a core value of the Union enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union; whereas Article 8 TFEU commits the Union to eliminate inequalities and to promote gender equality between men and women, as well as gender mainstreaming;
 - B. Whereas the European Parliament has repeatedly asked the Commission to promote and implement the use of gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender impact assessments in all Union policy areas such as the implementation of the Union budget and reporting;
 - C. Whereas in a number of Member States with low birth rates, women and couples would like to have children but are in practice prevented from doing so as a consequence of economic difficulties, not by choice but as a result of more difficult living and working conditions, giving rise to higher levels of unemployment for women and making it harder for them, as well as for parents, to enjoy their respective maternity and paternity rights in the workplace, and making access to high quality public services and childcare facilities harder; whereas it is vital to ensure that women have the right to work with rights and without it affecting the right to motherhood, as women continue to be the worst affected and suffer the most discrimination; whereas examples of this discrimination include pressure from employers on women attending job interviews at which they are asked whether they have children and how old they are along with economic and work-related pressures on female employees not to take maternity leave;
 - D. whereas gender equality in the Union has been particularly impacted by the consequences of the war in Ukraine, the cost of living crisis, which women are disproportionately affected by, and the backlashes against gender equality and women's rights, especially around sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in several Member States; whereas this further deepens inequalities and hampers gender equality;
- 1. Stresses that a gender equality perspective should be integrated and ensured into all policy areas, stages and alleviation measures, particularly in the light of the gendered aspects of ongoing crises such as wars, the climate and energy crisis, inflation, and the backlash against women's rights, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the Union and world-wide; stresses the importance of gender budgeting in all recovery and alleviation measures to make use of EU programmes for mitigating gendered impacts of different crises;
 - 2. Repeats its concern at the interrelation between the attacks on the rule of law, democracy and human rights and the backlash against gender equality and women's rights; calls on the Commission to continue its efforts to strengthen the rule of law in the Union, in particular those legal proposals aimed at protecting the EU budget in case of generalised deficiencies as regards the rule of law, breaches of human rights, including women's rights and violations of the fundamental values of the European

Union; calls on the Commission to explore the core mission of those to whom EU funds are granted and to withhold funding and ensure that EU funds are not made available to any entity that use EU funds for the purposes of backsliding human rights, particularly women's fundamental rights and gender equality, including SRHR and women's rights to bodily integrity, autonomy and self-determination; calls on the Member States to safeguard sexual and reproductive health and rights, including access to safe and legal abortion care and in particular by ensuring the availability of reproductive health programmes and services providing the types of care and medicines required for voluntary family planning and maternal and new-born health;

3. Notes the Commission's methodology for tracking gender aspects of expenditure as of 2023; recalls that only 2% of the Union's budget was assessed as having a principle objective of improving gender equality; calls on the Commission to improve this score by mainstreaming gender from the start of programme design; reiterates that further detail is needed so that the majority of spending (73%) currently assessed as 0* 'potential to contribute to gender equality' can be fully understood; notes with concern that special report 10/2021, published by the ECA confirmed that the Union's budget cycle does not yet adequately take gender equality into account since key elements, such as gender analysis, gender-related objectives, indicators and accountability through reporting, are largely missing;
4. Welcomes the Commission's work on a new classification to measure the gender impact of Union spending; calls on the Commission to ensure that this classification focuses on an accurate and comprehensive representation of the impact of programmes on gender equality; calls on the Commission, in view of the end of this legislative term, to continue its work on gender equality and calls for a Commissioner on gender equality for the next term; welcomes the fact that gender equality and mainstreaming is one of the horizontal principles for Union funds in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027 and in the Recovery and Resilience Facility; calls nevertheless on the Commission to fully implement the European Court of Auditor's recommendations, including in the mid-term review of the current multiannual financial framework and the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility; calls on the Commission to ensure that this classification focuses on an accurate and comprehensive representation of the impact of all existing programmes and funds; reiterates in this context that a comprehensive gender tracking methodology needs to include reporting on negative impacts on gender equality;
5. Insists that women and men should benefit equally from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, in particular in the light of the Union's gender pay gap of 13%; recalls that the Commission introduced a gender assessment of the Member States' Recovery and Resilience Plans only as an ex-ante assessment, which revealed that some Member States had no measures tagged as focusing on gender equality; stresses therefore the importance of data collection requirements to enable a systematic and comprehensive collection of gender-disaggregated data in the context of all relevant EU policies; urges the Commission to treat this as a priority and make use of the opportunities to improve data collection requirements and indicators in new legislation and reviews, such as the recast of the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union; calls on the Commission to deliver on the positive commitment made by President von der Leyen to promote gender equality in all policymaking and calls on the Commission to deliver on

its commitments under Gender Equality Strategy 2020 - 2025 and stresses as well that much more needs to be done since a gender perspective is lacking in the main climate, environmental and economic Commission proposals presented; stresses that in the last decade, with the onset of the economic and financial crisis, economic, social, employment and gender inequalities within and between Member States have made life harder for women and girls; to that end recalls the important role of the European Institute for Gender Equality in raising awareness of the extent and causes of gender inequality in the EU; calls, therefore, for its budget, staff and independence to be increased;

6. Repeats its calls for a dedicated budget line for gender equality, in particular within the Daphne programme in the light of the crisis of gender-based violence facing the Union; stresses the importance of strengthening the specifically dedicated Daphne initiative by increasing its resources, in particular measures that aim to combat all levels and all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls and domestic violence in line with Article 7(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/692 and to properly support victims; stresses, in addition, the importance of using European Structural and Investment Funds such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) to promote gender equality, women's employment, women's empowerment, entrepreneurship, leadership and management roles, as well as long-term care facilities; notes that a study requested by FEMM committee¹ shows that men are often favoured over women and marginalized groups when it comes to the design of subsidies and support under the Fit for 55 package, as well as in other policies, programmes and funding for the green transition;
7. Is of the opinion, on the basis of the data currently available, that discharge can be granted on the General budget of the EU in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2022.

¹ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2022/736899/IPOL_STU\(2022\)736899_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2022/736899/IPOL_STU(2022)736899_EN.pdf)

**ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The Chair in his capacity as rapporteur declares under his exclusive responsibility that he did not receive input from any entity or person to be mentioned in this Annex pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	24.1.2024
Result of final vote	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>23</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>4</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>2</div> </div>
Members present for the final vote	Christine Anderson, Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Frances Fitzgerald, Lívia Járóka, Arba Kokalari, Alice Kuhnke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Andželika Anna Mozdżanowska, Johan Nissinen, Carina Ohlsson, Sandra Pereira, Samira Rafaela, Evelyn Regner, Diana Riba i Giner, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Maria Veronica Rossi, Sylwia Spurek, Marco Zullo
Substitutes present for the final vote	Laura Ballarín Cereza, Sylvie Brunet, Marina Kaljurand, Eleni Stavrou
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Milan Brglez, Rainer Wieland

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

23	+
PPE	Maria da Graça Carvalho, Frances Fitzgerald, Arba Kokalari, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Eleni Stavrou, Rainer Wieland
Renew	Sylvie Brunet, Samira Rafaela, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Marco Zullo
S&D	Laura Ballarín Cereza, Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Milan Brglez, Marina Kaljurand, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner
The Left	Sandra Pereira, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
Verts/ALE	Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Alice Kuhnke, Diana Riba i Giner, Sylwia Spurek

4	-
ECR	Johan Nissinen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID	Christine Anderson, Maria Veronica Rossi

2	0
ECR	Andżelika Anna Moździanowska
NI	Livia Járóka

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention