



Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
The Chair

30.8.2023

Mr Johan Van Overtveldt
Chair
Committee on Budgets
BRUSSELS

Subject: Opinion on BUDG interim report on the Mid-term revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021–2027 (2023/0201R(APP))

Dear Mr Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality has been asked to submit an opinion to your committee. By written procedure of 13 July 2023, the committee decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter.

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality considered the matter at its meeting of 30 August 2023¹. At that meeting, it decided to call on the Committee of Budget, as Committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its interim report

Yours sincerely,

Robert Biedroń

¹ The following were present for the final vote: Robert Biedroń (Chair), Andželika Anna Możdżanowska, Isabella Adinolfi, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Arba Kokalari, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Aušra Maldeikienė, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Christine Schneider, Pernille Weiss, Karen Melchior, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Irène Tolleret, Helène Fritzon, Predrag Fred Matić, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner, Vera Tax, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Sylwia Spurek (Vice-Chair), Johan Nissinen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Christine Anderson, Annika Bruna, Sandra Pereira

SUGGESTIONS

- A. whereas gender equality and the elimination of inequalities are core values upon which the Union is founded, and whereas the commitment to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all of its actions is enshrined in Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
 - B. whereas Parliament has repeatedly urged the Commission to promote and implement the use of gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender impact assessments in all Union policy areas;
 - C. whereas budgets are never gender-neutral and therefore need to be drawn up with the goal of gender equality from the outset; whereas data indicates that every crisis has a disproportionate effect on women and girls, as can be seen in the ongoing crises which the Union is facing; and whereas Russia's war against Ukraine and the aftermath of the COVID crisis demand a gender-sensitive response;
1. Welcomes the Commission's communication on the mid-term revision of the MFF 2021–2027; acknowledges the need to address the financial impact of the consequences of Russia's war on Ukraine and the aftermath of the COVID crisis; highlights that the Union budget should not contribute to gender inequalities or fuelling hate, therefore calls on the Commission to explore the core mission of those to whom Union funds are granted and to withhold funding from actors who seek to use Union funds for the purposes of backsliding on human rights, particularly women's rights and gender equality; emphasises that the mid-term revision presents an opportunity to address shortcomings in the Union's approach to gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting which should be seen as an integral part of the financial process, allowing funds to be allocated in the most efficient manner;
 2. Welcomes the reiteration of the commitment to the new gender equality expenditure tracking methodology and the pilot mainstreaming of those objectives as of 2023; highlights that a majority of programmes are currently assessed as having the potential to contribute to gender equality, corresponding to the majority of funding (score 0 *, 73% of the budget), compared with those that actually contribute to gender equality either as a primary objective (score 2, 2% of the budget) or as an important objective (score 1, 9% of the budget)²; highlights the importance of effective and gender-sensitive reviews of all programmes and spending that enable adjustments to be made when and where necessary, in line with the Court of Auditors' Special Report 10/2021 on Gender mainstreaming in the EU Budget³;
 3. Urges the Commission to increase funding to the budgetary lines and programmes where gender equality is a primary or important objective, such as the Daphne Strand, aiming to combat all forms of gender-based violence, and the equality, rights and gender

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/horizontal-priorities/gender-equality-mainstreaming_en
https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/SWD_2023_336_1_EN_autre_document_travail_service_part1_v4.pdf, p48

³ <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications?did=58678>

equality strand of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme, the EU4Health Programme, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and external action programmes such as the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe and the UN Spotlight Initiative;

4. Calls on the Commission to increase the budget of the European Institute for Gender Equality to ensure that that Institute has sufficient resources to carry out its mandate, including providing technical assistance to Member States, in the light of increasing urgency and demand for its technical support for gender mainstreaming;
5. Reiterates its concerns regarding the attacks on gender equality and fundamental rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, within the Union and calls for funding be allocated to tackle this backlash and disinformation, as well as to support civil society organisations protecting women's rights, including those facilitating access to safe and legal abortion via cross-border services, which guarantee women's fundamental right to have control over their bodies;
6. Insists that women and men should benefit equally from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, in particular with the objective to narrow the Union's ongoing gender pay gap of 13 %.