OPINION

of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

for the Committee on Budgets

on the General Budget 2013 – all sections

Rapporteur: Cornelis de Jong
SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that, as a consequence of the current economic crisis and the difficult budgetary situation in many Member States, it is important that the commitments and payments included in the budget of the European Union reflect clear added value and maximum management efficiency;

2. Stresses, however, that the internal market is a key policy area for economic growth and that austerity policies should be accompanied by growth policies for overcoming the crisis; therefore considers that the budgetary allocation should reflect this;

3. Takes note of the efforts made to lower expenditure on external staff; is of the opinion that, as a standard, the budget for external staff should not exceed 10% of total staff expenditure;

4. Acknowledges the need for continuous financing of the ‘Single Market Forum’, an annual event organised jointly by the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council Presidency; highlights the importance of the Single Market Forum for bringing together representatives of citizens, businesses and consumer organisations as well as representatives of the Member States and the institutions of the European Union, in order to establish a clear commitment to transposition, application and enforcement of single market legislation;

5. Calls, therefore, for financing of the Preparatory Action ‘Single Market Forum’ (budget line 12 02 05), which follows a Pilot Project implemented under the 2011 and 2012 budgets (budget line 12 02 03);

6. Notes that the commitments for budget line 02 03 01 are 4% higher than in the previous year and is of the opinion that this increase can be avoided by setting the right priorities;

7. Welcomes the creation of budget line 02 03 04 02 which will allow consumers and SMEs to be more involved in standardisation practices;

8. Agrees that the budget for payments for budget line 12 02 01 should be raised in order to match the needs of Eurobarometer and Your Europe Advice; is sceptical, however, about the budget proposed for studies in this section;

9. Deplores the lack of commitment appropriations for budget line 12 02 02 on the SOLVIT Programme and the Single Market Assistance Services action plan for the second year in a row; stresses that, despite being an effective out-of-court dispute settlement mechanism, SOLVIT still needs better promotion so that citizens and businesses can benefit from its services and that further efforts are still needed to rationalise Single Market Assistance Services;
10. Welcomes, in this respect, the fact that SOLVIT, Your Europe, Your Europe Advice and the IMI system are already working together on certain issues; stresses that, against that background, it would be better to merge the budget for these governance tools in one budget line; proposes to increase the budget for this new budget line by EUR 1.3 million, in order for SOLVIT to be fully functional and to transfer the amount of EUR 1.7 million currently foreseen for Your Europe Advice under budget line 12 02 01 to the consolidated budget line 12 02 02;

11. Acknowledges the need to raise the budget for the Customs programmes; is, however, convinced that this can in part be paid for by cutting back on events and seminars;

12. Is convinced that consumer policy is a top priority for the IMCO committee and that the budget for this policy area should reflect this.
# RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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<th>Date adopted</th>
<th>6.9.2012</th>
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<td><strong>Result of final vote</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Regina Bastos, Jürgen Creutzmann, María Irigoyen Pérez, Emma McClarkin, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Marc Tarabella, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Sabine Verheyen</td>
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