

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

2005/2001(BUD)

14.9.2005

OPINION

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2006:
Section III – Commission
(C6-0000/2005 - 2005/2001(BUD))

Draftswoman: Katerina Batzeli

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Points up the significance of the financial year 2006 for agriculture, since, for the first time, there will be expenditure on the single-payment and regional-payment schemes and the modulation mechanism; furthermore, should there be no agreement on the 2007-2013 financial perspective, the 2006 budget will serve as the basis for the 2007 budget;
2. Stresses that, in connection with the differences in implementation of the CAP reform in the Member States, problems may arise with claims for payments, and in this context calls for European budget funds to be paid only to farmers whose business is based within the European Union;
3. Regrets that on an accounting basis only, and without taking account of any political priority, the Council has adopted an across-the-board reduction of 0.56 % in all market and income support spending above EUR 50 m, with the exception of three CAP reform lines (single-payment and regional-payment schemes, single area payment scheme and additional amounts of aid); notes that that will result in a reduction of EUR 150 m, including more than EUR 100 m in direct aids alone, to which should be added the reduction of more than EUR 75 m in agricultural spending (such as on Leader and Sapard, etc.) coming under other headings;
4. Takes the view that the Council conducted no serious analysis before making these reductions; what is purely an accounting exercise has brought about absurd reductions in funding in some cases;
5. Regrets the reduction against funding for SAPARD when the programme's implementation rate is high, which may well lead, in 2006, to the same situation as in 2005, i.e. the need to make use of other budget lines, during the year, in order to provide the necessary appropriations;
6. Takes the view that the Commission's proposed margin of EUR 1.21 bn below the financial perspective ceiling is already ample to cope with any market-related crises or potential dollar fluctuations and that, consequently, the Council's reduction and the resulting EUR 1.35 bn margin present a misleading picture of the resources needed for the conduct of agricultural policy;

7. Takes the view that the amounts entered in the PDB for agriculture represent the bare minimum and therefore calls for all PDB lines to be restored, which is all the more vital given that the Commission's forecasts, on which the PDB figures are based, very often turn out to be optimistic by comparison with actual market developments;
8. Welcomes the fact that the Council has made no reduction in amounts for rural development;
9. Endorses the Council's decision on revision of the financial perspective, thus making it possible to transfer EUR 655 m in direct-aid modulation appropriations from heading 1a to heading 1b, but regrets the fact that the decision was taken so late, thus posing major programming problems;
10. Takes the view that, for greater clarity, the budget lines between which modulation amounts have been distributed should be identified, and calls for modulation amounts, rather than being spread thinly between the majority of rural development measures, to be concentrated on a limited number of priorities such as the setting-up of young farmers, training or less-favoured areas;
11. Takes the view that amounts freed up if some Member States are unable to use rural development funding in its entirety should be reallocated for rural development;
12. Takes the view that heading 1a appropriations unused by the end of the financial year should not simply be returned to Member States, but, rather, should be earmarked for an agriculture-related purpose;
13. Proposes that there should be an increase in funding for improved promotion of quality products and for promotion of regional marketing and regional labels and in funding for provision of information on the common agricultural policy;
14. Considers that, in order to teach sound dietary habits and combat obesity in young children, schools should likewise be able to take advantage of the free distribution of fruit and vegetables;
15. At a time when the search for alternatives to oil should be a priority, the reduction in appropriations for aid for energy crops is totally illogical;
16. Calls for additional appropriations to be allocated for aid for setting up young farmers and for training, these being two key areas for ensuring that the countryside remains alive;
17. Calls for particular attention for innovation and renewal within the CAP, as this is of vital importance in the reformed agricultural policy, and calls for attention to be devoted to innovation particularly with reference to the establishment of young farmers and to training activities;
18. Calls, within the field of forestry – particularly planting and maintenance – for special attention to be devoted to preventing and combating forest fires as well as combating plant diseases brought on by drought;

19. Calls for veterinary expenditure and funding of research into, and prevention of, animal diseases to be increased, too.

PROCEDURE

Title	Draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2006: Section III – Commission		
Procedure number	2005/2001(BUD)		
Committee responsible	BUDG		
Committee asked for its opinion Date announced in plenary	AGRI		
Enhanced cooperation	no		
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Katerina Batzeli 20.1.2005		
Discussed in committee	23.5.2005	13.7.2005	13.9.2005
Date suggestions adopted	13.9.2005		
Result of final vote	for:	29	
	against:		
	abstentions:	-	
Members present for the final vote	Katerina Batzeli, Sergio Berlato, Thijs Berman, Niels Busk, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Albert Deß, Gintaras Didžiokas, Carmen Fraga Estévez, Duarte Freitas, Jean-Claude Fruteau, Ioannis Gklavakis, Lutz Goepel, Bogdan Golik, Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, María Esther Herranz García, Elisabeth Jeggle, Heinz Kindermann, Diamanto Manolakou, Jean-Claude Martinez, María Isabel Salinas García, Agnes Schierhuber, Czesław Adam Sikierski, Marc Tarabella, Janusz Wojciechowski		
Substitutes present for the final vote	Christa Klaß, Wiesław Stefan Kuc, Astrid Lulling, Markus Pieper, Karin Resetarits		
Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote			