



2022/2184(BUI)

7.3.2023

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

on Guidelines for the 2024 Budget – Section III
(2022/2184(BUI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Robert Biedroń

PA_NonLeg

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 gender equality is a core value of the European Union, as enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union; whereas Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states that 'in all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women', thus promoting equality as a fundamental principle of the Union and establishing the principles of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting;
 - 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 the EU has committed to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5 on gender equality; whereas narrowing the gender gap in the EU could result in an additional 10 million jobs and an increase of up to EUR 3.15 trillion in gross domestic product by 2050¹; whereas it is important to focus on enhancing women's potential in all sectors of the economy; whereas women have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in precarious employment, feminised sectors and the informal economy, through increased gender-based violence and harassment, unpaid and unequal care and domestic responsibilities and restricted access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); whereas Parliament has called for no Union funds to be allocated to Member States until authorities respect the required measures needed to ensure compliance with the rule of law²; whereas non-compliance with the rule of law in Poland has had an adverse impact on women and LGBTIQ+ people;
- 1. Stresses that a gender equality perspective should be fully integrated into and ensured in all policy areas and at all stages of the budgetary process, particularly in the light of the multiple gendered impacts of various ongoing climate, energy and social crises, including the backlash against gender equality and women's rights, especially SRHR, in several Member States and the impact of war and conflict worldwide; regrets that, as observed in the European Court of Auditors' annual report on the performance of the EU budget, gender mainstreaming is the least successfully implemented overarching policy priority³ and that currently the EU institutions lack a consistent approach and structured cooperation regarding this priority; stresses that gender impact assessments, objectives and mainstreaming should be practised in all policy areas to ensure that EU expenditure becomes an effective tool for promoting gender equality; calls on the

¹ European Institute for Gender Equality, '[Advancing work–life balance with EU Funds. A model for integrated gender-responsive interventions](#)', Publications Office of the EU, Luxembourg, 2020.

² European Parliament resolutions of 10 March 2022 on the rule of law and the consequences of the ECJ ruling (OJ C 347, 9.9.2022, p. 168) and of 8 July 2021 on the creation of guidelines for the application of the general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget (OJ C 99, 1.3.2022, p. 146).

³ European Court of Auditors, '[Annual report on the performance of the EU budget – status at the end of 2021](#)', Publications Office of the EU, Luxembourg, 2022.

Commission to ensure that its new classification system to measure the gender impact of the Union's spending accurately and comprehensively represents the impact of programmes on gender equality; calls for requirements to systematically collect and report accurate and comparable data to be included in upcoming legislative proposals for EU funding programmes, and as part of the performance reports in the annual budget;

2. Stresses that the citizens, equality, rights and values programme (CERV) needs separate gender-related budget lines, targets and reporting requirements, including on preventing and combating gender-based violence; recalls the requirement to allocate at least 40 % of the funds dedicated to the equality, rights and gender equality strand and the Daphne strand to activities to prevent and combat all forms of gender-based violence at all levels and at least 15 % of those funds to activities promoting women's full enjoyment of rights; recalls also that it is imperative to increase CERV's budget to better combat inequalities that have been exacerbated by ongoing crises; reaffirms its requests for the Daphne programme's resources to be increased in order to combat all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, psychological and physical violence, stalking, sexual violence, rape, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, paying particular attention to women fleeing the war in Ukraine, who face a significant risk of violence and should be protected; calls for budgetary allocations to tackle female genital mutilation throughout the EU's external action programmes, including through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation instrument – Global Europe;
3. Calls on the Commission to increase the budget allocation to civil society organisations that promote women's rights in Europe and beyond, especially those working on SRHR, including the cross-border provision of safe and legal abortions, which guarantees women's access to the fundamental right to have control over their bodies; highlights the importance of reaching smaller grassroots organisations in order to guarantee the best impact on women's rights and gender equality, and therefore welcomes new calls for organisations to redistribute funds; recalls the importance of the resources allocated to the EU4Health programme and calls for a particular focus to be put on women living in rural, sparsely populated and remote areas by providing access to mobile healthcare where appropriate; highlights the necessity of EU4Health in achieving universal health coverage across the Union, including access to sexual and reproductive health services, and reducing inequalities in health;
4. Stresses the importance of investments in high-quality public services, including healthcare and social infrastructure for coping with the social and health crises, building social resilience and combating inequalities; stresses the importance of creating high-quality jobs in these sectors to achieve a just transition towards a less carbon-intensive society; notes that investments in gender equality are widely recognised as a significant driving force behind economic growth;
5. Repeats its concern about the connection between attacks on the rule of law and backlash against gender equality and women's rights in the EU; calls on the Commission to strengthen the rule of law in the Union and thus protect fundamental rights and gender equality via the rule of law conditionality mechanism for access to EU funds; calls on the Commission to not release any funds to Poland until the Polish

authorities fully meet the milestones and targets outlined in Poland's recovery and resilience plan; reiterates the importance of the rule of law for women and LGBTIQ+ people; calls on the Commission to assess the core mission of any organisations receiving EU funds and to withhold funding from groups seeking to use EU funds to abet backsliding on human rights, particularly women's rights, gender equality and the rights of LGBTIQ+ people;

6. Recalls that women are over-represented in low-paid sectors, including in precarious employment, feminised sectors and the informal economy, and that they perform the majority of unpaid care and domestic work; calls for greater coordination between the instruments available and an increased percentage of the EU budget to be dedicated to advancing gender equality, improving work-life balance irrespective of age and gender and supporting women's access to the labour market, including by ensuring investments in high-quality care infrastructure and services for coping with the social and health crises; welcomes the fact that a gender equality-related expenditure tracking system was included in the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund, which will allow for better monitoring of investments related to gender equality; stresses the importance of cohesion policy in promoting gender equality and, in this regard, regrets the decision that a gender breakdown is in most cases not relevant for the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund; stresses the importance of mitigating growing inequalities, in particular through recovery and resilience plans and cohesion policy and by ensuring gender equality in digitalisation;
7. Recalls the crucial work of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), particularly in the context of the backlash against women's rights across the Union and beyond; underlines that the EIGE plays an important role in sharing knowledge and expertise on gender mainstreaming and gender sensitive analysis and recommendations related to crises involving the climate, health, migration and war; stresses that the EIGE has proven to be a vital and effective organisation; stresses the urgent need for the EIGE's budget to be increased, so that it can employ more staff, including eight contract agents that it needs immediately, in order to cope with a sharp rise in requests for technical assistance on gender mainstreaming; underlines that, without sufficient funding, the EIGE will not be able to fully perform its duties, which will be to the detriment of policymaking in the Member States;
8. Reiterates that the EU budget should be equipped with tools to encourage women's participation and interest in digital education, the economy and the science, technology, engineering, math and information and communications technology sectors and careers; similarly underlines the need for increased funding to improve education and vocational training, including lifelong learning, to help bridge the digital gender gap and support aspiring female entrepreneurs, engineers and technicians in the digital and artificial intelligence sectors; calls for Horizon Europe and the digital Europe programme to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming in their actions and to report gender-disaggregated data; calls for budgetary resources to be allocated to support women's entrepreneurship and economic independence, as well as women-led small and medium-sized enterprises.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	28.2.2023
Result of final vote	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>24</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>3</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>2</div> </div>
Members present for the final vote	Simona Baldassarre, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Frances Fitzgerald, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Arba Kokalari, Alice Kuhnke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Radka Maxová, Karen Melchior, Johan Nissinen, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Samira Rafaela, Evelyn Regner, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Christine Schneider, Michal Šimečka, Sylwia Spurek
Substitutes present for the final vote	Michiel Hoogeveen, Ewa Kopacz, Elena Kountoura, Katarína Roth Nevedálová, Pernille Weiss
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Francisco Guerreiro, France Jamet, Łukasz Kohut, Ana Miranda

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

24	+
PPE	Maria da Graça Carvalho, Frances Fitzgerald, Arba Kokalari, Ewa Kopacz, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Christine Schneider, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Karen Melchior, Samira Rafaela, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Michal Šimečka
S&D	Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Łukasz Kohut, Radka Maxová, Katarína Roth Nevedalová, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner
The Left	Elena Kountoura
Verts/ALE	Francisco Guerreiro, Alice Kuhnke, Ana Miranda, Sylwia Spurek

3	-
ECR	Michiel Hoogeveen, Johan Nissinen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión

2	0
ID	Simona Baldassarre, France Jamet

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention