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*Plenary sitting*

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**A9-0288/2023**

Part 1

11.10.2023

# REPORT

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024  
(11565/2023 – C9-0336/2023 – 2023/0264(BUD))

Part 1: Motion for a resolution

Committee on Budgets

Rapporteurs: Siegfried Mureşan (Section III – Commission)  
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- Decisions taken by the Committee on Budgets at its meetings of 2 October 2023 on the draft amendments to the draft general budget.....

Part 2 – A9-0288/2023



## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

**on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 (11565/2023 – C9-0336/2023 – 2023/0264(BUD))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Article 106a of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,
- having regard to Council Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053 of 14 December 2020 on the system of own resources of the European Union and repealing Decision 2014/335/EU, Euratom<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its interim report on the proposal for a mid-term revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 20 June 2023 for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (COM(2023)0337),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 June 2023 entitled ‘Mid-term revision of the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027’ (COM(2023)0336) and the accompanying staff working document (SWD(2023)0336),
- having regard to the proposal of 20 June 2023 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the Ukraine Facility (COM(2023)0338),
- having regard to the proposal of 20 June 2023 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (‘STEP’) and amending Directive 2003/87/EC, Regulations (EU) 2021/1058, (EU) 2021/1056, (EU) 2021/1057, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) 2021/1060, (EU) 2021/523, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697 and (EU) 2021/241 (COM(2023)0335),
- having regard to its resolution of 10 May 2023 on the impact on the 2024 EU budget of increasing European Union Recovery Instrument borrowing costs<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 April 2023 on Parliament’s estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2024<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2022 on upscaling the 2021-2027

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 424, 15.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0335.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0194.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0119.

multiannual financial framework: a resilient EU budget fit for new challenges<sup>5</sup>,

- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2022/2496 of 15 December 2022 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2020/2093 of 17 December 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027<sup>7</sup> and to the joint declarations agreed between Parliament, the Council and the Commission in this context<sup>8</sup> and the related unilateral declarations<sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources (“IIA”)<sup>10</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012<sup>11</sup> (the ‘Financial Regulation’),
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget<sup>12</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law)<sup>13</sup>,
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Proclamation on the European Pillar of Social Rights of 13 December 2017<sup>14</sup> and its resolution of 19 January 2017 thereon<sup>15</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 16 February 2023 on an EU strategy to boost industrial competitiveness, trade and quality jobs<sup>16</sup>,

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<sup>5</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2022)0450.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> OJ C 444 I, 22.12.2020.

<sup>9</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2020)0357.

<sup>10</sup> OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> OJ C 428, 13.12.2017, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0010.

<sup>16</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0053.

- having regard to its resolution of 19 May 2022 on the social and economic consequences for the EU of the Russian war in Ukraine – reinforcing the EU’s capacity to act<sup>17</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 1 February 2023 entitled ‘A Green Deal Industrial Plan for the Net-Zero Age’ (COM(2023)0062),
- having regard to its resolution of 12 July 2023 on accession to the Schengen area<sup>18</sup>, to its resolution of 11 December 2018 on the full application of the provisions of the Schengen acquis in Bulgaria and Romania: abolition of checks at internal land, sea and air borders<sup>19</sup>, to its resolutions of 13 October 2011 and of 18 October 2022<sup>20</sup> on the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen area and to the report of 23 November 2022 of the complementary voluntary fact-finding mission to Romania and Bulgaria on the application of the Schengen acquis and its developments since 2011, sent to the European Parliament in December 2022, and to the Commission proposal on the two countries’ accession to the Schengen area,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 11 December 2019 on the European Green Deal (COM(2019)0640) and to Parliament’s resolution of 15 January 2020 in response thereto<sup>21</sup>,
- having regard to the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025,
- having regard to the Agreement adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21) in Paris on 12 December 2015 (the Paris Agreement) and to the Agreement adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Biodiversity Conference on 19 December 2022 (the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework),
- having regard to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, – having regard to the draft general budget of the European Union for the 2024 financial year, which the Commission adopted on 5 July 2023 (COM(2023)0300),
- having regard to the position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the 2024 financial year, which the Council adopted on 5 September 2023<sup>22</sup> and forwarded to Parliament on 8 September 2023 (11565/2023 – C9-0336/2023),
- having regard to Rule 94 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the opinions of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, the Committee on Transport and Tourism, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee on Fisheries, the Committee on Culture and Education, the Committee on

<sup>17</sup> OJ C 479, 16.12.2022, p. 75.

<sup>18</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2023)0278.

<sup>19</sup> OJ C 388, 13.11.2020, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> OJ C 94 E, 3.4.2013, p. 13 and OJ C 149, 28.4.2023, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> OJ C 270, 7.7.2021, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> OJ C 317, 7.9.2023, p. 3.

- Constitutional Affairs and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality,
- having regard to the letter from the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A9-0288/2023),

### **Section III – European Commission**

1. Stresses that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, following on from the COVID-19 pandemic, has brought further substantial economic and social consequences for the people of Europe and worldwide, pushing up inflation, generating energy insecurity and energy poverty, driving up food and energy prices and resulting in a cost of living crisis for millions, especially for the most vulnerable; underlines that the new geopolitical and economic context, coupled with the worsening climate and biodiversity crisis and the resulting unprecedented extreme weather events and natural disasters impacting people and communities in Europe and its neighbourhood, has given rise to new policy needs, notably in climate and energy, social investments, defence, agriculture and industrial policy;
2. Recalls that the Commission, in drawing up the draft budget for 2024 (the "DB") based on the existing multiannual financial framework ("MFF") regulation, explicitly underlined the "limits" of the framework "after three years of unprecedented crises" and stressed that the regulation was agreed "in a completely different geopolitical and economic context";
3. Recalls, furthermore, that a fortnight after publishing the DB, the Commission tabled a proposal to revise the MFF regulation, alongside legislative proposals to establish the Ukraine Facility and the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), stating that the package must be in place by 1 January 2024 and therefore in time for the 2024 budget;
4. Notes that, despite the Commission's proposal to revise the MFF, the Council chose to formulate its position on the 2024 budget assuming no change to the framework; deeply regrets that, despite the drastic constraints, the Council elected to apply a 'business as usual' approach to its budget reading, cutting commitment appropriations in the DB by EUR 772 million and payment appropriations by EUR 515 million across the MFF headings in a way that would diminish the Union's impact, ability to act and relevance globally and that pays no heed to the challenging economic and social context; considers that the cuts proposed by the Council are unjustified, are not driven by an objective assessment of needs or absorption capacity and run counter, in many instances, to shared policy ambitions and political agreements; decides, therefore, to restore appropriations on all lines cut by the Council to the level of the DB;
5. Recalls that the budget can only be adopted in accordance with the MFF regulation in force; reiterates its firm conviction that a revised MFF regulation must provide the framework for the 2024 budget and, in order to ensure democratic decision-making in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty, considers it appropriate for Parliament to formulate its position on the basis of a revised framework; decides, therefore, to draw up its reading on the 2024 budget in alignment with its interim report on the MFF revision;

6. Recalls its long-standing position that new policy priorities or tasks should be accompanied by fresh money and that Union institutions, bodies and decentralised agencies must be properly staffed and adequately resourced to fulfil their mandate; regrets that the current budgetary situation has led the Commission to redeploy significant funds over the MFF period; emphasises that all spending through the Union budget must be subject to parliamentary scrutiny;
7. Underlines that swift progress on new own resources is essential both for the repayment of European Union Recovery Instrument (EURI) borrowing costs and for the financial robustness and implementation of the current and future multiannual financial frameworks; welcomes the first basket of new own resources presented by the Commission in December 2021 and the adjusted second basket published in June 2023; calls on the Council to advance without delay to ensure the timely introduction of new own resources, in line with the legally binding roadmap annexed to the IIA; underlines that more robust new own resources will be needed to guarantee a fit-for-purpose Union budget in future years and looks forward to ambitious and innovative proposals from the Commission that go beyond the IIA;
8. Underscores that the 2024 budget must be aligned with the Union's objectives and international commitments; stresses the need for continuous work to achieve the climate and biodiversity mainstreaming targets for Union budget spending laid down in the IIA, as part of the broader aim of making the Union climate-neutral by 2050 at the latest; reminds the Commission of its obligation under the IIA to regularly take stock of the progress towards climate mainstreaming targets; calls on the Commission to monitor the implementation of the 'do no significant harm' principle and to take necessary corrective measures if and when needed;
9. Is concerned by the Commission's assessment that the 10 % target for biodiversity-related spending in 2026 and 2027 will most likely not be reached and by the absence of a clear path towards reaching the agreed targets; underlines, therefore, the need for further efforts within the 2024 budget to ensure that biodiversity spending targets for 2026 and 2027 are met; calls on the Commission to pay due attention to the conclusions of the European Court of Auditors special report on climate spending in the 2014-2020 budget and to the need to track climate- and biodiversity-related expenditure for all programmes and actions accurately; stresses the need to ensure consistency between climate and biodiversity funding;
10. Reiterates that all Union programmes, policies and activities should be implemented in a way that promotes gender equality in the delivery of their objectives; welcomes, in this regard, the Commission's work, in accordance with the IIA, to track gender equality-related spending, in particular through an ex-post gender impact assessment and reporting on volumes; calls on the Commission to apply this methodology to all MFF programmes in order to demonstrate results for the 2024 budget accompanied by the systematic collection, reporting and evaluation of gender-disaggregated data;

### ***Special Instruments***

11. Recalls that the Commission has proposed to establish two new special instruments over and above the MFF ceilings - the EURI to better manage debt repayment costs and the

Ukraine Facility designed to ensure a longer-term structural solution to Ukraine's funding needs - and to increase appropriations for the Flexibility Instrument and for the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve;

12. Reiterates its assessment, now shared by the Commission, that a structural solution must be found for the repayment of EURI borrowing costs; recalls that Parliament has consistently insisted that the EURI repayment costs be placed over and above the MFF ceilings; notes that EURI repayment costs are estimated at EUR 4 billion in the DB as against the initially programmed EUR 2,1 billion and would therefore exhaust the Flexibility Instrument and use part of the Single Margin Instrument in 2024 without the MFF revision;
13. Notes that the Council, in its position on the 2024 budget, reduces appropriations set aside for EURI borrowing costs based on the hope that borrowing costs are ultimately lower than forecast in the DB; insists that, in accordance with the principle of budgetary prudence, the budgetary authority should rely on the Commission's objective forecasting and the updates in the Amending Letter; proposes, therefore, to restore the DB amount and, in line with its MFF interim report, to delete the line from Heading 2b and place the full amount in the EURI special instrument over and above the MFF ceilings;
14. Welcomes the proposal to establish the Ukraine Facility as a longer-term structural solution to Ukraine's funding needs anchored in the Union budget; underlines that support for Ukraine should also include cross-border actions, activities and projects in partnership with neighbouring countries; insists that the Ukraine Reserve must be mobilised by the budgetary authority in the annual budgetary procedure; insists that the budgetary nomenclature must provide for the necessary granularity and transparency to ensure proper oversight and decisions by the budgetary authority; proposes, therefore, the creation of new budget lines that would fulfil this purpose;
15. Underlines that budgetary flexibility has been key for the Union to respond to unforeseen events and to adjust its spending priorities in light of evolving political, economic and social needs; highlights, however, that the Union budget is not equipped with the flexibility it requires; reiterates, therefore, its view that the Flexibility Instrument should be increased by EUR 1,457 billion in 2024 in line with its MFF interim report;
16. Considers that demands on the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR) are likely to increase and, therefore, that substantially reinforcing the SEAR is crucial to enable the Union to act in emergency situations caused by major natural disasters, extreme weather events or public health crises in Member States and accession countries and also to support non-EU countries suffering from conflicts, refugee crises, natural disasters or humanitarian emergencies; increases, therefore, allocations for the SEAR in 2024 by EUR 1,092 billion in 2024 in line with its MFF interim report; maintains appropriations for the European Global Adjustment Fund and the Brexit Adjustment Reserve as proposed in the DB;

### ***Heading 1 - Single market, Innovation and Digital***

17. Recalls that programmes under Heading 1 play a key role in supporting research and innovation, in boosting the competitiveness and sustainability of the EU economy, in supporting SMEs and start-ups and in investing in cross-border infrastructure, thus

contributing significantly to the green and digital transitions and to driving fair, sustainable and inclusive growth, economic and social development and quality job creation;

18. Acknowledges that the Commission did not follow through on its commitment under the work programme for 2023 to ‘push to create a new European Sovereignty Fund’; acknowledges that, despite its limited size and scope, the STEP proposal has the potential to deliver results more quickly by using existing programme structures and seeking to create synergies and thereby helping to secure the open strategic autonomy of the Union, reduce dependence on non-EU countries and boost investment in key strategic sectors; considers that the STEP proposal should act as a testbed for a fully-fledged Sovereignty Fund in the next MFF period;
19. Underlines that, as part of the STEP proposal, additional appropriations are to be allocated to InvestEU and to the European Innovation Council (EIC); proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for the InvestEU guarantee by EUR 1,05 billion and for the EIC by EUR 125 million in 2024 in line with its MFF interim report; proposes, furthermore, to make available again EUR 500 million in research decommitments under Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation for the EIC under Horizon Europe, in addition to the EUR 95 million included in the DB;
20. Recalls that the recently agreed Chips Act has a significant impact on the budget under Heading 1, in particular for Horizon Europe and for Digital Europe; finds Council’s cut to financing for the Chips Act especially difficult to understand as the legislation has recently been agreed and the cut goes against a clear Union priority; underlines that, in accordance with the political agreement on the Chips Act, an additional EUR 50 million is required to meet funding needs over the period 2024 to 2027; proposes, therefore, to cover 25 % of that shortfall by allocating EUR 12,5 million to the Chips Joint Undertaking in 2024;
21. Recalls that the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) is key to boosting investment in high-performance, sustainable trans-European networks, in ensuring the stability of the energy sector for the future, for example through support for renewable energy and energy efficiency, and to decarbonising the EU economy, thereby accelerating the green transition and promoting interconnectivity; underlines that CEF Transport, through “solidarity lanes” such as along the Danube, is vital in supporting transport infrastructure in and towards Ukraine, in developing infrastructure in the neighbouring regions and in enabling the transport of crops and critical goods in both directions and welcomes the decision to associate Ukraine to the programme; proposes, to increase appropriations for CEF Transport by EUR 100 million above the DB in 2024 in order to support these aims;
22. Stresses that a well-functioning Single Market is critical for the Union’s competitiveness and to enhance access to markets for EU businesses, especially SMEs; emphasises that SMEs in particular have been hit hard by high inflation and energy prices and proposes, as a result, an increase of EUR 10 million above the DB for the SME strand of the Single Market programme; in particular for start-up and scale-up mechanisms; reiterates, furthermore, the programme’s role in contributing to human, animal and plant health; proposes, in that regard, an increase of EUR 5 million to ensure effective implementation of veterinary programmes for animal diseases and zoonosis, in particular to combat

bovine tuberculosis;

23. Underscores that the just green and digital transitions and a refocusing of industrial policy require significant investment in skills development, including through reskilling and upskilling, and in bridging the digital divide between urban and rural areas through equal access to emerging technologies, enhanced digital literacy and improved opportunities in rural and less developed areas; points, for example, to the value of the Net Zero Academies; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for skills development under the Single Market programme by EUR 10 million;
24. Highlights the vital role that Horizon Europe plays in supporting research and innovation and in helping to turn research results and innovative ideas into products and services that stimulate job creation, boost the global competitiveness of EU business and support efforts to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss; recalls that the programme remains heavily over-subscribed and is therefore unable to support a large number of research projects evaluated as ‘excellent’; proposes, therefore, to increase allocations for the programme by a total of EUR 140 million compared to the DB (excluding the STEP-related increases), with reinforcements for the European Research Council, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and Clusters ‘Health’, ‘Culture’ ‘Climate, Energy and Mobility’ and ‘Food’;
25. Underlines the essential role played by the decentralised agencies active under this heading, in particular in light of geopolitical developments; proposes to increase appropriations and staffing for the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity and the European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators in line with their identified needs and expanding mandates;
26. Reinforces Heading 1 by EUR 1 454 239 500 in commitment appropriations above the DB (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions) and by EUR 1 684 239 500 compared to the Council reading; points out that EUR 1 175 000 000 of its reinforcements are specific to STEP; underscores that, in line with its MFF interim report, the ceiling for Heading 1 would increase by EUR 1,375 billion in 2024;

#### ***Heading 2a - Economic, social and territorial cohesion***

27. Underlines the key role cohesion policy plays in delivering on EU policy priorities and boosting the EU economy by contributing to fair and sustainable growth and development, promoting economic and social convergence and solidarity between countries and regions, supporting the green and digital transitions, fostering innovation and employment and addressing regional and social inequalities; calls on the Commission and the Member States to accelerate implementation of cohesion policy and thereby ensure its timely absorption, especially in light of the additional implementation pressure from the Recovery and Resilience Facility; underlines the need to ensure project continuity through a proper phasing of projects from the 2014-2020 MFF period into the 2021-2027 period;
28. Is deeply concerned by the stubbornly high energy and food prices and long-term high inflation with broad negative economic impacts, resulting, in particular, in a cost of living crisis across the Union; stresses the role of cohesion policy in mobilising resources to provide help and relief to the hardest hit people, communities and regions; highlights, in

that regard, that, in 2024, EUR 4,8 billion of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) budget under shared management is to be allocated to food aid and basic material assistance for the most deprived persons, beyond the 4 % target; calls on Member States to allocate more of their ESF+ funds to organisations providing assistance and food aid to the most vulnerable and deprived persons in light of the current cost of living crisis;

29. Stresses the importance of adequate funding for programmes under Heading 2a in order to ensure that cohesion policy, as the EU's main investment policy, delivers on its objectives; underlines that local and regional authorities are key to ensuring effective implementation of EU programmes and calls for dialogue between the local and regional level, on the one hand, and the Union level, on the other, to be strengthened, including through adequate financing for relevant actions and institutions; emphasises the need for cities to receive sufficient funding to enable them to implement EU programmes locally;
30. Regrets that, due to the limited flexibility of the current MFF, the Commission has resorted to reorienting cohesion policy, which is not a crisis response tool but has been repeatedly called on to make up for shortcomings in budgetary flexibility or crisis response mechanisms in the MFF to the detriment of its long-term policy objectives;
31. Accepts the Council position with respect to Heading 2a;

#### ***Heading 2b - Resilience and values***

32. Underlines that ensuring all EURI borrowing costs are covered by the EURI special instrument over and above the MFF ceilings would have the effect of restoring some margin within Heading 2b and creating budgetary space in the Flexibility and Single Margin Instruments; underlines that, especially given the high interest rates, programmes under Heading 2b have been impacted by the EURI line's presence within the same heading since the Commission has been de facto prevented from proposing reinforcements where they are needed;
33. Points, in this regard, to the flagship Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes, which play a vital role in supporting learning mobility opportunities, improving people's skills and employability and promoting social inclusion; highlights the role that Erasmus+ has in enhancing university cooperation, modernising education and supporting actions designed to reduce school drop-out rates; emphasises the valuable contribution it has made to supporting Ukrainian students and teaching staff since the war;
34. Emphasises that both programmes are required by law to put in place measures to boost participation rates among people with fewer opportunities; regrets that participants from disadvantaged backgrounds are often prevented from taking part in the programme given that grants are insufficient in a context of soaring inflation and the increased cost of living; is committed to ensuring that Erasmus+ does not become a de facto selective programme open only to those who can afford to participate; recalls that the Commission is required to put in place financial support measures for people with fewer opportunities and calls for a readjustment of Erasmus+ grants to account for higher inflation and higher living costs; proposes, therefore, an increase of EUR 100 million for Erasmus+ and EUR 2 million for the ESC above DB specifically to ensure the programmes are accessible for all;

35. Underlines the importance of a stronger Health Union and enhanced preparedness in post-pandemic Europe, as well as the need to better understand and treat the long-term effects and implications of COVID, including by financing translational research, clinical trials and pivotal studies; highlights the vital role that the EU4Health programme plays in this respect, as well as in supporting actions to achieve universal health coverage across the Union, encompassing quality access to sexual and reproductive health services and access to new technologies and remote monitoring devices, telemedicine and AI-supported diagnostic devices, which can help deliver better care in rural areas; proposes, therefore, to increase the programme's appropriations by EUR 20 million above DB, including to help offset redeployments towards the European Health Emergency and Response Authority;
36. Is alarmed by the growing impact of extreme weather events and natural disasters in Europe, its neighbourhood and globally and concerned about the Union's ability to respond in an effective and timely manner; underlines that these disasters are increasingly linked to climate change and are therefore likely to occur with greater frequency and intensity in the future; stresses the need to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation measures, in particular in vulnerable regions and to boost the Union's response capacity; increases, therefore, appropriations for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism by EUR 20 million above DB in order to ensure an effective response and protect human lives, including through the mobilisation of joint medical teams in emergencies;
37. Emphasises the key role that Creative Europe plays in supporting the cultural and creative sectors, fostering media literacy and combatting disinformation, and promoting and protecting media freedom and pluralism as the basis for a functioning democracy; underscores that soaring energy prices and inflation, following on from the COVID-19 pandemic, have had a significant impact on the cultural and creative sectors, which are often made up of small organisations and individual artists; proposes, therefore, to increase financing for the Creative Europe programme by EUR 25 million above DB, with EUR 15 million for the Culture strand and EUR 10 million for the Cross-Sectoral strand;
38. Reiterates the importance of Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme in promoting European values and citizens' rights, in fostering active civic engagement and in building resilient societies; recalls that the programme is vital in combatting gender-based violence, especially important in the context of the measurable increase in violence against women, and violence against the LGBTQI+ community; underscores the programme's value in supporting the key principles of democracy, the rule of law, solidarity, justice, non-discrimination, equality and inclusiveness; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for the programme by EUR 6 million above DB, with reinforcements for the 'citizens' engagement and participation', Daphne and 'Union values' strands;
39. Deems it necessary to reinforce support to the Turkish-Cypriot line by EUR 2 million above DB in order to finance the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus and support the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage;
40. Underlines the significance of the social dimension in the Union budget and the need for effective social dialogue and proper information and training for workers' organisations,

with a view to further developing and increasing the capacity and involvement of social partners; increases, therefore, financing for the relevant lines by EUR 1 million each above DB;

41. Recalls the essential role played by the decentralised agencies under Heading 2b; increases funding and staffing levels for the European Institute for Gender Equality, the European Labour Authority and the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation in line with the agencies' identified needs and to ensure that they are adequately staffed and resourced to handle their workload and deliver on their mandate;
42. Underlines the importance of protecting the Union budget against fraud, corruption and other misconduct; stresses, in this regard, the central role that the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) plays in protecting the Union's financial interests, including with respect to the use of NextGenerationEU funds, and ensuring compliance with the rule of law; proposes, therefore, targeted reinforcements to the EPPO and increase its staffing levels to allow it to fulfil its mandate; calls on all the Member States to join the EPPO to ensure more robust protection of the Union's financial interests;
43. Reinforces Heading 2b overall by EUR 199 485 306 in commitment appropriations above DB levels (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions) and by EUR 812 302 190 compared to the Council reading; recalls that, in line with its MFF interim report; EURI costs would not be considered under Heading 2b;

### ***Heading 3 - Natural Resources and Environment***

44. Underlines that the STEP proposal includes additional commitment appropriations in 2024 for the Innovation Fund under Heading 3 and a commensurate increase in the ceiling; considers that the proposed allocation for the Innovation Fund marks important progress towards its full budgetisation; recalls the important role the Innovation Fund plays in supporting investment in hydrogen production and infrastructure; proposes, therefore, to create a new budget line for the Innovation Fund, with appropriations of EUR 1,25 billion in line with its MFF interim report;
45. Reiterates its concern about the negative impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on global food security, affordability and supply chains and on the European agricultural sector and farmers' ability to withstand inflationary pressure and increased input prices; calls on the Commission to analyse the war's consequences on farmers and on food production, including with respect to imports from Ukraine, and to propose measures as needed; emphasises the need to help new and young farmers through additional support mechanisms as a structural solution and thereby ensure the sustainability of the sector and generational renewal; proposes, therefore, to increase income support to young farmers by EUR 40 million above DB;
46. Underlines the importance of school schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy in ensuring broader access to healthy and nutritious food for children and points out that the schemes' reach is impacted by rising food prices; decides, therefore, to increase by EUR 5 million above DB support for the schemes;
47. Underlines the central role that the LIFE programme, as an EU flagship programme, plays in delivering on the European Green Deal and achieving the Union's climate neutrality

goal, in line with the Paris Agreement, supporting climate mitigation and adaptation measures, reducing emissions and increasing the use of renewable energy, creating a circular economy, protecting ecosystems and reversing the alarming trend of biodiversity loss; is concerned by the increase in climate change-driven extreme weather events and stresses the need for urgent action; emphasises the role of the LIFE programme in accelerating the just transition; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for the programme by EUR 30 million above DB;

48. Recalls that, traditionally, an Amending Letter will complete the picture regarding available resources under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and that the approach to amendments can be adjusted accordingly in the course of the conciliation;
49. Reinforces Heading 3 by EUR 1 325 000 000 in commitment appropriations above the DB (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions) and by EUR 1 335 000 000 compared to the Council reading; points out that EUR 1 250 000 000 of its reinforcements are specific to STEP; underscores that, in line with its MFF interim report, the ceiling for Heading 3 would also increase by EUR 1,25 billion in 2024;

#### ***Heading 4 - Migration and Border Management***

50. Underlines that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, armed conflicts and instability in neighbouring regions, as well as poverty, hunger, the consequences of climate change and underlying trends in economic development, demographic changes, continue to push people to come to the Union for refuge, safety or freedom, in search of a better life or to reunite with close family members, placing significant pressure on programmes and agencies under Heading 4; recalls, in that regard, its view that financing under the Heading should be increased by EUR 250 million in 2024, in line with its MFF interim report;
51. Reiterates the need to implement a migration and asylum policy that is based on solidarity, shared responsibility and respect for human rights in line with Union values and international commitments; stresses that the war has vastly increased pressure on asylum and reception systems in the Member States and that the Union must provide longer-term support to the host Member States to facilitate the reception and integration of refugees from Ukraine, as well as other refugees granted international protection, face recent migration trends and ensure the efficient management of migration, including as regards effective, safe and dignified return and readmission procedures; stresses, furthermore, the need to anticipate the financial implications of a timely agreement on the Pact on Asylum and Migration and bolster the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) in view of its central role in ensuring the Pact's successful implementation; recalls the important role that regional and local authorities play in the integration process on the ground while respecting the competences of the Member States; decides, in view of the above, to reinforce AMIF by EUR 110 million above DB in 2024 given its positive contribution in providing immediate support to refugees;
52. Recalls the essential role played by the European Union Agency for Asylum in supporting Member States with respect to asylum and international protection procedures; proposes to increase staff and financing levels for the agency in line with its heavier workload;

53. Stresses that effective and fair management and protection of the Union's external borders are key to ensuring the security of the Union, guaranteeing the smooth and efficient implementation of the Union's migration and asylum policy and preserving the free movement of people within the Union and the proper functioning of the Schengen area; stresses, moreover, the need to better prevent irregular migration to protect vulnerable people from smuggling and trafficking networks and address the instrumentalisation of migrants as part of hybrid attacks; underlines the vital role that the Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI) plays in that regard; notes that the Commission proposes to reinforce the BMVI above financial programming levels in the DB, though points out that this 'reinforcement' only partially offsets repeated redeployments from the BMVI to finance revised agency mandates; proposes to increase appropriations for the BMVI by EUR 60 million above DB, including to accelerate Romania's and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen area and the implementation of the pilot schemes established with the Commission;
54. Highlights the need for a further increase in appropriations and staff for eu-LISA to ensure that the agency can implement critical internal security and border management projects; underlines the need for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) to have the requisite resources to carry out its mandate and operational activities effectively and decides, therefore, to restore the DB for the agency;
55. Reinforces Heading 4 overall by EUR 173 941 500 in commitment appropriations above the DB and by EUR 193 941 500 compared to the Council reading; underscores that, in line with its MFF interim report, the ceiling for Heading 4 would also increase by EUR 250 million in 2024;

### ***Heading 5 - Security and Defence***

56. Underlines that defence challenges have surged since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, rendering support to the defence sector more important than ever to ensure Europe is a safe continent; underscores the need to enhance the Union's role in international security and considers that European defence cooperation leads to greater efficiency, potential savings and smarter spending and is key to enhancing the Union's strategic autonomy; reiterates the need to quickly boost the defence industrial production capacity and interoperability of the Member States, particularly those on the frontline and therefore most exposed to current threats;
57. Points out that significant steps forward have been taken with the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act on the defence demand side and the Act in Support of Ammunition Production<sup>23</sup> on the supply side; notes that the two regulations exhaust all Heading 5 margins and require use of the Flexibility Instrument in 2024, in addition to substantial redeployments from the European Defence Fund (EDF);
58. Stresses that the STEP proposal includes additional appropriations for the EDF; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for the EDF by EUR 625 million in 2024 in line with

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<sup>23</sup> Regulation (EU) 2023/1525 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 July 2023 on supporting ammunition production (ASAP) (OJ L 185, 24.7.2023, p. 7).

its MFF interim report;

59. Notes the importance of ‘military mobility’ in enabling Member States to provide rapid support in the context of the war by upgrading infrastructure capacity for heavy and large-scale military transport, enhancing transport corridors and improving logistics; underlines that the programme is oversubscribed, has substantial absorption capacity and will be fully committed by the end of 2023; decides, therefore, to increase appropriations for ‘military mobility’ by EUR 45 million above DB;
60. Reinforces Heading 5 overall by EUR 670 000 000 in commitment appropriations above the DB and by EUR 687 000 000 compared to the Council; points out that EUR 625 000 000 of its reinforcements are specific to STEP; underscores that, in line with its MFF interim report, the ceiling for Heading 5 would also increase by EUR 625 million in 2024;

### ***Heading 6 - Neighbourhood and the World***

61. Emphasises that, in particular following Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, the international context has deteriorated rapidly as a result of the food, energy and economic crises, which have dramatically increased pressure on Heading 6; deplores the fact that funding under Heading 6 was woefully inadequate from the outset of the MFF and that the MFF did not factor in continued funding for the needs of refugees from Syria, Iraq and other countries, leaving almost no scope to cope with additional challenges;
62. Notes that the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)-Global Europe cushion has been depleted very quickly and used beyond its core purpose of responding to emerging challenges and priorities, while the humanitarian aid budget has relied heavily on mobilisation of the severely stretched SEAR; reiterates, in that regard, that financing under the Heading should be increased by EUR 2,875 billion in 2024, in line with its MFF interim report;
63. Stresses the importance of reinforcing the Southern Neighbourhood line in supporting political, economic and social reforms in the region, in providing assistance to refugees, in particular Syrian and Palestinian refugees, and in enabling support along the southern migration routes; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for the line by EUR 650 million above DB, including to ensure adequate and predictable funding for UNWRA to respond to the intensified needs on the ground;
64. Underlines that the war has had a particularly significant effect on countries in the Eastern Neighbourhood, such as the Republic of Moldova, that have provided shelter and assistance to refugees fleeing the war and faced the knock-on effects of sky-high inflation and energy and food prices; underlines the importance of sustained support for candidate countries in implementing the necessary accession-related reforms and in enhancing their resilience and preventing and countering hybrid threats; welcomes the decision to grant Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova candidate country status and insists on the need to deploy the necessary funds to support their accession process; decides, therefore, to increase appropriations by EUR 450 million above DB for the Eastern Neighbourhood; proposes, furthermore, to increase accession-related support under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA III) by EUR 50 million in 2024 for the Western Balkans;

65. Shares the Council's assessment that the Commission should have factored humanitarian aid needs resulting from the war into the DB; considers that, given the highly challenging international context, increasing geopolitical instability, rising extreme poverty and more frequent natural disasters and extreme weather events, humanitarian aid needs in 2024 are likely to be more substantial than estimated by the Council in its reading; recalls, furthermore, that humanitarian aid to Ukraine will continue to be covered under Heading 6 rather than the Ukraine Facility; underlines that insufficient access to humanitarian aid hits the most vulnerable hardest, in particular women and children; points out that the Union's humanitarian aid budget has relied heavily on the SEAR, driving resources away from the SEAR's other objectives and reducing the Union's ability to respond to emergencies; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations for humanitarian aid by EUR 550 million compared to the DB;
66. Recalls that the NDICI cushion is designed to enable the Union to respond in an agile and effective manner to a changing external policy landscape and emerging challenges through budgetary flexibility; proposes, therefore, to increase appropriations in the cushion by EUR 800 million above DB in 2024;
67. Underlines its support for the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and the need to continue relevant actions financed under the EU Trust Fund for Colombia; proposes, therefore, to reinforce appropriations by EUR 10 million above DB for 'The Americas' geographic programme under the NDICI; reiterates, furthermore, its unwavering commitment to protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms globally and increases by EUR 10 million above DB the allocation for the 'fundamental rights and freedoms' thematic programme;
68. Reiterates its commitment to the international dimension of Erasmus+, which enables learning mobility exchanges with partner countries around the world; increases, therefore, appropriations for the international dimension of Erasmus+ by EUR 10 million above DB, split evenly between the NDICI and IPA III;
69. Recalls that the interest due from the EUR 18 billion in MFA+ loans being disbursed to Ukraine in 2023 was to be covered by the Member States, with the Union budget only contributing in the event of available resources; considers that no such resources are available and therefore deletes the line and cuts the appropriations for the MFA+ interest rate subsidy;
70. Reinforces Heading 6 overall by EUR 2 525 000 000 in commitment appropriations above the DB and by EUR 2 407 100 000 compared to the Council reading; underscores that, in line with its MFF interim report, the ceiling for Heading 6 would increase by EUR 2,875 billion in 2024;

#### ***Heading 7 - European Public Administration***

71. Recalls that spending under Heading 7 should be set at a level that guarantees that the Union has an effective and efficient administration; points out, in that regard, that the Commission's proposal for a revision of the MFF would reduce the need for recourse to the Single Margin Instrument for spending under Heading 7 in 2024;
72. Accepts the Council position for Heading 7 with respect to Section III;

### ***Pilot projects and preparatory actions (PP-PAs)***

73. Recalls the importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions (PP-PAs) as tools for the formulation of political priorities and the introduction of new initiatives that have the potential to turn into standing Union activities and programmes; adopts, following a careful analysis of all the proposals submitted and taking fully into account the Commission's assessment of their compliance with legal requirements and implementability, a balanced package of PP-PAs that reflects Parliament's political priorities; calls on the Commission to swiftly implement PP-PAs and provide feedback on their performance and results delivered on the ground;

### ***Payments***

74. Underlines the need to provide a sufficient level of payment appropriations in the 2024 budget and decides, as a general rule, to reinforce payment appropriations on those lines which are amended in commitment appropriations; notes the low level of payments proposed by the Commission for 2024, attributable to delays in the implementation of some programmes due to their late adoption and the disruption to projects because of the COVID-19 crisis; underlines, in this context, the risk of a payments backlog in the later years of the MFF period and for the subsequent MFF and recalls its position on the MFF revision in that regard;

## Other Sections

### **Section I – European Parliament**

75. Is aware of the constraints of Heading 7 in the current MFF; recalls that these constraints are the results of the cuts applied by the Council to the Commission's already very low initial proposal when agreeing on the current MFF 2021-2027; expresses its astonishment and deep concern at the Commission's unilateral decision to reduce Parliament's estimates for 2024, which breaks once more the tradition of good cooperation between the two institutions; recalls that the Parliament's estimates were prepared and adopted with particular attention to the Commission's recommendations; against that background, restores the appropriations of its budget for 2024 set at EUR 2 383 401 312, in line with its estimates of revenue and expenditure adopted by the Plenary on 20 April 2023; incorporates budgetary-neutral technical adjustments to reflect updated information which was not available earlier this year;
76. Notes that, while its budget is included under Section I - European Parliament, the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations (APPF) is an independent Union body; welcomes the fact that the number of posts allocated to the APPF is clearly identified in the establishment plan and that the specific amount related to its staff is included in the budgetary remarks for both Items 1200 and 1400; expects that this information will continue to be disclosed in the future budgets; agrees to remove on that basis Article 502 from the 2024 budget nomenclature onwards;
77. Reiterates the Parliament's priorities for the forthcoming financial year, namely, focusing Parliament's budget on its core functions of co-legislator, acting as one arm of the budgetary authority, representing citizens and scrutinizing the work of other institutions, as well as providing the resources for priority projects on engaging with citizens, green Parliament promoting the saving of resources, accessible Parliament fully respecting gender issues and strengthening security, cyber-security and IT development;
78. In line with its above-mentioned resolution of 20 April 2023 on its estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2024 and taking into account the answers provided by the Secretary-General on 19 July 2023:
- (a) asks the Bureau to work on a technical solution to allow Members to exercise their right to vote while benefitting from their maternity, paternity or long term sickness leave;
  - (b) reiterates its request to the Bureau to modify the Implementing Measures for Title VII of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (CEOS) to ensure the full alignment of the allowances rates incurred in respect of duty travel between Parliament's three places of work between officials, others servants and Accredited Parliamentary Assistants (APAs); acknowledges that the Parliament's responsible services are drafting a proposal in order to resolve this issue and encourages the Bureau to act as soon as the proposal is submitted;
  - (c) regrets the continued opposition of the Bureau to overturning the decisions of 2 October 2000 and 15 December 2014 that explicitly prohibit the participation of APAs in official delegations and committee missions; reiterates its call on the Conference of Presidents and the Bureau, once again, to revise the implementing

provisions governing the work of delegations and missions outside the European Union and the decision on "Committee missions outside the three places of work"; underlines the fact that such a revision should consider the possibility for APAs, subject to certain conditions, to accompany Members on official Parliament delegations and missions;

- (d) reminds the Bureau that proper information and consultation with the Committee on Budgets before adopting any major decision on building related issues is needed due to their important budgetary implications; welcomes the maintenance policy for Parliament's buildings adopted by the Bureau on 8 March 2021 introducing so called "building passports"; asks the Bureau to explore savings opportunities; calls for a pro-active building policy which must focus on the green renovation of the building stock and guarantee that Parliament strives to maximise energy efficiency and thereby reduces energy consumption and CO2 emissions and the running cost of Parliament's facilities.

### ***Other Sections (Sections IV-X)***

- 79. Condemns the Commission's horizontal approach to reduce the estimates of the institutions in order to adhere to the principle of stable staffing, and to a maximum increase of 2 % for non-salary related expenditure, despite the inflationary pressures for a second year in a row and irrespective of new tasks given to the institutions by the Commission and the co-legislators;
- 80. Highlights that the largest parts of the institutions' budgets are fixed by statutory or contractual obligations impacted by inflation and that they have no control over inflation rates and increasing energy prices; is concerned about the high cost of living and the increasing prices in Luxembourg, in particular the rising housing costs entailing difficulties for all institutions based in Luxembourg in recruiting staff; requests all institutions based in Luxembourg to address this long-standing issue also with Luxembourg counterparts;
- 81. Highlights the need for the institutions to have sufficient staff in order to fulfil their mandate; welcomes the continuous efforts made by the institutions to redeploy staff and find additional efficiency gains but recognises the limits of this approach in the current inflationary context when paired simultaneously with increasing responsibilities;
- 82. Increases, for the following duly justified cases, the level of appropriations or staff above the DB in order to give the institutions enough resources to respect their legal and contractual obligations and perform adequately, efficiently and effectively the growing number of tasks from their mandate; proposes therefore to:
  - (a) restore the level of appropriations in line with the estimates of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Ombudsman, by increasing the level of appropriations above the DB for budgetary lines that cover appropriations in relation to contractual and mandatory expenditures;
  - (b) restore the level of appropriations partially in line with the estimates of the European Court of Auditors, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Data Protection

Supervisor and the European External Action Service by increasing the appropriations above the DB for budgetary lines that cover appropriations in relation to contractual and mandatory expenditures;

- (c) increase the establishment plans above the DB with the corresponding appropriations in line with the institutions' requests for the European Data Protection Supervisor and European Data Protection Board to enable them to face new responsibilities and partially in line with the institutions' requests for the European Committee of the Regions to enhance cybersecurity capabilities and the European External Action Service to implement the Strategic Compass, strengthen the crisis response center and enhance cybersecurity and the fight against disinformation.

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- 83. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, together with the amendments to the draft general budget, to the Council, the Commission, the other institutions and bodies concerned and the national parliaments.

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Carina Ohlsson

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the growing instability and the rise of unprecedented challenges in the immediate European neighbourhood and the international environment increases the demands on the Union to act with a budget fit for that purpose;
  - B. whereas the Union must continue to strengthen support to Ukraine in its struggle of self defence against Russia's war of aggression, including through military support, and respond to other urgent global needs as they evolve;
  - C. whereas the European Commission proposed a new instrument "Ukraine Facility", which aims to be up to €50 billion for the period from 2024 to 2027;
  - D. whereas the European Court of Auditors issued a special report 14/2023 on "Programming the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe: comprehensive programmes with deficiencies in the methods for allocating funds and impact monitoring";
- 1. Welcomes that the Commission presented a budget proposal which corresponds to the MFF ceiling of EUR 15 830 million in Heading 6 which underlines the massive needs in external action spending; recalls that the Parliament from the outset considered the MFF ceiling in Heading 6 as insufficient given the geopolitical necessities;
  - 2. Strongly believes that a revision of the MFF is needed to make the Union budget fit for purpose in order to address global challenges; highlights that sufficient funding is key to the EU's credibility as a stronger, more assertive, and more strategic actor on the world stage; welcomes therefore the Commission proposal for a revision presented on 20 June, believes however that an even stronger increase in Heading 6 would be needed to address the various challenges in the neighbourhood and beyond; strongly believes that external action funding is crucial for the EU's stability and security amid Russian aggression in Ukraine and malign influence in the neighbourhood and beyond, therefore views it as imperative that the EU maintains its current presence as a stabilizing power;

calls on the Council to agree on a revision of the MFF before the end of the year so that it can have an impact on the 2024 budget; furthermore calls on the Commission to present as soon as possible a detailed breakdown per budget line regarding the suggested increases for 2024 of EUR 2.331 million (in 2018 prices) in order for the budgetary authority to make full use of the additional funds in Heading 6;

3. Notes that the majority of external action spending is concentrated under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI/Global Europe) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), which has ring-fenced budget allocations per geographical region, providing flexibility but due to the unprecedented pressure sees the urgent need for new initiatives and proposals to be put forward, calls for targeted increases in particular in regions in crisis where needs are most pressing;
4. Highlights the importance of an increase in funding for additional permanent staff for including and streamlining the fight against malicious interference and disinformation and an effective institutional set-up within the EU such as for the implementation of those structures identified in the recently adopted INGE report, including a dedicated EEAS Strat Com Far East team, a Commission taskforce and a European Centre for Interference Threats and Information Integrity;
5. Recognises that it is still necessary to increase the financial support of the EU to UNRWA in 2024, due to the agency's critical financial situation that jeopardizes its ability to fulfil its important role effectively; reiterates the importance of providing assistance to UNRWA as a central component of the EU's strategy to promote security, stability, and development in the Middle East; calls therefore for an increase of EUR 60 million in the EU's financial support to UNRWA in 2024 to ensure the continuation of vital services provided to millions of Palestinian refugees;
6. Notes that increases in external action spending need to be accompanied by a strengthened monitoring and anti-corruption framework; calls on the Commission, following recommendations from the European Court of Auditors, to make external action spending more standardised, comparable and transparent; believes that granting the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European Public Prosecutors' Office (EPPO) powers to monitor external action spending is a good avenue to ensure that funds are properly spent and that funds contribute to the EU's external goals;
7. Continues to see the Western Balkans integration and the countries' reform progresses, in particular in the area of rule of law, democracy and fundamental freedoms, as a geopolitical priority, especially in the context of Russia's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which resonated strongly across the region, but insists on the conditionality requirements regarding rule of law for every euro committed in the 2024 budget; welcomes furthermore the accession perspective for Ukraine and Moldova, insists however that additional funding is needed to support both countries on their path to accession; calls for the strengthening of rule of law conditionality in all funding streams linked to accession procedures, particularly in the Western Balkans; calls for reinforced monitoring and reporting regarding rule of law reforms; furthermore calls for continuous support for the Belarusian democratic forces, for increased support for Georgian civil society and independent media, and for peace-building activities between

Armenian and Azerbaijani societies;

8. Emphasises the need for coherence, accountability and efficiency of financing the EU external action; calls for increased transparency and democratic scrutiny of EFIs' funding through strategic steering by the Parliament and an enhanced geopolitical dialogue between the Parliament and the Commission;
9. Reminds that the EU's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) foresees a strong conditionality and funding must be modulated or even suspended in the case of significant regression or persistent lack of progress regarding the rule of law and fundamental rights; reiterates once again its call on the Commission to develop guidelines on the application of the conditionality; stresses the need to prioritize the alignment of accession countries with the EU's common foreign and security policy and consider any funding in this light, in order to ensure that all EU expenditure is fully in line with the EU's strategic goals and interests;
10. Calls on the Commission to create a permanent training residential programme on the EU's external action and CFSP for junior diplomats from EU candidate countries, which should draw from the experience and lessons learned from the pilot project on the European Diplomatic Academy and fully synergize with the future permanent structure of the forenamed Academy; stresses that, in this sense, the above-mentioned programme should foster a connection to the EEAS, European Commission, Council, and European Parliament;
11. Stresses the need to increase allocations for military mobility in 2024 budget and during the MFF revision. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine shows the need of increasing the budget for military mobility projects, that would improve the speed of military response in case of aggression, and also will help civilian infrastructure needs, including rail transport of Ukrainian grain to the EU Member States' seaports;
12. Calls for greater support for independent media fighting Russian disinformation and propaganda, in particular media in the national languages of the Eastern Partnership countries, Russian-language media inside and outside Russia, as well as media in the Western Balkans and in the African countries where the Wagner Group is active;
13. Reiterates that adequate level of funding should be maintained for the Southern Neighbourhood in 2024; regrets therefore the diminution of 100 million EUR compared to 2023;
14. Welcomes the continuation of funding for humanitarian aid and support for Syrian refugees in the country and the region;
15. Notes that the purpose of European cooperation in defence matters is to make Europe and its citizens safer and reduce costs by creating synergies; highlights that the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has been deeply impacted by Russia's war; emphasises the importance of providing adequate financial support by Member States and through the European Defence Fund to frame for a strong CSDP in particular ambitious and effective civilian CSDP missions, and military CSDP operations and to increase the EU's security and strategic autonomy; considers that such efforts would increase the Union's ability to contribute to international stability, security and peace, in

particular as regards the promotion and respect for international law, in close cooperation with the UN, NATO, OSCE and allied countries, or if needed, alone;

16. Strongly welcomes that in June 2023, the Council adopted a decision to increase the overall financial ceiling of the European Peace Facility (EPF) by €3.5 billion and the overall financial ceiling now totals more than €12 billion (in current prices); notes that the European Peace Facility (EPF) has enabled an unprecedented support from EU Member States, including delivery of weapons to Ukraine;
17. Welcomes the newly proposed Ukraine Facility and its proposed overall amount of up to €50 billion for the period 2024 to 2027; welcomes its concept to link Ukraine's reconstruction plans to the accession process and calls on the Commission to ensure that existing financial assistance is targeted to our criteria for accession; acknowledges the need to harmonise financial support tools for the more efficient use and rapid application of aid; underlines that at the same time, the scope of the Ukraine Facility must be aligned with Parliament's legislative, budgetary and control prerogatives;
18. Insists that a continuous effort must be made to adjust existing accession tools and build the legal basis for the IPA III in Moldova and Ukraine; underlines the need to uphold a realistic prospect of accession for Ukraine and Moldova; welcomes the ongoing assistance to Georgia and approve of the support given in the areas of public finance management and infrastructure;
19. Underlines the importance of the EU's presence in Africa and stress that the visibility of EU development assistance must be enhanced at both government and local community levels in partner countries; calls on the Commission to promote local action, encouraging local ownership of development projects to ensure sustainability and inclusion; highlights that using the Global Gateway and participatory development policy as a framework for multi-tiered cooperation could have a socio-economic multiplier effect worldwide;
20. Calls on the Commission to engage in efforts with international partners to facilitate a new national dialogue in Tunisia; recalls that the NDICI-Global Europe and memorandum of understanding agreements come with conditions; urges the Commission to ensure that they are respected and that relevant funding suspensions are applied in case these conditions are not met;
21. Believes that funding of projects focussing on women and girls in conflict and crisis-affected areas, including on gender-based violence, conflict prevention, rebuilding and empowering of women, is insufficient and should be strengthened throughout all geographical regions in the budget with meaningful stakeholder involvement throughout the funding process; calls for the rights of Afghan women and girls to be further strengthened and, most importantly, for them to have access to secondary and university education, including through EU scholarships to study at schools and universities in EU Member States; believes in particular that projects aiming at actively countering disinformation, in particular on these issues, can further strengthen EU actions and help establish long-term stability;
22. Underlines the importance of directing attention towards the severe situation in Afghanistan and securing essential support for local and international organisations and

individuals who are actively promoting the rights of women and girls, while also ensuring the provision of essential public services such as healthcare and education;

23. Welcomes that the Commission has further developed a methodology to track gender equality-related spending in the 2021-2027 MFF, which looks at policy design and resource allocation and in particular the presentation of an ex-post gender impact assessment on a more granular level and reporting on volumes; calls on the Commission to assess holistically gender impact and facilitate that all the relevant data is available for the tracking;
24. Stresses the important work of civil society organisations in safeguarding democracy and human rights, and calls for additional funding to be made available for their activities, especially those concerned with LGBTIQ+ rights;
25. Emphasises that the protection and promotion of human rights globally continues to be of core interest for EU's external actions; reiterates the need for increased funding dedicated to supporting human rights worldwide, especially where there is closure of civic spaces, and with a particular focus on the protection of human rights defenders and journalists, in particular those most at risk; calls for increased funding to strengthen the capacities of EU Delegations and key stakeholders in designing and implementing key public policies;
26. Believes that the support of third countries in the fight against climate change needs to be increased as a matter of urgency; reiterates its call for the adoption of an EU financing plan for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), since Heading 6 of the MFF does not provide sufficient means for the EU's external action to help partner countries finance their SDG strategies; stresses that the 2024 Union budget should be aligned with the Union's ambitions of making the Union climate neutral by 2050 at the latest, as well as the Union's international commitments in particular the Paris Agreement and the Kunmin-Montreal Agreement;
27. Stresses the need for continuous efforts towards the achievement of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming targets laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 in the Union budget and the European Union Recovery Instrument expenditures (IIA); Welcomes the efforts for a more transparent and comprehensive reporting in the budgetary documents as well as the performance website, and emphasises the need to carry out sufficient ex-post evaluations with a particular focus on impact; calls on the Commission to carefully take into account the conclusions of the special report of the European Court of Auditors on climate spending in the 2014-2020 EU budget as well as the performance audit from November 2022;
28. Stresses the need to ensure consistency between climate and biodiversity funding and calls on the Commission to publish the amounts and shares of expenditure that will contribute to both targets per programme when presenting the draft budget; recalls that the do-no-significant-harm principle is mainstreamed in all Union activities through the budgetary implementation as agreed in the IIA and stresses therefore the urgent need to ensure the respect of the 'Do No Significant Harm' principle through the entire budget in all the 6 dimensions and to take necessary corrective measures if and when needed without undue delay;

29. Recalls the European Parliament's Recommendation of 15 March 2023 on the functioning of the EEAS and for a stronger EU in the world, in particular its call for the EEAS to be provided with adequate resources; hence calls for an increase in the establishment plan of 35 posts, while the EEAS shall develop and implement targeted recruitment procedures, in particular taking into account currently underrepresented groups in terms of geographical balance, gender and minorities;
30. Calls for special attention to be paid to nuclear safety and disaster preparedness in the light of Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine and concerns about the safety of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), as well as the Lukashenka regime's continued failure to ensure the nuclear safety of the Belarusian NPP in Astravyets;
31. Strongly believes that a considerable reinforcement of humanitarian aid, accompanied by clear objectives in terms of the rule of law and governance, is needed for the Union to be able to respond to emerging crises and therefore increases this budget line by EUR 1 billion in order to meaningfully address the unprecedented level of humanitarian needs worldwide, aggravated by the Ukraine war and its global economic repercussions, notably in terms of food insecurity; highlights that funds from the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR) can be mobilised for crises outside the EU throughout the whole financial year.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	20.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 49 -: 6 0: 2
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Alviina Alametsä, Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Traian Băsescu, Anna Bonfrisco, Reinhard Bütikofer, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Katalin Cseh, Michael Gahler, Giorgos Georgiou, Sunčana Glavak, Raphaël Glucksmann, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Dietmar Köster, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Nathalie Loiseau, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Thierry Mariani, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Sven Mikser, Alessandra Moretti, Javier Nart, Matjaž Nemec, Demetris Papadakis, Kostas Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Manu Pineda, Thijs Reuten, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Mounir Satouri, Andreas Schieder, Jordi Solé, Hermann Tertsch, Hilde Vautmans, Anders Vistisen, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Željana Zovko
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Vladimír Bilčík, Angel Dzhambazki, Andrey Kovatchev, Georgios Kyrtos, Carina Ohlsson, Juozas Olekas, Nikos Papandreou, Mick Wallace, Javier Zarzalejos
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Gheorghe Falcă, Dace Melbārde, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

49	+
ID	Anna Bonfrisco
PPE	Alexander Alexandrov Yordanov, Traian Băsescu, Vladimír Bilčík, Gheorghe Falcă, Michael Gahler, Sunčana Glavak, Andrey Kovatchev, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Miriam Lexmann, Leopoldo López Gil, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Vangelis Meimarakis, Dace Melbārde, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Javier Zarzalejos, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez, Željana Zovko
Renew	Katalin Cseh, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Georgios Kyrtos, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Hilde Vautmans
S&D	Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Raphaël Glucksmann, Dietmar Köster, Sven Mikser, Alessandra Moretti, Matjaž Nemec, Carina Ohlsson, Juozas Olekas, Demetris Papadakis, Nikos Papandreou, Tonino Picula, Thijs Reuten, Nacho Sánchez Amor, Isabel Santos, Andreas Schieder
Verts/ALE	Alviina Alametsä, Reinhard Bütikofer, Mounir Satouri, Jordi Solé, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Thomas Waitz

6	-
ID	Thierry Mariani, Anders Vistisen
NI	Kostas Papadakis
The Left	Giorgos Georgiou, Manu Pineda, Mick Wallace

2	0
ECR	Angel Dzhambazki, Hermann Tertsch

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT**

for the Committee on Budget

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Ilan De Basso

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Budget, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas in a context of increasing geopolitical instability, crises and natural disasters, the EU must strengthen its role through credible cooperation with partner countries in the neighbourhood and the Global South;
  - B. whereas according to OCHA 339 million people are projected to need humanitarian assistance by the end of 2023 and the EU must stand ready to deliver aid in line with its commitments;
  - C. whereas the already existing acute food insecurity and malnutrition in the Global South have increased since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;
  - D. whereas the gap between humanitarian needs and resources is increasing; whereas according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service, only 57 % of funding needs were met in 2022; whereas global humanitarian funding continues to rely heavily on a very limited number of donors, with the ten largest humanitarian donors providing more than 80 % of all funding; whereas the need to expand the resource base for humanitarian action is acute;
  - E. whereas the 2024 European Union budget contribution to partner countries in the Global South should be aligned with the ambitions of making the Union climate neutral by 2050 at the latest, as well as with the Union's international commitments, in particular the Paris Agreement and the Kunmin-Montreal Agreement, and significantly contribute to the implementation of the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Circular Economy Action Plan, the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability and the Zero-pollution Action Plan;
1. Welcomes the attention given to Heading 6 in the proposal for the revision of the MFF for the period 2024-2027 with an increase in the ceiling of Heading 6 by 10.5 billion; underscores that this increase should be seen as a minimum so that the Union can

address the various challenges in third countries and contribute to the fulfilment of the SDG commitments; urges the Council to agree on the MFF revision on time for it to have an impact on the 2024 budget; furthermore calls on Member States to live up to the commitment to dedicate at least 0,7 % of their gross national income to Official Development Assistance (ODA) and welcomes in this regard the Council Conclusions of 22 May 2023 encouraging the Member States to devote an appropriate share, for example 10 %, of their ODA budget to humanitarian action; furthermore underlines the urgent need for increased efforts to broaden the resource base for humanitarian action, drawing on the resources of traditional, emerging and potential donors, the private sector as well as other stakeholders, on addressing the humanitarian funding gap;

2. Recalls that the Union has cooperative relations with a large number of countries and that the EU external financing instruments shall contribute to achieving the international commitments and objectives that the Union has agreed to, in particular the Agenda2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement;
3. Stresses that together with the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, human development is the key priority of the NDICI-GE instrument; calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure that EU development aid reaches people first; regrets that the NDICI-GE instrument was underfunded since the start of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, creating a gap between the EU's bold ambitions on the global stage and the resources available to achieve them; recalls that the review of the NDICI-GE instrument and the revision of the MFF, to which the EU budget 2024 should be re-adapted, are key opportunities to change this;
4. Urges the Commission to respect each budgetary target set in the NDICI-GE regulation, notably 30 % for climate, 85 % for gender mainstreaming, 20 % for human development and to provide detailed figures on the implementation of the horizontal objectives and the programming for the remaining MFF period, in particular on climate, migration, biodiversity and gender mainstreaming; notes that, for 2021, the share of the committed amount contributing to the migration and forced displacement target was 14 %, exceeding the indicative target of 10 %; notes with particular attention that migration is the main component behind the EUR 10.5 billion rise in the ceiling of Heading 6 under the proposal for the revision of the MFF; regrets that the share of the committed amounts contributing to climate objectives was 18,5 %, drastically below the 30 % target; is concerned that according to the Commission the 10 % MFF biodiversity spending target set for the years 2026 and 2027 will most likely not be reached and therefore underlines the need for further efforts to ensure that it is met; highlights that the biodiversity financing gap over the period 2021-2030 is around EUR 18,69 billion per year and should be remedied as soon as possible;
5. Recalls that at least 85 % of new actions implemented under the NDICI-GE instrument should have gender equality as a principal or a significant objective, and at least 5 % of those actions should have gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as a principal objective; welcomes that the Commission has further developed a methodology to track gender equality-related spending in the 2021-2027 MFF; calls on the Commission to holistically assess the gender impact of spending and ensure that all the relevant data is available for tracking;

6. Calls for additional investments to address the setback in the recognition and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as well as the general backlash against women's rights and gender equality in developing countries; in this regard underlines that targeted support to CSOs and communities advocating for the respect of SRHR, women's rights, gender equality and the LGBTIQ+ community and other marginalised populations should be prioritised;
7. Stresses the need for continuous efforts towards the achievement of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming targets laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 on the Union budget and the European Union Recovery Instrument expenditures; stresses the need to ensure consistency between climate and biodiversity funding and calls on the Commission to publish the amounts and shares of expenditure that will contribute to both targets per programme, including the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation - Global Europe (NDICI-GE) instrument, when presenting the draft budget; emphasises the need to carry out sufficient ex-post evaluations with a particular focus on the impact of the projects on climate and biodiversity;
8. Notes with great concern that humanitarian aid remains the most strained instrument under Heading 6; warns that ad-hoc solutions through budgetary reinforcements from other funding sources or redeployments and recommitments are not sustainable; calls on the Commission to establish and maintain a solid baseline for predictable and principled humanitarian aid as the trend of growing emergencies is unlikely to slow down, including due to the humanitarian impact of the increasing number of weather events expected to occur until 2027; stresses also that there is a need to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian system and to increase efforts to reduce humanitarian needs; reminds that humanitarian needs in Ukraine will not be covered by the Ukraine Facility proposed in the MFF revision; requests an increase of 1 billion euro on top of the Commission proposal to the HUMA budget line, which anticipates the needs predicted by main humanitarian actors and takes into account that the EU humanitarian budget in 2022 reached EUR 2,62 billion after several reinforcements and that similar needs remain for 2024; is extremely alarmed by the deepening food insecurity in developing countries, exacerbated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and calls on the Commission to support partner countries in enhancing food security;
9. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to increase the education share of the EU's development aid budget from 10 % to 13 %; notes with concern the persistently high illiteracy in the least developed countries; highlights that illiteracy is a gendered issue, affecting two thirds of women worldwide;
10. Reminds that women and children bear the greatest consequences of limited access to humanitarian aid and are the most vulnerable to violence and abuses; calls for child-centred transversal approaches in budget decisions; invites the Commission to introduce a child marker to track the Union's external spending on children's development and protection in humanitarian settings, in line with the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021-2024);
11. Expresses its concern for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine

Refugees (UNRWA)'s financial situation, and calls for stepping up EU financial support to the Agency in 2024 for a total contribution of 110 million, to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of vital services to one of the most vulnerable populations in the Middle East;

12. Reaffirms the key role of civil society organizations (CSOs) as development actors in implementing the EU external action agenda and values; calls for their active involvement in budget programming.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	20.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 16 -: 2 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Hildegard Bentele, Stéphane Bijoux, Dominique Bilde, Christophe Clergeau, Ryszard Czarnecki, Mónica Silvana González, György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Karsten Lucke, Erik Marquardt, Janina Ochojska, Michèle Rivasi, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Bernhard Zimniok
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Frances Fitzgerald, Marlene Mortler, Patrizia Toia, Carlos Zorrinho
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Róza Thun und Hohenstein

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

16	+
PPE	Hildegard Bentele, Frances Fitzgerald, György Hölvényi, Rasa Juknevičienė, Marlene Mortler, Janina Ochojska
Renew	Stéphane Bijoux, Róza Thun und Hohenstein
S&D	Christophe Clergeau, Mónica Silvana González, Karsten Lucke, Patrizia Toia, Carlos Zorrinho
The Left	Miguel Urbán Crespo
Verts/ALE	Erik Marquardt, Michèle Rivasi

2	-
ID	Dominique Bilde, Bernhard Zimniok

1	0
ECR	Ryszard Czarnecki

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Eva Maria Poptcheva

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Calls for the 2024 EU budget to ensure that all Member States put in place well-designed, future-oriented investment and responsible and sustainable structural reforms in order to strengthen Member States' competitiveness, to generate more job opportunities, to meet EU climate neutrality and biodiversity targets, and to unleash the full potential of the EU economy and achieve long-term, inclusive and sustainable growth and advance the green and digital transitions;
2. Calls on the 2024 Union budget to be a true European budget that allows (i) to successfully tackle the social and economic consequences of the war in Ukraine, in particular the increase in energy and food prices, (ii) to promote the strategic autonomy of the Union, and (iii) to accelerate the implementation of the EU Green Deal, RepowerEU, the Net-Zero Industry Act and the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP);
3. Considers that simple, sound, enforceable and responsibility-driven fiscal rules that promote forward-looking countercyclical policies and ensure public debt and deficit sustainability are key for the long-term economic prosperity of Member States and the Union; takes note of the fact that the proposed reform of the economic governance framework foresees more flexibility for strategic public investments and allows for different debt reduction paths for Member States; believes that a strategy of determined, gradual and realistic fiscal consolidation is warranted to strengthen fiscal sustainability and to rebuild fiscal buffers; recalls the need for the reform to be approved preferably prior to the deactivation of the general escape clause; stresses that economic governance at the EU level should be subject to strong democratic accountability and should contribute to enhancing fiscal policy coordination;
4. Calls for the 2024 budget to include targeted spending in areas that are key for the Union's strategic autonomy and competitiveness such as energy, defence security and military mobility, climate, biodiversity and agriculture, healthcare, education and

reindustrialization in key technological sectors, based on economic growth and price stability and aiming for a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment;

5. Stresses that the Union budget as well as national fiscally responsible tax incentives should contribute to increasing the spending in research and development (R&D) as a key driver for innovation and economic growth by leveraging both private and public investment; stresses the importance of financing net zero technology innovation;
6. Calls for adequate resources to ensure that European companies and the Union are competitive internationally, and are able to attract productive investments and create quality employment, and to increase productivity in the context of growing international competition;
7. Emphasises the need for an appropriate revision of the current Multiannual Financial Framework in order to make it fit for the new circumstances that arose after its adoption in 2020, including by facilitating spending in strategic areas for the EU's competitiveness;
8. Stresses the importance of the additional new EU own resources to cover the costs of the repayment of NextGenerationEU, financing of the EU budget and of the green and digital transition; calls for a swift implementation of the Global Tax Deal; recalling that a share of the revenue generated under Pillar One is also included in the first basket of own resources; takes note of the Commission's willingness that a share of corporate income tax collected under BEFIT as well as a Financial Transaction Tax or Financial Activities Tax should form part of a second basket of new own resources while recognising that tax policy is a competence of Member States, whilst seeking at EU level a better coordination in the tax policies;
9. Recalls that good fiscal policy and administrative cooperation are essential to attract investment and favour the competitiveness of European companies, thus increasing public revenue and job opportunities; recognises the complex framework of administrative cooperation in the field of taxation and calls therefore for the sufficient funding of the Fiscalis programme; highlights that the Fiscalis programme is a crucial cooperation programme for Member States and their national tax authorities to pursue common goals regarding the fight against tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning;
10. Believes that the budget plays an important role in the completion of the Banking Union and the Capital Markets Union; recalls that the Union lags behind other jurisdictions regarding companies' access to financing;
11. Considers that the facilitation of SMEs' access to financing is a priority for the Union; understands that the EU funded programmes to support SMEs must be properly financed and should be financially reinforced;
12. Recalls that public investment should be a driver for further private investment for the creation of quality jobs, growth generation and competitiveness reinforcement; calls therefore for an increase of the InvestEU programme;
13. Calls for the budget to provide support to Ukraine for as long as Russia's war of

aggression continues, and to contribute to its reconstruction, including through the European Union Solidarity Fund and the Emergency Aid Reserve; highlights that the newly-proposed Ukraine Facility will contribute to the reconstruction, recovery and modernization of Ukraine as well as to the availability of funds for the integration of refugees; takes note that Ukraine has received grants as budget support and considers the advantage of grants in order not to further degrade the external and public debt of Ukraine; calls to maintain European citizens' support for the actions taken against Russia and for other actions needed in supporting Ukraine;

14. Reiterates that the budget should effectively support and complement the uptake of funds under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the success of which will depend on the swift implementation by Member States, strict compliance with the RRF Regulation and the monitoring and evaluation work of the European Commission; expresses concern about increasing financing costs of the RRF due to increasing interest costs; underlines the importance of systematic coherence, synergies and the added value of transnational and cross-border projects in the context of RRF and European Structural and Investment Funds;
15. Calls for adequate additional financial and human resources for the European Supervisory Agencies (ESAs), specifically for the European Banking Authority and the European Securities and Markets Authority, including for the upcoming Anti-Money-Laundering Authority (AMLA), in order to execute strictly those tasks assigned to them by the European Parliament and the Council, which have increased through the ESAs review and sectoral legislation; highlights that the speedy developments in the fields of sustainable finance, financial technology, anti-money laundering, cyber resilience and other areas entail increased competences and responsibilities for the ESAs and thus, calls for these to be matched with adequate staff and funding; calls also for adequate funding dedicated to the fight against tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning; considers the EU Tax Observatory a useful contribution to both democratic debate and informing decision makers and thus calls on the Commission to continue the support for the Observatory; stresses that all organisations receiving Union funding must behave in a politically neutral and unbiased way; notes that this also applies to organisations that are supposed to provide independent financial expertise as well as for organisations providing research in the area of taxation; calls for adequate funding for the Anti-Money-Laundering Authority (AMLA) to be able to perform its tasks competently; underlines the increasing need to strengthen the efficient functioning of the EU's Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) measures and the necessary contribution of AMLA as a direct supervisor as well as the focal point of an integrated system composed of the Authority itself and the national authorities with an AML/CFT supervisory mandate, aimed at ensuring compliance with AML/CFT-related obligations;
16. Notes that where the 'Do No Significant Harm' Principle is incorporated in Union activities, it should be respected in the budgetary implementation and necessary corrective measures to be taken if and when needed;
17. Stresses that cohesion policy and the Structural and Investment Funds have been a pillar of the European Union, as they have enabled the creation and development of business projects in regions with greater difficulties, as well as much-needed public investments

in these regions; calls on Member States to ensure an effective and timely absorption of cohesion policy funds, including through modernisation and adequate staffing of their administrations, so that such funds are used according to their policy purpose; calls for implementing existing programs in a coordinated, rapid, efficient and transparent manner to achieve the true recovery and cohesion of the European Union.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	30.8.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>+: 42</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>–: 6</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>0: 6</span> </div>
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Rasmus Andresen, Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Gunnar Beck, Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Gilles Boyer, Engin Eroglu, Markus Ferber, Jonás Fernández, Giuseppe Ferrandino, Claude Gruffat, José Gusmão, Enikő Győri, Eero Heinäluoma, Michiel Hoogeveen, Danuta Maria Hübner, Stasys Jakeliūnas, France Jamet, Billy Kelleher, Ondřej Kovařík, Philippe Lamberts, Aušra Maldeikienė, Costas Mavrides, Siegfried Mureşan, Caroline Nagtegaal, Luděk Niedermayer, Piernicola Pedicini, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Eva Maria Poptcheva, Evelyn Regner, Antonio Maria Rinaldi, Dorien Rookmaker, Alfred Sant, Ralf Seekatz, Pedro Silva Pereira, Irene Tinagli, Ernest Urtasun
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marc Angel, Esther de Lange, Nicolaus Fest, Valérie Hayer, Eugen Jurzyca, Andželika Anna Możdżanowska, Johan Nissinen, Tonino Picula, René Repasi, Andreas Schwab, Sven Simon
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Jens Geier, Colm Markey, Alessandro Panza, Tom Vandendriessche

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

42	+
PPE	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Isabel Benjumea Benjumea, Markus Ferber, Danuta Maria Hübner, Esther de Lange, Aušra Maldeikienė, Colm Markey, Siegfried Mureşan, Luděk Niedermayer, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Andreas Schwab, Ralf Seekatz, Sven Simon, Tom Vandenkendelaere
Renew	Gilles Boyer, Engin Eroglu, Giuseppe Ferrandino, Valérie Hayer, Billy Kelleher, Ondřej Kovařík, Caroline Nagtegaal, Eva Maria Poptcheva
S&D	Marc Angel, Jonás Fernández, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Jens Geier, Eero Heinäluoma, Costas Mavrides, Tonino Picula, Evelyn Regner, René Repasi, Alfred Sant, Pedro Silva Pereira, Irene Tinagli
Verts/ALE	Rasmus Andresen, Claude Gruffat, Stasys Jakeliūnas, Philippe Lamberts, Piernicola Pedicini, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Ernest Urtezar

6	-
ECR	Michiel Hoogeveen, Eugen Jurzyca, Johan Nissinen
ID	Gunnar Beck, Nicolaus Fest, France Jamet

6	0
ECR	Andżelika Anna Moździanowska, Dorien Rookmaker
ID	Alessandro Panza, Antonio Maria Rinaldi
NI	Enikő Győri
The Left	José Gusmão

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

19.7.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Committee on Budgets

on the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Dragoş Pîslaru

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR), proclaimed by the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission in November 2017, the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan of 4 March 2021 and the Porto Declaration of 8 May 2021 on social affairs adopted by the members of the European Council, should be taken into account,
- B. whereas Parliament already adopted a resolution on 15 December 2022 on upscaling the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework<sup>1</sup>,
  - 1. Calls for a strong budgetary response by the Union in 2024 to the social and economic difficulties faced by Europeans as a consequence of inflation and the cost of living crisis, in the context of the war of aggression against Ukraine and post-pandemic challenges; is concerned in particular that high energy, food and housing prices, and continued pressure on essential services and supply chains are exacerbating already existing social and economic inequalities, eroding the middle class, and worsening the living and working conditions and mental health of many workers and their families; recalls that a strong sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery requires full use of the EU budget's potential, in particular EU funding and financial instruments in the social and employment area; stresses the importance of ensuring streamlined administrative processes to facilitate access to Union funds to the benefit of people and businesses;
  - 2. Stresses that the Union budget should support policies and measures to facilitate access to and mobility within the labour market, to strengthen the competitiveness of European economies, create quality and sustainable employment, further develop resilient national social systems, while using resources and optimise those systems to make sure that they help eradicate poverty, promote inclusion policies and increase upward social convergence across the Union so that no one is left behind; notes in particular that

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2022)0450.

investment in lifelong learning, reskilling and upskilling is essential to address the green and digital transition; welcomes that the 2023 Porto Social Forum conclusions highlight in the context of the European Year of Skills – how robust policies on skills, education and training can create better employment, swifter integration in the labour market and foster social inclusion, and be a source of self-fulfilment and consequently boost the resilience and competitiveness of the EU's economy and society; insists on the importance of investing in social inclusion and measures for groups at greater risk of social deprivation and discrimination such as children, young people, LGBTIQ+ families or single parent families, persons with disabilities, older persons, and people with migrant background; recalls that the integration into the labour market of the most vulnerable groups, such as people in poverty, people with disabilities, young and elderly people, the unemployed, in particular the long-term unemployed, and in particular people displaced as a result of the war of aggression against Ukraine, is paramount;

3. Underlines that a skilled workforce that keeps up with the demands of a modern labour market is essential to stimulate economic growth, competitiveness and contributes to social prosperity; highlights in particular the importance of investing in skills in times of deep transformations in the labour market and the green and digital transitions; calls for financial and technical support to the creation of local strategies for skills and skills development hubs in cooperation with local employment agencies; highlights the key role that the Skills Academies set up under the Net Zero Industry Act Regulation will play in disseminating knowledge and skills on net-zero technologies that can enhance the Union's competitiveness and its global position in net-zero industries and calls for a budget of at least EUR 102 million for the set up and functioning of the Academies for the period 2024-2027 with an allocation of EUR 25.5 million for the year 2024;
4. Highlights the crucial role of Union funds and financial instruments, including the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and Repower EU to ensure an economically and socially sustainable, just, inclusive and non-discriminatory recovery; recalls that the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is the key driver for strengthening the social dimension of the Union in line with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights; also points out the importance of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF), the Just Transition Fund (JTF), ReactEU with its additional resources for ESF+, the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD);
5. Notes the Commission proposal to allocate EUR 16,8143 billion in commitments in 2024 to ESF+; recalls that ESF+ is the main instrument for investing in people and building social protection and that it must play a key role in supporting Member States to achieve social cohesion, high employment levels, adequate social protection and a skilled and resilient workforce ready for the transition to a green and digital economy; calls for a reinforcement of ESF+ so that it is sufficiently funded in light of the steep increase in the cost of living and its impacts on workers and their families;
6. Recalls the obligation for Member States with a rate of young people who are not in employment, education or training that is higher than the Union average to allocate at least 12,5 % of their ESF+ resources to implement the Youth Guarantee; recognises that, the unemployment rate for young people in the EU is on a decreasing trend, although this trend is unevenly shared across Member States and it still is much higher

compared to the unemployment rate of the general population; highlights, therefore, the need to continue to invest in the creation of quality jobs for young people and calls on the EU and all Member States to mobilise all available national and European funding to promote and provide decent working and quality training opportunities for young people; calls on Member States to make the best use of the Employment and Social Innovation strand (EaSI) of ESF+ for investment in social innovation and for stimulating labour mobility; expects that EaSi will reach its full working regime in 2024 now that its budgeting is back in line with programming;

7. Recalls that the European Child Guarantee has been in place for 2 years and that it is a crucial instrument in fighting the ever more increasing child poverty; notes that in a short time the Member States have already invested around EUR 9 billion in the Child Guarantee; reiterates its calls to urgently increase the funding of the European Child Guarantee and the need to create a dedicated budget of at least EUR 20 billion and insists on making this funding available as part of the revised MFF so that it can be already put in place in 2024; recalls also its position that all Member States should use at least 5 % of the ESF+ resources under share-management to targeted actions to combat child poverty and support the implementation of the Child Guarantee; calls on the European Commission and the Member States to make full use of existing funding possibilities under the EU budget, such as ESF+, ReactEU, RRF, to eradicate child poverty;
8. Highlights the demographic challenge in the Union resulting from an ageing population, a decrease in fertility and higher life expectancy; stresses the lack of European and national policy responses, to address the demographic challenge, covering areas such as adequate housing, sufficient quality care facilities and support services and insists on the need to invest in social infrastructures; underlines that the current economic uncertainties severely impact older people; stresses that the budget should underline the importance of safeguarding and promoting the well-being of older persons and their fundamental rights in the EU by introducing an “ageing-in-dignity” criteria and providing sufficient funding to support investment in and access to housing in order to tackle effectively the growing problems of a lack of affordable housing, poor housing conditions, housing exclusion and homelessness and to promote participation in society, access to culture and sport activities;
9. Reiterates that women are more widely affected by the current crises and war in Ukraine and are more at risk of suffering from employment and social fallout; calls for mainstreaming of a gender responsive budget to better align policies and activities that promote the equal participation of women in the labour market and that comprehensive systems be put in place to monitor and measure gender budget allocations, women’s participation in the labour market, access to employment, pay and pension gaps;
10. Stresses that the European Instrument for Temporary Support to Mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE) has proved to be successful in fighting unemployment as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic; further calls on the Commission to build on the SURE instrument to support national schemes to protect employment and preserve workers’ incomes that can be activated temporarily when a part of the EU experiences an economic shock; insists that all national and EU emergency measures, particularly those associated with employment protection and

income compensation continue and are refinanced as long as the socio-economic consequences of the war continue to have a negative impact on the labour market and until the economy fully recovers; asks the Commission to take into account the observations made by the European Court of Auditors as regards the implementation and the transparency of the SURE instrument;

11. Recalls that the JTF should provide support for territories and people facing serious socio-economic and employment challenges deriving from the transition process towards Union's 2030 targets and a climate neutral economy of the Union by 2050; takes note of the Commission appropriations in 2024 of EUR 1,486 billion; highlights its importance for addressing the social aspects of the transition, in particular creation of national social infrastructure and support to jobseekers, including up- and reskilling while ensuring a safety net for those left behind; highlights the need to establish a mechanism to monitor the implications of the Green transition on social coherence and regional cohesion to ensure fairness and identify the needs for adequate public support;
12. Recalls the target in the Porto Declaration of 7 May 2021 to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million by 2030, including at least 5 million children; considers that there is a need for higher ambition towards the actual eradication of poverty and social deprivation; takes note that, in 2024, EUR 4.8 billion of the ESF+ budget under shared management would be allocated on food aid and basic material assistance for the most deprived persons, thus going beyond the actual objective of 4% and highlighting the worrying increase in the number of deprived persons; calls on the Member States to ensure that low-income households are reached with measures that reduce their exposure to rising energy costs (insulation, solar panels); further encourages Member States to provide additional resources to support all households and businesses in their efforts to reduce energy consumption as part the green transition; stresses that homelessness is affecting many adults and children, and must be effectively prevented and addressed;
13. Regrets the further decrease in the allocation for the Budget line 07 20 04 06 (Specific competences in the area of social policy, including social dialogue); highlights that strong social dialogue is a key feature of the European social model; recalls the commitment of the Union to promote the role of social partners and to facilitate social dialogue, in line with Article 152 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union; stresses the necessity to ensure adequate support for social dialogue and to develop and improve the capacity of social partners and to increase the allocation for this budget line, also in consideration of inflation; recalls furthermore that it is key to guarantee adequate support for information and training measures for workers' organisations, taking also into account the impact of inflation on staff expenditure in the budgets of the trade union institutes; in this framework, calls for increases to be included in budget line 07 20 04 09 (Information and training measures for workers' organisations); Is concerned that real wages are currently falling due to inflation and a series of exceptional energy price shocks; considers that there is an urgent need for wage increases in order to sustain internal demand and inclusive growth, and to reduce the impact of the double crisis on workers and households; considers that additional efforts are required within the EU budget and the MFF to help social partners achieve wage increases through tripartite capacity building frameworks, thereby accelerating the expected positive impact of the proposed directive on adequate minimum wages and its

swift implementation;

14. Recalls the essential role of pilot projects (PPs) and preparatory actions (PAs) for testing new policy initiatives and collecting data in the fields of employment and social inclusion; calls on the Commission to evaluate PP/PA proposals impartially on the basis of a legal and financial assessment, in line with in the Interinstitutional agreement; further calls on the Commission to intensify the dialogue with the European Parliament on how innovative ideas could become eligible for new pilot projects and to provide detailed, clearer and more transparent feedback and explanations of its assessments, with concrete examples of the Union actions that are considered to ‘cover’ the proposals; also recalls that the implementation of an adopted PP/PA must remain faithful to the proposal;
15. Recalls that the agencies Eurofound, EU-OSHA, Cedefop, ETF and ELA play an important role in providing Union institutions and countries with specialised knowledge notably on employment and social issues and that they must receive the necessary financial and human resources to fulfil their evolving tasks; notes that the 2024 estimates for agencies are in line with the budget programming and that an additional amount ( EUR 650,000 in 2024) is planned for Eurofound for the second year in a row to help it cope with the sharp increase in the coefficient corrector in Ireland; reiterates its previous call<sup>2</sup> to support ELA’s call for transforming 15 seconded national experts posts into temporary agent posts and for two additional contractual agent posts - without budget impact, with a view to be able to attract and retain the necessary staff resources to fulfil its tasks and to bring the share of SNEs on ELA’s staff closer to the standard situation of other EU agencies; considers that the expertise of the decentralised agencies should be better used;
16. Recalls the importance of budgetary accountability and prioritisation, while stressing at the same time the importance of flexibility and sufficient resources to respond to major crises and their social and labour implications; repeats its concern that the current high inflation puts a great pressure on the MFF ceilings leaving no margins available to tackle the biggest challenges in the annual budgetary procedure and long-term EU goals; reiterates therefore its calls for an urgent, comprehensive and ambitious revision of the current MFF; believes that the Commission proposal in this regards falls short of the EU ambitions to tackle current and future social challenges; welcomes the commitment to invest in European sovereignty, however regrets the lack of ambition of the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) proposal and reiterates its call for a fully-fledged European Sovereignty Fund<sup>3</sup> to ensure the EU's strategic autonomy, including investment in human capital and skilled labour, promote inclusive access to quality jobs and address shortages of labour and skills critical to key economic and industrial sectors; stresses the importance of mobilising fresh money to prevent the ESF+ funding from being diverted of its specific objectives; underlines the need for a solid, sustainable plan to cover increased interest costs on debt repayments under the Next Generation EU; fully endorses further financial aid to Ukraine and welcomes the newly proposed Ukraine Facility;
17. Calls on the Commission to develop a proper strategy for the mainstreaming of social

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0191\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0191_EN.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0053\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0053_EN.pdf)

objectives in Union spending; considers that a social mainstreaming methodology in the Union budget would be necessary in order to ensure that all Union-funded policies are supportive of the 20 principles defined in the European Pillar of Social Rights, and that all Union spending contributes to European social objectives; insists that the rules governing the use of Union funds must ensure and enhance compliance with the highest social rights and democratic principles, be aligned with the EPSR, the SDGs and the fundamental rights of workers; calls for the provisions to allow public money only to those employers respecting workers' rights and applicable working conditions; calls for more effective social conditionalities in rules on public procurement and concessions and for them to be backed with effective sanctions; encourages the European Commission to consider the creation of a comprehensive data base, in addition and related to the Eurostat data, that would allow timely and reliable monitoring of the developments in employment, living conditions and industrial relations; considers that detecting social risks and taking into account the divergent employment effects and long-term unemployment across particular industries should be adequately addressed; calls on the Commission therefore to present a tracking methodology for expenditure on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the EU's social budget based on the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and a Social Scoreboard and well-being indicators to measure the overall impact of different funds, instruments and facilities financed under the MFF and NGEU<sup>4</sup>;

18. Considers the protection and promotion of the multilingualism principle to be crucial, as it promotes the quality of democratic participation and transparency; calls, in this regard, for an adequate increase in the funding of interpretation and translation services by the EU institutions, including Parliament and the Commission, and to ensure maximum internalisation of these services and ensuring the health and safety at work of the workers that provide them;
19. Calls for the 2024 EU budget to pay attention to the needs of, and relations with, islands, outermost regions and territories, rural or remote areas, less accessible peripheries, mountainous areas or areas lagging behind, as they are particularly affected by the social and economic consequences of the current crises and are more vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change;

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<sup>4</sup> EMPL position in the form of amendments on Guidelines for the 2024 Budget - Section III, 02-03-2023  
EMPL\_AD(2023)745178 PE745.178v01-00

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	18.7.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>34</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>3</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>4</div> </div>
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Marc Angel, Dominique Bilde, Gabriele Bischoff, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Milan Brglez, Sylvie Brunet, Jordi Cañas, David Casa, Ilan De Basso, Jarosław Duda, Cindy Franssen, Chiara Gemma, Elisabetta Gualmini, Agnes Jongerius, Irena Joveva, Katrin Langensiepen, Elena Lizzi, Sara Matthieu, Jörg Meuthen, Max Orville, Sandra Pereira, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Dragoș Pîslaru, Elżbieta Rafalska, Daniela Rondinelli, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner, Mounir Satouri, Romana Tomc, Nikolaj Villumsen, Maria Walsh, Stefania Zambelli, Tomáš Zdechovský
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Alex Agius Saliba, Carmen Avram, Gheorghe Falcă, Aurore Lalucq, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner, Ralf Seekatz
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Andrey Novakov, Helmut Scholz

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

34	+
PPE	David Casa, Jarosław Duda, Gheorghe Falcă, Cindy Franssen, Andrey Novakov, Ralf Seekatz, Romana Tomc, Maria Walsh, Tomáš Zdechovský
Renew	Sylvie Brunet, Jordi Cañas, Irena Joveva, Max Orville, Dragoș Pîslaru
S&D	Alex Agius Saliba, Marc Angel, Carmen Avram, Gabriele Bischoff, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Milan Brglez, Ilan De Basso, Elisabetta Gualmini, Agnes Jongerius, Aurore Lalucq, Carina Ohlsson, Evelyn Regner, Daniela Rondinelli
The Left	Sandra Pereira, Helmut Scholz, Nikolaj Villumsen
Verts/ALE	Katrin Langensiepen, Sara Matthieu, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Mounir Satouri

3	-
ECR	Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner
ID	Dominique Bilde
NI	Jörg Meuthen

4	0
ECR	Chiara Gemma, Elżbieta Rafalska
ID	Elena Lizzi, Stefania Zambelli

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

30.8.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Pascal Canfin

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines that the 2024 Union budget comes at a crucial time, both in terms of the delivery of strategic Union objectives, like the implementation of the European Green Deal and geopolitically, with the ongoing Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, and the end of the 9th European Parliament legislature and Commission term;
2. Stresses that despite being faced with the unprecedented circumstances of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters, the Union responded decisively and promptly, deploying the Union budget as one of the key tools;
3. Underlines that climate change and biodiversity loss are the largest compound threat to long-term Union security, including food security, and only reinforce inflationary pressures; stresses that accelerating the green transition will strengthen the Union's long-term strategic autonomy, economic security and resilience, and improve the well-being of its citizens;
4. Underscores the importance of integrating climate change adaptation in all relevant Union-funded policies and programs to enable rapid response to emergencies such as recent floods, fires, pandemics and other unforeseen events; emphasizes the continued importance of ensuring adequate funding of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in order for the Union to be able to respond to such emergencies; stresses the need for better climate disaster preparedness by building adaptive capacity, and putting in place climate adaptation measures at Union level, including a stress test of key infrastructures of European relevance against a scenario of 1,5 to 4°C global warming, to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate shocks; underlines the need to recognise the importance of Union programmes in providing investment and support to prevent health crises and strengthen the Union's resilience;

5. Recalls that the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) should contribute to the mainstreaming of biodiversity and climate action in Union policies, to facilitating just transition and financing pandemic recovery as well as to the modernisation and preparedness of health systems; calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure the full execution of the REPowerEU Plan to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy sources and technologies to speed up the green transition and ending dependency on Russian fossil fuels;
6. Highlights the need to ensure that the do-no-significant-harm principle is mainstreamed in all Union activities through the budgetary implementation according to the Commission proposal for amending the Financial Regulation in line with the Union's commitment to sustainable financing and the green transition;
7. Underlines the cross-border nature of environmental and climate challenges and the need for a coordinated approach; reminds of the imminent need to restore Ukraine's nature capital and underscores that the 2024 Union budget and the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is crucial to maintaining the Union's climate leadership and credibility with international partners;
8. Stresses that the 2024 Union budget should keep the green transition as one of its priorities and should be aligned with the Union's ambitions of making the Union climate neutral by 2050 at the latest, as well as the Union's international commitments, in particular the Paris Agreement and the Kunmin-Montreal Agreement, and significantly contribute to the implementation of the European Green Deal and the 8th Environmental Action Programme;
9. Reiterates its call for the phase-out of harmful subsidies and for coherence between all Union funds and programmes; insists that projects and programmes that are inconsistent with the objective of limiting global warming to under 1,5°C or with the objective of halting and reversing biodiversity loss should not be eligible for support under the Union budget;
10. Stresses the need for continuous efforts towards the achievement of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming targets laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 in the Union budget and the European Union Recovery Instrument expenditures and calls for increased efforts in the 2024 Union budget to achieve these levels of spending; deplores that the Commission has not yet published the methodology for ex-ante tagging expenditure contributing to halting and reversing biodiversity loss; underlines that further efforts must be made within the 2024 Union budget to ensure that biodiversity spending targets set for the years 2026 and 2027 are met; highlights that the biodiversity financing gap over the period from 2021 to 2030 is around EUR 18,69 billion per year<sup>1</sup> and should be remedied as soon as possible; calls on the Commission to carefully take into account the conclusions of Special Report 09/2022 of the European Court of Auditors on 'Climate spending in the 2014-2020 EU budget' as well as the performance audit from November 2022;
11. Takes note of the Commission estimates based on the ex-ante methodology that the total

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<sup>1</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/793eb6ec-dbd6-11ec-a534-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-258471562>

climate financing in the Union budget will reach EUR 58 134 million, representing a share of 31,9 %; looks forward to the Commission presenting in 2023 a methodology for tracking climate related expenditure which are effect-based (looking at CO2 impact) as a complement to the intention-based methodology (using Union climate coefficients); calls for further work to differentiate between climate mitigation and adaptation, as set out in the Interinstitutional Agreement;

12. Stresses the need to ensure consistency between climate and biodiversity funding and calls on the Commission to publish the amounts and shares of expenditure that will contribute to both targets per programme when presenting the draft budget;
13. Welcomes that the Commission has further developed a methodology to track gender equality-related spending in the 2021-2027 MFF, which looks at policy design and resource allocation and in particular the presentation of an ex-post gender impact assessment on a more granular level and reporting on volumes; calls on the Commission to assess holistically gender impact and facilitate that all the relevant data is available for the tracking;
14. Welcomes the agreements reached by the co-legislators on a significant portion of the files of the 'Fit for 55 package'; calls on the Commission and Member States to maintain and build on the momentum and achievements for the complete implementation of the package; welcomes the review of the Union pharmaceutical legislation; recalls that the Union needs to address medicine shortages and supply chain bottle necks; recalls that Union health systems are overburdened from the pandemic years; calls for increased public investment to address unmet medical needs in the Union and development of next generation antibiotics;
15. Underlines the importance of the continued support of the Union budget for the Union agencies whose role is increasing in these times of unprecedented circumstances; recalls that in order to properly comply with new actions foreseen under the adopted and upcoming proposals, the Union agencies under the remit of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (EEA , ECHA , EMA, ECDC and EFSA) must be adequately funded and staffed; stresses that the deterioration of the staff levels of the Union agencies could jeopardise, among others, the achievement of the European Green Deal or the successful management of public health risks and the creation of the European Health Union underpinned by the European Health Data Space;
16. Recalls the need to have an annual budget consistent with the implementation of the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy, of the Farm to Fork Strategy, of the Circular Economy Action Plan, of the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability and of a Zero-pollution Action Plan in the 2024 Union budget; in this line calls to increase the budgetary support for the new LIFE programme and the Just Transition Fund and all other programmes that support and protect nature conservation;
17. Stresses the importance of strengthening the sustainability and resilience of health systems whilst reducing disparities in equal and equitable access to health care and medication; stresses that health related expenditure should follow the 'One Health' and 'Health in all policies' approaches; recognises the importance of Union programmes, in providing investment and support to prevent cross border health crises and strengthen

the resilience of health care systems and infrastructure; stresses the necessity to continue the Union's fight against cancer aligned with the Beating Cancer Plan and by ensuring adequate funding, with a strong focus on actions delivering tangible results for citizens; calls for further action and funding to address issues related to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR);

18. Calls for increasing the level of support to the European Health Union in addition to the EU4Health programme in the 2024 Union budget; stresses that sufficient resources should be allocated for increasing investments in research and development in the area of health, inter alia, in improving pandemics preparedness and management; reiterates its concern and regrets that over 50 % of the EU4Health budget was allocated for operational expenditures of the Commission's European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (DG HERA) and stresses the importance of appropriate funding to be allocated to the activities as foreseen by the EU4Health Regulation; stresses the importance of an enhanced system of Union own resources to finance the Union's goals on health, the environment and the climate, and contribute to NextGeneration EU's debt recovery; welcomes the agreed related provisions concerning, inter alia, the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and calls on the Member States to adopt, as soon as possible, the new own resources package proposed by the Commission on 14 December 2021; calls for stronger linkage of the Union's own resources with environmental and climate policies in the upcoming second package;
19. Stresses the need to consider further support measures to strengthen the Union's strategic independence and reduce its dependence on third countries in relation to the production of critical medicines;
20. Emphasises that the Union budget is at the heart of the transition and is a key enabler of a greener, sustainable, more resilient, competitive and more socially inclusive Union where access to health care is equitable and universal.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	29.8.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 57 -: 5 0: 6
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Maria Arena, Traian Băsescu, Sergio Berlato, Alexander Bernhuber, Delara Burkhardt, Pascal Canfin, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Bas Eickhout, Cyrus Engerer, Agnès Evren, Hélène Fritzon, Malte Gallée, Gianna Gancia, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Anja Hazekamp, Martin Hojsik, Jan Huitema, Karin Karlsbro, Joanna Kopcińska, Peter Liese, Javi López, César Luena, Marina Mesure, Tilly Metz, Silvia Modig, Dolors Montserrat, Ville Niinistö, Nikos Papandreou, Jutta Paulus, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjärd, Erik Poulsen, Frédérique Ries, Sándor Rónai, Maria Veronica Rossi, Silvia Sardone, Christine Schneider, Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Maria Spyraiki, Nils Torvalds, Edina Tóth, Achille Variati, Petar Vitanov, Mick Wallace, Pernille Weiss, Michal Wiezik, Anna Zalewska
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Stefan Berger, Asger Christensen, Christophe Clergeau, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Nicolás González Casares, Max Orville, Massimiliano Salini, Christel Schaldemose, Susana Solís Pérez, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Sarah Wiener
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Pietro Bartolo, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Marie Dauchy, Daniel Freund, Marisa Matias, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Kathleen Van Brempt, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Lucia Vuolo

15.9.2023

## **LETTER OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY**

Mr Johan Van Overtveldt  
Chair  
Committee on Budgets  
BRUSSELS

Subject: Opinion in the form of a letter on the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024- all sections (2023/0264(BUD))

Dear Mr Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy has been asked to submit an opinion to your committee. At its meeting of 27 October 2022, the committee decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter. It considered the matter at its meeting of 23 May 2023 and adopted the opinion at the meeting of 19 September 2023.

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that the Union Budget for 2024 should align with the objectives of the European Green Deal, the Green Deal Industrial Plan, the EU climate neutrality targets and the Paris Agreement; believes that the EU budget should provide sufficient funding towards sustainable growth and contribute to adequate support for citizens and undertakings that have been most affected by multiple crises and their social and economic consequences; continue to address the consequences of Russia's war of aggression, by direct support for Ukraine and by strengthening the Union's open strategic autonomy, energy independence, digital transition, cyber security and defence capabilities.
2. Insists on the need to increase investments for EU industry. Emphasises that 2024 needs to be the year Europe starts to invest in its industrial competitiveness, acknowledging the importance of investing in businesses in order to promote sustainable growth and quality jobs.
3. Recalls the negative impacts of higher inflation on the EU budget, especially due to the higher amount of EURI payments, and the consequent inadequate amounts left in the Single Margin Instrument to deal with unforeseen expenditure, including any further EU response to developments in the ongoing war against Ukraine, as well as any new actions to reduce EU dependence in the energy, digital and industrial sectors; insists that EURI interest payments should never be at the detriment of appropriate funding for other EU programmes; stresses that to secure Europe a net-zero, prosperous and competitive future, the Union budget needs to prioritise research, innovation and industrial investments that contribute to

decarbonisation, increase resilience and competitiveness for all European industries.

4. Firmly believes that existing Union Programmes should get an increased budget to ensure that the objectives agreed upon in 2020 as well as new objectives added afterwards, particularly in the area of defence and industrial policy, can be achieved despite high inflation. Emphasises that at a minimum all available funding for Programmes should be used, including all available decommitments under Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

5. Insists on a timely adoption of the MFF revision in order to allow for enough time to agree on the budget for 2024, which is critical in view of the fact that NGEU can no longer be used to reinforce critical EU programmes (including Horizon Europe) as was the case in 2021-2023; stresses that re-allocating funding between existing financial programs is not a viable long term solution and believes an ambitious revision of the MFF would send a positive signal to EU citizens and businesses.

6. Welcomes the Commission's proposal for a Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) as the budgetary leg of the Union's industrial policy. Highlights that the amount requested by the Commission is a positive first approach but does not fulfil the promise of a European Sovereignty Fund; encourages the Commission to propose a new and dedicated mechanism in the next MFF. Deplores the fact that its funding mostly diverts resources from existing funds while not offering credible support for important initiatives such as the Net-Zero Industry Act or the Critical Raw Materials Act. Maintains that this severely undermines the added value of STEP as it removes funding of fundamental importance to the Union's industrial future and open strategic autonomy.

7. Stresses again the need to mobilise adequate funding for all new legislative proposals in support of the energy and environmental and the digital transitions; insists that initiatives like the European Chips Act, New European Bauhaus, Secure Connectivity, Hydrogen Bank and STEP should be allocated additional budget or should get completely new budget lines. Insists on contributing to adequate funding being available across the Union.

8. Recalls the importance of streamlining and fostering synergies between all EU funding schemes supporting European industry players and innovators; highlights the need to deliver clear and accessible information to potential applicants; asks to complement information with dedicated administrative support, in particular for SMEs.

9. Deplores the extensive cuts, amounting to 166 MEUR, to Horizon Europe proposed by the Council in its position on the 2024 budget, especially in view of the fact that NGEU commitments only run up until the end of 2023 and so cannot compensate for it; stresses that all programmes in the remit of ITRE critical for the green and digital transitions, as well as for the EU's open strategic autonomy, rely heavily on spurring innovation, which is achievable only through sustained long-term funding; reminds in this context that continuous shifting and repurposing of research funding and its redirection to new projects and policy priorities, urgent as they may be, compromises long term-objectives and targets of the EU, including in relation to climate and energy targets.

10. Reminds of the negative consequences of such a structural deficit of funds and ambition as evidenced by the fact that over 71% of projects evaluated as 'excellent' under Horizon Europe in the first two years of the programme could not be financed; deplores the resulting waste of talent; calls for an increased budget for Horizon Europe which would allow

each sub-programme to fund at least 50% of all “excellent” proposals.

11. Reminds in this context of the particular case of the planned reinforcement of the Commission’s communications budget with 240 MEUR for the period until the end of the current MFF. Deplores the fact that such an initiative is financed with transfers of funds away from key Union programmes, including Horizon Europe.

12. Stresses the importance of the transition towards a highly energy efficient and renewable based energy system through enhanced interconnectivity to reduce EU’s energy dependence, hence improving the stability and affordability of energy prices; and to significantly invest in energy saving and efficiency measures, in the ramp-up of domestic renewable energy capacities especially in Member States lagging behind, and in the decarbonisation of industrial processes in line with the EU sectoral integration strategy.

13. Reminds that investments in socio-economic recovery after the pandemic and in light of high inflation rates remains crucial; underlines the need to support the transition of industries and hard-to-abate sectors in order to achieve a competitive Union with a carbon neutral economy; reiterates the need of robust investments in infrastructure, strengthening electricity grids, connectivity and facilitating the delivery and storage of hydrogen. Supports a reinforced budget for relevant joint undertakings, such as clean hydrogen and key digital technologies, notably with regard to support for sectors and SMEs most hit by the pandemic and the impact of Russia’s war of aggression as well as activities contributing to climate neutrality.

14. Voices concern that, although the 2024 budget foresees dedicated new funding for the defence industry, the needs would be partly met by using 300 million euros from the Flexibility Instrument, generating uncertainty about sustainable defence funding in future. Expresses concerns that future EU budgets (2025-2027) may be enacted without an MFF revision and an EU ‘own resources’ decision, which highlights the necessity of successfully adopting the new own resources proposals made by the Commission.

15. Calls for appropriate funding in the implementation of Net-Zero Industry Academies and European Battery Alliance Academies; reminds of the importance of having a skilled workforce contributing to the green and digital transitions; insists on promoting training, up-skilling and re-skilling.

16. Highlights the importance of women’s participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, as well as in the deep tech innovation and venture capital sectors; calls for the promotion of gender equality in the implementation and monitoring of all programmes.

17. Calls for adequate funding and staffing for all agencies and Union bodies in the policy areas of industry, research and energy; calls for additional funds and staffing for the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) and 10 additional full-time equivalent posts and corresponding additional appropriations to the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA); deplores the cuts proposed by the Council to the budgets of ACER and the EU Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) in precisely the moment when they get new tasks related to newly adopted legislation;

Yours sincerely,



Cristian-Silviu Buşoi

Chair



Christian Ehler

Rapporteur

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

57	+
PPE	Traian Băsescu, Stefan Berger, Alexander Bernhuber, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Agnès Evren, Peter Liese, Dolors Montserrat, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjård, Massimiliano Salini, Christine Schneider, Maria Spyraiki, Lucia Vuolo, Pernille Weiss
Renew	Pascal Canfin, Asger Christensen, Martin Hojsík, Jan Huitema, Karin Karlsbro, Max Orville, Erik Poulsen, Frédérique Ries, Susana Solís Pérez, Nils Torvalds, Michal Wiezik
S&D	Maria Arena, Pietro Bartolo, Delara Burkhardt, Sara Cerdas, Mohammed Chahim, Christophe Clergeau, Cyrus Engerer, Hélène Fritz, Nicolás González Casares, Javi López, César Luena, Nikos Papandreou, Sándor Rónai, Christel Schaldemose, Kathleen Van Brempt, Achille Variati, Petar Vitanov
The Left	Anja Hazekamp, Marisa Matias, Marina Mesure, Silvia Modig, Mick Wallace
Verts/ALE	Bas Eickhout, Daniel Freund, Malte Gallée, Tilly Metz, Ville Niinistö, Jutta Paulus, Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Sarah Wiener

5	-
ECR	Sergio Berlato, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID	Marie Dauchy
NI	Ivan Vilibor Sinčić

6	0
ECR	Joanna Kopcińska, Anna Zalewska
ID	Gianna Gancia, Maria Veronica Rossi, Silvia Sardone
NI	Edina Tóth

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

19.7.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE INTERNAL MARKET AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

for the Committee on Budgets

on General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections (2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Andreas Schwab

### **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 into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in the budgetary procedure the IMCO Committee is responsible for heading one - single market, innovation and digital, including budget clusters 03 02 single market programme, 03 03 EU anti-fraud programme, and 03 05 cooperation in the field of customs;
2. Welcomes the higher amount contributed to the functioning of the internal market; highlights however the impact of the significant inflation rise in the EU last year; notes that due to the high inflation, the proposed budget represents a deduction compared to last year's one; emphasises the necessity to consider such inflation in the determination of the budget; calls for an adaption taking into account the average inflation rate in the EU in 2022; warns that high government spending could further increase inflation; stresses the need to identify and reduce funding for programs with low efficiency and the need to provide for sufficient resources to fund new priorities;
3. Notes that Russia's unjustified and illegal war against Ukraine continues to create problems in the internal market such as high inflation and distortions in supply chains and trade flows. Therefore calls for incentives to make the internal market more resilient, reduce its dependencies and diversify supply chains;
4. Calls for adequate and effective initiatives to restore, further deepen and complete the single market while supporting the transition towards a digital, sustainable social market economy, to promote the interest of European consumers by enhancing a consumer welfare, a high standard of protection, and to address unjustified and disproportionate barriers to the four freedoms making the single market stronger, and more resilient aiming at increasing EU trade flows and improving value chains, thus contributing to economic growth;
5. Reminds that volume of public investment recovered after the financial crisis, reaching a

comparable level to that of the United States; emphasizes that private investment in the Union lags significantly behind; calls for adequate structural policies at both the EU and Member States levels to improve their attractiveness as destinations for investment and talent, including by reducing red tape;<sup>1</sup>

6. Welcomes the positive reception of the Single Market and InvestEU Programmes; believes that those programmes will continue to help improving the functioning of the internal market and the competitiveness of SMEs and start-ups to generate Europe's growth in the globalised market; calls therefore on the Commission and Member States to maintain sufficient funding of the programmes, especially initiatives that supports the green transition and digitalisation, including the industrial sector, and to ensure their efficiency and monitoring at all levels; Believes that the expenditure from the 2024 budget should be done, taking into account the effectiveness of measures for the development of the internal market, social cohesion, the sustainability of SMEs and the elimination of disparities in the internal market;
7. Calls on Member States to implement national recovery and resilience plans to support the digital and sustainable transition; recalls the need for synergies between the single market and the Next Generation EU recovery instrument; Believes that the national recovery and resilience plans should take into account the changes in the Member States following the war in Ukraine and the successive crises;
8. Suggests the allocation of a specific budget for the creation of a program to inform consumers about their rights in the internal market;
9. Highlights, in particular, the great potential of the free movement of services, which is still underdeveloped, and calls for initiatives and actions to boost cross-border trade in services in full respect of the freedom to provide services and taking into account the right for Member States to regulate the services in the general public interest while respecting the criteria of non-discrimination, necessity and proportionality; calls on the Commission to swiftly investigate all cases of hampering the internal market rules, irrespective of the size of the Member State is;
10. Highlights that the Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act as well as the future legislation on Artificial Intelligence and the Data Act strengthen the digital economy, protect consumers online, ensure fairness and contestability in the digital market and established clear rules on how online platforms and gatekeepers operate; calls for sufficient funding of digital policies of the Union in order to strive for a leadership position of the Union in the global digital economy.
11. Welcomes the Commission's proposal on the establishment of the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority as well as the European Customs Data Hub; insists on the importance of further standardisation, digitalisation, and automatisisation of the custom systems; stresses that for the proper implementation of the Customs Single Window, sufficient resources should be available for national authorities of Member States; stresses that a lack of sufficient resources and staff of customs authorities could endanger the proper functioning of the internal market and the customs union;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oecdecoscope.blog/2022/05/17/how-can-europe-catch-up-on-its-digital-backlog/>

12. Notes that cross-border infrastructure is the backbone of the single market, helping goods, services, businesses and citizens to move freely across borders; stresses and welcomes that the reformed Connecting Europe Facility is an important instrument to invest and further promote pan-European transport infrastructure; Calls to properly address the interconnections between the different Member States and not to create isolated or poorly connected areas within the EU;
13. Calls on the Commission to allocate resources to ensure the access to internet and digitisation for all EU citizens, especially the elderly and those living in rural areas. Although much progress has been made, it is necessary to end the digital gap and ensure equality of conditions for all citizens;
14. Notes that the adoption of best practices in public procurement for EU-funded projects could help to avoid frequent errors and ensure proper implementation of investments;
15. Stresses that the budget should be transparent and understandable to the citizens of the Union and based on results with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of public institutions;
16. Underlines the importance of clear labelling to indicate publicly that a project had been funded or partly funded by the EU; reiterates that effective and sustainable spending and proper evaluation of results and impacts of funded projects creates savings that could finance further activities;
17. Urges the Commission and authorities managing EU funded projects to always assess the need for public funding in their project selection procedures in order to avoid crowding out private investments; reminds that such a cost-benefit analysis demonstrating a funding gap would help in assessing the need for EU funding in research projects, according to the Court of Auditors; regrets in this regard it is not already a standard procedure.
18. Asks the Commission to support the pilot projects and preparatory actions proposals within the IMCO Committee's remit, that help or improve the European single market and the transparency and information for European consumers on the products and services they receive.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	18.7.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 29 -: 9 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Andrus Ansip, Pablo Arias Echeverría, Alessandra Basso, Brando Benifei, Adam Bielan, Biljana Borzan, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Markus Buchheit, Anna Cavazzini, Deirdre Clune, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese, Sandro Gozi, Maria Grapini, Svenja Hahn, Krzysztof Hetman, Virginie Joron, Eugen Jurzyca, Kateřina Konečná, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Antonius Manders, Leszek Miller, Anne-Sophie Pelletier, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Ivan Štefanec, Róza Thun und Hohenstein, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Kim Van Sparrentak, Marion Walsmann
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marco Campomenosi, Claude Gruffat, Ivars Ijabs, Karen Melchior, Tsvetelina Penkova, Kosma Złotowski
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Paulo Rangel, Grzegorz Tobiszowski

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

29	+
ECR	Adam Bielan, Grzegorz Tobiszowski, Kosma Złotowski
ID	Alessandra Basso, Marco Campomenosi
PPE	Pablo Arias Echeverría, Deirdre Clune, Krzysztof Hetman, Antonius Manders, Paulo Rangel, Andreas Schwab, Ivan Štefanec, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Marion Walsmann
Renew	Andrus Ansip, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Sandro Gozi, Svenja Hahn, Ivars Ijabs, Karen Melchior, Róza Thun und Hohenstein
S&D	Brando Benifei, Biljana Borzan, Maria Grapini, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Leszek Miller, Tsvetelina Penkova, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose

9	-
ID	Markus Buchheit, Virginie Joron
The Left	Kateřina Konečná, Anne-Sophie Pelletier
Verts/ALE	Anna Cavazzini, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese, Claude Gruffat, Kim Van Sparrentak

1	0
ECR	Eugen Jurzyca

### Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

20.9.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 – all sections  
2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Ciarán Cuffe

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the transport sector is essential for the Union's economic and social development and cohesion and for ensuring mobility, accessibility and connectivity for all citizens and all regions, with particular attention to peripheral, rural, insular and outermost regions and other disadvantaged areas, which are dependent on air and maritime connections;
- B. whereas the transport must contribute significantly to efforts to reach Union-wide climate neutrality by 2050 and reduce external costs associated with transport including air and noise pollution; whereas to achieve this systematic change all transport modes need the right incentives to drive the transition in technologically neutral way;
- C. whereas air and waterborne transport will have greater decarbonisation challenges in the next decades; whereas due to current lack of market ready zero-emission technologies, long development and life cycles of aircraft and vessels, necessary investments in refuelling equipment and infrastructure are crucial, while taking into account international competition in these sectors;
- D. whereas mobility in Europe should be based on an affordable, smart, efficient and interconnected multimodal transport system for both passengers and freight, enhanced by an affordable high-speed rail network and infrastructure; recalls in this regard Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy;
- E. whereas transport is key for the just, digital and green transitions and, to avoiding anyone being left behind; whereas it is essential to ensure that transport is accessible and affordable for all European citizens and that their mobility as a vital tool for their economic and social life is not limited; whereas parts of the transport sector are experiencing labour shortages and in some cases working and safety conditions need to be improved;

- F. whereas digitalisation will become an indispensable driver for the modernisation of the entire system, making it seamless, more efficient and safe; whereas EU also needs to use digitalisation to further increase the levels of safety, security, reliability, and comfort, thereby maintaining the EU's leadership in transport equipment manufacturing and services and improving our global competitiveness through efficient and resilient logistics chains;
- G. whereas the transport sector is contributing around 5% to EU GDP and employing more than 10 million people in the Union; whereas the transport system is critical to the EU businesses and global supply chains;
- H. whereas transport and tourism sectors represent an important part of the EU's economy in terms of GDP and employment; and whereas the transport and tourism sectors and businesses were among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis and by the illegal and unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; whereas these sectors and businesses of the sector require a coordinated response at EU level, backed by adequate budgetary means;
- I. whereas, in the current economic context characterised by subdued economic growth, unprecedentedly high inflation levels and increasing interest rates, investments in transport infrastructure have become significantly more expensive;
- J. whereas transport still faces a wide range of financing challenges across the EU: underinvestment, lack of suitable financing solutions, ageing infrastructure, insufficiently developed and non-transparent pipelines of transport projects, continuous growth of urban populations, and regulatory and administrative barriers;
- K. whereas the Union transport sector needs to become independent from Russian fossil energy sources and avoid any future dependencies on single countries or world regions for critical energy, fuels or raw materials supply, including for the production of batteries for use in battery electric vehicles and power storage solutions;
- L. whereas the Commission further integrates Moldova and Ukraine into EU Single Market through the Connecting Europe Facility for infrastructure funding; whereas this agreement will enable Moldovan and Ukrainian project promoters to apply for EU funding for projects of common interest in the transport, energy and digital realms, improving the country's connectivity with its EU neighbours and will promote growth, jobs and competitiveness;
- M. whereas Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine highlights the fact that the EU transport network cannot be viewed in isolation; whereas transport, and the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes in particular have become the lifeline of Ukraine's economy, and they are currently the only option for Ukraine to export its non-agricultural goods to the rest of the world, and to import what it needs, such as fuel and humanitarian assistance;
- N. whereas tourism is an essential economic activity for the Union and contributes to the growth of many other sectors by more than 10% of the EU's GDP; whereas tourism accounts for more than 11% of the workforce and plays an important role in promoting employment and social well-being, especially in the EU regions dependent on tourism;

- O. whereas the Union's draft budget for 2024 shows that that the current Multiannual Financial Framework is unable to meet the needs of the Union, has not enough flexibility to face unexpected developments, it is not capable of properly financing all its subsequent priorities, especially the transport, travel and tourism sectors and does not compensate for high inflation levels and unfavourable financing conditions; whereas this opinion is intended to set out a number of priorities reflective of the limited margins of manoeuvre for financing from the Union's 2024 budget;
1. Calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure the required long-term funding of Union transport projects that provide mobility and interconnected, efficient and affordable transport for citizens and goods and to accelerate the green and digital transitions; strongly believes the Multiannual Financial Framework review must be ambitious enough to ensure that the Union's long-term transport policy goals and new priorities are not undermined by inadequate budgetary resources and inflation; and strongly regrets that this is not reflected in the Commission's communication on the MFF review;
  2. Recalls that cross-border infrastructure is the backbone of the Single Market, allowing goods, services, businesses and citizens to move freely across borders; reiterates the crucial role of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for the timely completion of the trans-European network for support under the Solidarity Lanes as well as for achieving stronger connectivity with our strategic partners in non-EU countries; strongly regrets the decrease in the CEF-transport budget commitments for 2024 compared to 2023; regrets the reallocation of funds from CEF to areas such as the Chips Act and the Commission's executive communication budget; highlights that any new European policy needs to come with a new allocated budget and not to reshuffle funds within the current MFF; remarks that the oversubscription of CEF funding, and the exhaustion of allocated funding justifies a frontloading of funding for CEF to avoid shortfalls; urges, therefore, a substantial and rapid increase of the CEF envelope to meet all existing and new policy goals;
  3. Criticises the lack of increase on the contribution from Connecting Europe Facility (Transport) for military mobility commitments, in light of the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine; believes that the envelope needs to be further reinforced to strengthen the Union's security and enhance EU military mobility, especially in the border-crossing points with Ukraine and Moldova; asks the Commission and the Member States to further explore and present solutions to increase the military mobility budget line;
  4. Welcomes the increase in the Cohesion Fund allocation to the CEF for transport in 2024 but remarks that inflationary pressures cancel out this small increase and thus calls for an additional increase;
  5. Welcomes the increase in the Climate, Energy and Mobility cluster under Horizon Europe but believes further increases are warranted; regrets the decreased budget for Clean Aviation Joint Undertaking; recalls the importance of ensuring that industrial alliances and the joint undertakings match their level of responsibility and that they are sufficiently funded;
  6. Stresses that the legislative tools adopted to develop and introduce sustainable fuels in the aviation and maritime sector are not matched by the appropriate financial support and

regrets, in this respect, the decreased budget for Clean Aviation Joint Undertaking;

7. Recalls the modal shift to rail targets set within the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy and stresses the importance of this being reflected in the budget; also highlights the need to prioritise investments in sustainable, interconnected, efficient, affordable and smart modes of transport and in the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure throughout the Union;
8. Welcomes the increase in the budget contributions to the Union transport agencies - European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) - but reiterates that the funding for these agencies should match their level of responsibility, such new tasks as the support to the uptake of sustainable aviation and maritime fuels, and the EU's transport policy objectives; remarks that funding for ERA should be increased to more closely match that of EMSA and EASA, especially for the completion and implementation of the TEN-T network, particularly with regard to cross-border interoperability, improving safety, increasing competitiveness and the deployment of the ERTMS;
9. Recalls that any new legislation applying to the transport sector, such as the European Green Deal and in particular the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, implies additional responsibilities for the Union transport agencies; reiterates that adequate financing of the those agencies is much more needed taking into account their work and contribution to the decarbonisation of the Union's transport industry;
10. Requests the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to pursue its efforts outside the EU, namely with the opening of new representation offices in so far partially uncovered regions such as Africa and the Gulf Region; welcomes the Agency's additional efforts in the research and innovation field by joining the Horizon Europe and participating to the governance of Clean Aviation and SESAR joint undertakings; urges the Agency to develop an appropriate Clearing House for SAF and an EU Certification scheme for fuel standards to promote the production of future energy sources for next generation of aircraft and existing fleets compliant with the highest level of environmental protection;
11. Regrets that yet again there is no proposal on tourism, in spite of the long-lasting and regular calls by the European Parliament; reiterates moreover its call for the creation of a European agency for tourism.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	19.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 36 -: 2 0: 3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Erik Bergkvist, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Paolo Borchia, Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Jakop G. Dalunde, Karima Delli, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Gheorghe Falcă, Carlo Fidanza, Isabel García Muñoz, Elsi Katainen, Kateřina Konečná, Peter Lundgren, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Rovana Plumb, Bergur Løkke Rasmussen, Dominique Riquet, Thomas Rudner, Massimiliano Salini, Achille Variati, Petar Vitanov, Lucia Vuolo, Roberts Zīle, Kosma Złotowski
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Pär Holmgren, Ljudmila Novak, Jutta Paulus, Andreas Schieder, Annalisa Tardino
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Matteo Adinolfi, Pietro Fiocchi, Niclas Herbst, Ondřej Kovařík, Francisco José Millán Mon, Dennis Radtke, Christian Sagartz, Petri Sarvamaa, Eugen Tomac

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

36	+
ECR	Carlo Fidanza, Pietro Fiocchi, Roberts Zīle, Kosma Złotowski
PPE	Karolin Braunsberger-Reinhold, Gheorghe Falcă, Niclas Herbst, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Francisco José Millán Mon, Ljudmila Novak, Dennis Radtke, Christian Sagartz, Massimiliano Salini, Petri Sarvamaa, Eugen Tomac, Lucia Vuolo
Renew	José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Elsi Katainen, Ondřej Kovařík, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Bergur Løkke Rasmussen, Dominique Riquet
S&D	Erik Bergkvist, Isabel García Muñoz, Rovana Plumb, Thomas Rudner, Andreas Schieder, Achille Variati, Petar Vitanov
Verts/ALE	Jakop G. Dalunde, Karima Delli, Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, Pär Holmgren, Jutta Paulus

2	-
ECR	Peter Lundgren
The Left	Kateřina Konečná

3	0
ID	Matteo Adinolfi, Paolo Borchia, Annalisa Tardino

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

20.9.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections (2023/0000(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Juozas Olekas

### **SUGGESTIONS**

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

1. Takes note of the EUR 53,76 billion in commitments and EUR 52,58 billion in payment for agriculture; nonetheless calls for an increase of the budget considering the challenges that the agri-food sector has faced in 2023 and that will have repercussions that need to continue to be efficiently tackled in 2024; stresses the need to further support farmers and producers, especially in the context of the challenges of climate change, the need to adapt to technological developments and market fluctuations in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, inflation and the energy crisis, which are having a marked impact on the internal market and in particular on the agri-food sector;
2. Believes that an increase in the budget is needed in order to safeguard food security in the context of extreme climate events, such as protracted droughts and a profoundly modified precipitation regime, and the disruptions determined by Ukrainian agricultural imports, whose state is characterised by increased volatility, as demonstrated by the recent suspension of the Black Sea Grain initiative; stresses that that budget must be expanded, but also topped up with new funds, which must accompany all new initiatives; highlights that generally the size of this budget is smaller compared to 2023 in relation to the GNI of the EU and even if the budget 2024 is EUR 2.7 billion more than the one agreed for 2023, the increase does not compensate for high inflation levels, which on the one hand resulted in a loss of the economic value of CAP subsidies, and on the other led to implementation difficulties of the Rural Development measures;
3. Recalls the Parliament resolution on “Upscaling the 2021-2027 MFF: a resilient EU budget fit for new challenges”; calls for an urgent revision of the EU long-term budget to respond more effectively to evolving needs, address funding gaps, increase flexibility and crisis responsiveness, and provide new funding for new political priorities, while maintaining that the repayment of recovery plan borrowing does not jeopardise EU

programmes; calls on the Commission to present a proposal for a new batch of new resources as soon as possible;

4. Regrets the significant cuts to important budget lines such as the school scheme (decrease by 12,2% compared to 2021) and the young farmers programme (16,9 % compared to 2021), and calls for a boosting of these programmes instead;
5. Highlights the essential role that agriculture plays in achieving the Union objectives of food security, sustainable growth, social inclusion, animal welfare, as well as adapting to and mitigating climate change, while helping to diversify agricultural production, preserve biodiversity and develop local economies, objectives compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals; therefore insists that there should be no cuts to the agricultural budget, especially given the fact that the agricultural sector is frequently affected by crises that require a budgetary response;
6. Notes that, in addition to the Common Agricultural Policy, cohesion policy funds are of great importance for the socio-economic development of rural areas; stresses that investments from this source boost the development of rural areas and contribute to raising the quality of life of inhabitants, support business and entrepreneurship, improve the situation on the labour market, and have the potential to stem the outflow of migration, especially of women and young people, from areas of low population density;
7. Stresses that the 2024 Union budget should be aligned with the Union's ambitions of making the Union climate neutral by 2050 at the latest, as well as the Union's international commitments in particular the Paris Agreement and the Kunmin-Montreal Agreement and significantly contribute to the implementation of the implementation of the European Green Deal;
8. Requests that, with a view to the revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework and the preparation of a multiannual financial framework for the next programming period, the Commission shall conduct an assessment of additional funds needed to support Member States in implementing nature restoration measures; furthermore calls on the Commission to identify, on the basis of this assessment, the existing potential solutions and to propose the setting up of a permanent and dedicated restoration fund;
9. Points out the negative cascade effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on global food security, food affordability, especially in those regions of the world highly dependent on staple food imports from Ukraine, on commodity prices and thus on production costs, on the smooth functioning of the entire agri-food sector, and the stability of EU agricultural markets, since Russia's war against Ukraine has seriously affected prices of resources necessary for agricultural production and increased speculation on the agricultural commodities markets; expresses its concern that this conflict has led, amongst other things, to the disruption of supply chains, the limitation of agricultural production and the heightening of vulnerability to food crises in the region; reiterates the need to urgently address these issues through increased EU support in order to ensure access to sufficient food of good quality on the EU market, and in particular in affected areas; draws attention to the urgent need to ensure the appropriate financial framework at EU level to help farmers, and especially small and medium-sized

farmers, to operate effectively, in particular to prevent any escalation of the food crisis and potential food security gaps; stresses the rapidly increasing importance of food and feed sovereignty;

10. Welcomes the fact that the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework prioritises assistance to Ukraine through the 'Ukraine Facility', with the aim of providing predictable financial support to Ukraine over the period 2024-2027; notes at the same time that uncontrolled inflows of agricultural products from Ukraine to the agricultural markets in EU Member States in the vicinity of the conflict have destabilised those countries' markets, especially in the cereals, oilseeds and soft fruit sectors; acknowledges the Commission's efforts to resolve the subsequent crisis and urges it to constantly monitor the situation in these markets so that, if necessary, the Commission would be ready to introduce new measures without undue delay;
11. Emphasises the importance of the crisis reserve to finance exceptional measures for climate events and market disturbances and the fact it has been repeatedly used to support farmers in the Member States, who are the most affected by market disturbances provoked by Russia's illegal war against Ukraine; stresses that the measures adopted so far in 2023 will be partially covered by the 2024 agricultural reserve and that further support may be needed as the Black Sea grain has not been renewed, which will put even higher pressure on riparian EU Member States agricultural markets and ports' infrastructure, calls in this regard on the Commission to urgently think of financial alternatives to the already utilised CAP's crisis reserve while ensuring that direct payments to farmers are not affected; recalls, however, that the crisis reserve only consists of about EUR 3 per hectare of the farmland in the EU;
12. Notes that part of the Ukrainian grain for export is remaining on the EU market, which leads to significant losses for farmers in some member states; calls on the Commission to increase the financial allocations for these countries in order to install additional storage capacity in ports and to support the local infrastructure, with view to ensuring the transit of Ukrainian grain to their final destination;
13. Draws attention to the need to ensure sufficiently broad margins below the ceilings to cope with unforeseen circumstances in the agri-food sector;
14. Underlines that inflation has been much higher than the 2 % deflator foreseen in the MFF, which will not compensate for the loss of value caused by inflation; this has affected consumers' purchasing capacity and has put additional pressure on producers imposing further strains on farmers' profitability, especially small-scale and young farmers, who are facing ever-increasing costs; draws attention to the need to take this reality into account in the design and implementation of the EU's financial and economic policies; highlights the fact that the CAP budget in the MFF 2021-27 is already lower than in the previous planning period and that the high inflation further depreciates the funding available to farmers particularly in the CAP Budget; underscores that the subventions granted through the CAP might become unattractive since the requirements for farmers increase in complexity while the financial benefits dwindle; highlights that the revision of the MFF should address all these shortcomings;
15. Underlines the need for a fair distribution of CAP support within and between Member

States and calls for additional support for farmers in the Member States with the lowest direct payments, through, inter alia, speeding up the process of flattening CAP support towards the EU average, in order to stabilise their income and strengthen their capacity to withstand inflationary pressures and increased input prices;

16. Calls for additional support for the Member States most affected by the impact of Russia's war against Ukraine; justifies these requests by the fact that the States in question are particularly vulnerable to economic fluctuations and need additional assistance to ensure the stability, resilience and sustainability of their agricultural sector; proposes concrete measures, such as increased funding for agricultural subsidies, facilitating access to credit and technical assistance to help farmers manage risks more effectively and avoid the danger of a relocation of agricultural activities from those countries to other countries inside or outside the EU;
17. Considers that the demographic challenge of ageing population is of particular concern in rural areas and calls the Commission and the Member States to ensure that generational renewal, as the key for social, economic and environmental sustainability of rural areas and EU food autonomy, the future of agriculture and the traditional family farming model, constitutes, among other things, a high priority in the future CAP programming period, stresses the need for targeted measures aimed at supporting start-ups by young farmers, easing their entry into farming and facilitating the takeover of farms by young people and by women as they play a fundamental role in maintaining the economic resilience of rural areas, and tackle the rural exodus; calls for more solid support and more incentives in that direction; calls especially for immediate actions to strengthen the support measures for young farmers and highlight the necessity to improve their access to land and credit; this support should include measures to facilitate transactions in the field of property rights, and in particular help for young people to obtain loans, rapid access to technical assistance and better training in preparation for the special challenges involved in farming; also stresses the importance of maintaining a continuous dialogue with young farmers in order to better understand their needs and expectations; calls to improve young farmers training schemes and encourages the Council and Commission to increase support for young farmers in the General Budget 2024;
18. Notes the growing need for highly qualified young professionals in the regions, and calls on Member States to take necessary measures, including financial incentives, to encourage young people to study agricultural professions, as well as to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from older people to the younger generation;
19. Welcomes that the Commission has further developed a methodology to track gender equality-related spending in the 2021-2027 MFF, which looks at policy design and resource allocation and in particular the presentation of an ex-post gender impact assessment on a more granular level and reporting on volumes; calls on the Commission to assess holistically gender impact and facilitate that all the relevant data is available for the tracking;
20. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to allocate budget resources to design and implement measures to fight gender gaps; notes the crucial need for providing women entrepreneurs in rural areas with an enabling environment, including legal and

political considerations, leading to greater access to information, knowledge and skills, as well as facilitating access to financial resources, leading to the creation of more jobs in rural areas;

21. Highlights the importance of redistributive income support mechanisms in supporting smaller and medium-sized farms and ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of Union funds, especially measures for young farmers engaged in agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and environment; emphasises that small and medium size farms play a crucial role in ensuring food security, creating and developing short supply chains, protecting the environment and supporting rural economies; stresses the need to ensure suitable financial support to help these farms become more resilient and to adapt to the use of new technologies in the agricultural sector so as to become more competitive on the national, European and international markets; calls to focus on projects that promote and enhance the safeguarding of existing jobs in the agriculture sector and the creation of quality jobs with adequate rights and stable and fair pay and decent working conditions, as well as effectively and decisively combating poverty and social exclusion in rural areas;
22. Stresses the need to provide funding to support the development of sustainable energy infrastructure in rural areas, for example through investment in biogas plants, which have the potential to reduce energy poverty, particularly in the least developed areas;
23. Stresses the importance of sufficient funding for research and innovation in the agri-food sector, especially for the development of sustainable farming practices and in particular through the Horizon Europe programme and the European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs), making sure that farmers are involved in this research; recalls the importance of ensuring that research results reach farm level in a timely manner, that farmers are properly trained to implement them and that these results are translated into accessible farm advisory services delivering updated and tailored information to farmers; draws attention to the importance of facilitating the transfer of knowledge to and between farmers, especially so as to foster sustainable development and competitiveness in agriculture; underlines the role of stronger agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (AKIS), as well as the Farm Sustainability Data Network (FSDN) to encourage innovation projects and to diffuse their use; calls on the Commission to provide sufficient financial support for further uptake of smart and innovate solutions in the agricultural sector given their potential environmental benefits and greater agricultural efficiency is required; considers that precision farming and the use of digitisation should be further analysed and promoted; stresses that a real investment shock will be an essential factor contributing to the European agricultural production model's eco-transition;
24. Highlights the need to fund partnerships between universities, research institutions and agricultural organisations in order to stimulate innovation and the development of new technologies and practices that improve the productivity, sustainability and resilience of the agri-food sector;
25. Recalls the importance of ensuring that research results reach farm level; stresses that obstacles such as lack of standardisation of data formats must be eliminated so that agricultural data can be used efficiently and to its full potential;

26. Welcomes the acceleration of the digital transformation in agriculture and rural areas, which is crucial for ensuring resilience and tackling the depopulation of these areas and to allow for more precise, efficient and sustainable agricultural systems in the EU with a higher environmental performance, as well as increase the attractiveness of employment in agriculture and rural communities for younger generations; stresses that digital transformation in rural areas needs more support; reminds that farmers should have access to digital solutions, technological advancements and developments in artificial intelligence. In this respect, sufficient financial support is key for ensuring a just digital transformation that prevents the exacerbation of disparities between regions; notes the continued importance of support for investments in modernisation and innovation if the agriculture sector is to contribute to meeting the targets of the European Green Deal, the Biodiversity strategy and Farm to Fork measures;
27. Emphasises the important role of agri-cooperatives, and calls on Member States to provide more support for the cooperative sector to develop incentive schemes for setting up new cooperatives, helping to boost the competitiveness of the agri-food sector and the economic and social development of rural areas while making sure that unnecessary administrative burden is mitigated; stresses that this collaboration can help cooperatives' members to adapt more easily to climate change, increase efficiency and diversify their production; highlights the fact that these organisations play a crucial role in improving economic efficiency and productivity, promoting innovation and improving living conditions in rural areas; also urges the adoption of measures to protect and enhance the rights and interests of members of agricultural cooperatives; such support could include educational programmes and training in modern management of cooperative enterprises and in financial and marketing principles, so as to increase the attractiveness of this form of farmer association at local level;
28. Highlights the central role played by Community Led Local Development initiatives in keeping and restoring living and thriving local rural economies, and the need to keep a sufficient level of funding for LEADER; Calls on the Member states to make full use of LEADER's capacities;
29. Recalls that implementation of common agricultural policy (CAP) strategic plans began in January 2023, putting in place CAP's new green architecture and taking an important step in the transition towards more sustainable food systems in the EU, among other things by introducing the need for farmers to allocate significant resources to meet environmental objectives, including through eco-schemes; emphasises the need for careful monitoring of the implementation of the national CAP strategic plans with regard to the administrative and bureaucratic burden they generate and their impact on the volume of EU agricultural production, the fluidity and resilience of food supply chains and food security; stresses that this monitoring should focus not only on compliance with EU regulations, but also on the concrete effects of these plans on farmers, especially small and medium-sized farms and young farmers; calls on the Commission to play an active role in this process and to work closely with the Member States to ensure that the CAP is implemented efficiently and correctly and that farmers are properly informed of the tools available to them through the CAP; encourages Member States to improve the quality of data and indicators reported to the Union in order to realize the full potential of the new performance-based CAP and accurately assess its impact.

30. Calls for a broader debate to be held on the future of agriculture in the EU, including on how the sector can be reformed to face future challenges such as demographic change, climate change and digitalisation;
31. Insists that any revenue to the Union budget deriving from any assigned revenues or repayments of irregularities from agriculture in previous years should remain under Heading 3;
32. Recalls that, according to the Court of Auditors' special report, climate spending in the 2014-2019 budget was not as high as reported, and that reliability issues could remain in the Commission's reporting for the 2021-2027 period, when the EU's new climate spending target will rise to 30%, calls on the Commission to report on the contribution made by climate spending to EU climate and energy objectives, focusing in particular on measuring the impact of the budget on mitigating climate change and review the methodology of climate mainstreaming accountability, to allow better decision-making to ensure a full transition to a sustainable agricultural sector;
33. Believes that the Union can make a vital contribution to the promotion of healthy eating habits, especially among children, and therefore considers it essential to make full use of the ceilings provided for in relation to the Union school schemes; therefore calls on the Member States to strengthen their national programmes to ensure full utilisation of the maximum available allocations by establishing less bureaucratic programmes;
34. Recalls the Court of Auditors' Special report on conflict of interest in EU cohesion and agricultural spending, calls on the Commission to take action to improve the prevention, detection and reporting of conflicts of interests, and to promote transparency;
35. Calls for the Commission to maintain an adequate level of funding in order to preserve the high sanitary and phytosanitary status in the EU, and rejects any decrease in co-financing rates for sanitary programmes and control of emerging diseases, which may jeopardise animal and plant health, and thus human health in the EU;
36. Points out the significant potential of results-based carbon farming for tackling climate change through carbon sequestration and the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems;
37. Emphasises the value that circular economy and the agricultural sectors that work according to its principles can bring in achieving the goals set in the European Green Deal, encourages pilot projects to improve knowledge and increase the understanding of possible benefits of circular economy principles for the European food system;
38. Reaffirms the significance of the Union's school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme to help children follow a healthy diet, with nutrition its primary focus; invites Member States to fully use their allocations of those schemes and prioritise sustainable, local, and high-quality production;
39. Stresses the importance of Solidarity Lanes in ensuring that Ukrainian grain can reach countries most in need, supporting Ukraine's economy and preventing a global food crisis, notices, however, the impact of the surge in traffic, and calls on the Commission to provide funding for strengthening and improving the relevant infrastructure.



## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	19.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>41</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>4</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>
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	<p>Mazaly Aguilar, Clara Aguilera, Attila Ara-Kovács, Carmen Avram, Adrian-Dragoș Benea, Benoît Biteau, Daniel Buda, Isabel Carvalhais, Asger Christensen, Angelo Ciocca, Dacian Cioloș, Ivan David, Paolo De Castro, Jérémy Decerle, Salvatore De Meo, Herbert Dorfmann, José Manuel Fernandes, Paola Ghidoni, Dino Giarrusso, Francisco Guerreiro, Martin Häusling, Martin Hlaváček, Krzysztof Jurgiel, Jarosław Kalinowski, Camilla Laureti, Gilles Lebreton, Norbert Lins, Marlene Mortler, Ulrike Müller, Maria Noichl, Juozas Olekas, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, Daniela Rondinelli, Bronis Ropė, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Anne Sander, Petri Sarvamaa, Simone Schmiedtbauer, Veronika Vrecionová, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez</p>
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	<p>Rosanna Conte, Peter Jahr, Petros Kokkalis, Tilly Metz, Michaela Šojdrová, Irène Tolleret, Emma Wiesner</p>

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

41	+
ECR	Mazaly Aguilar, Krzysztof Jurgiel, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Veronika Vrecionová
ID	Angelo Ciocca, Rosanna Conte, Paola Ghidoni, Gilles Lebreton
NI	Dino Giarrusso
PPE	Daniel Buda, Salvatore De Meo, Herbert Dorfmann, José Manuel Fernandes, Peter Jahr, Jarosław Kalinowski, Norbert Lins, Marlene Mortler, Anne Sander, Petri Sarvamaa, Simone Schmiedtbauer, Michaela Šojdřová, Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez
Renew	Dacian Cioloş, Jérémy Decerle, Martin Hlaváček, Ulrike Müller, Irène Tolleret, Asger Christensen
S&D	Clara Aguilera, Attila Ara-Kovács, Carmen Avram, Adrian-Dragoş Benea, Isabel Carvalhais, Paolo De Castro, Camilla Laureti, Maria Noichl, Juozas Olekas, Daniela Rondinelli
The Left	Petros Kokkalis, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
Verts/ALE	Bronis Ropė

4	-
Verts/ALE	Benoît Biteau, Francisco Guerreiro, Martin Häusling, Tilly Metz

2	0
ID	Ivan David
Renew	Emma Wiesner

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

19.7.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

for the Committee on Budgets

on General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections  
(2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Pierre Karleskind

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Fisheries calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls the economic, social and environmental aspects of fisheries, aquaculture and maritime affairs; stresses their vital role not only in ensuring food sovereignty and resilience of marine ecosystems and food systems but also in boosting the development of a sustainable blue economy that develops within ecological limits and in contributing to the development and revitalisation of coastal areas, especially in the outermost regions; takes the view that maintaining the competitive position of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors must go hand in hand with achieving the social, environmental and economic objectives set out in the common fisheries policy (CFP) as well as in the Green Deal and subsequent strategies;
2. Recalls the effects on the food supply chain, fuel costs and price volatility caused by Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, as well as its impacts on EU fishing activities and the livelihoods of fishers, especially in the Black Sea;
3. Stresses that Russia's military aggression has led to significant disruptions in trade flows and an increase in energy prices, which has hit small-scale fisheries particularly hard, requiring the use of European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) crisis measures to mitigate the effects of inflation for fishers, producers and consumers;
4. Calls on the Commission to promote synergies between Member States' services and local actors, including fishers, to properly tackle the challenges related to competition for maritime space with a view to ensuring the harmonious coexistence of different maritime activities, especially fishing activities;
5. Insists that special attention must be devoted to the fishing fleets in order to improve safety, on-board living conditions, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, including renewal of the fleet and with special attention to the small scale fishing fleet, while ensuring the social and economic resilience of the communities that depend on them; reiterates that this can contribute to making the fishery sector more attractive and

sustainable and must not be confused with fleet expansion or increased fishing capacity or ability to catch fish;

6. Urges the Commission to propose further actions to increase the global share of sustainable EU aquaculture production, which contributes to the supply of aquatic protein of high quality and with a low carbon footprint ; calls on the Member States and the Commission to make full use of the financial resources available for the EMFAF in order to sustainably boost the growth of this sector's share of global aquaculture production above its current 2 % by means of specific, acceptable and shared targets for 2030; urges Member States to earmark sufficient funding from the Recovery and Resilience Facility to support the innovation, sustainability and resilience, including against predators, of EU aquaculture sector, such as complimentary feed with a lower environmental and climate footprint and contributing to reduce the EU dependency on fish meal imports;
7. Recalls that, as a result of the Brexit, the EU fishing sector is still experiencing considerable economic disruptions; calls on the Commission, therefore, as a matter of priority, to secure commensurate compensation to offset the damage suffered by the sector and fishing communities; insists that Member States must ensure that such compensation reaches fishers as soon as possible;
8. Encourages Member States to monitor the implementation of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) and calls on the Commission to extend the deadline to fully cover the adjustment period until 30 of June of 2026, thereby allowing fishers, including small scale fishers, to fully benefit from its resources; insists that the BAR should also be used to help the wholesale and processing sectors, which have been badly affected by this crisis; stresses that the Brexit Adjustment Reserve should finance a range of measures to tackle the impacts of Brexit ranging from permanent cessation to investments in order to ensure the continuity of the fishing activities;
9. Insists on the need to improve scientific and technical knowledge in order to ensure the development and use of the most reliable research-based solutions; reiterates the importance of guaranteeing sufficient financial resources for Member States' and European scientific entities so that they can collect, manage, analyse, use and exchange fisheries sector data and invest in research on innovative, and more selective fishing techniques with technology-openness;
10. Draws attention to the international dimension of the CFP and its economic, social and environmental benefits; calls on the Commission to devote adequate resources to ocean governance; stresses the importance of international cooperation, transparency, traceability and a level playing field for delivering on the EU's commitments;
11. Pledges its support to the combat against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which aims in particular to eliminate illegally caught seafood from EU supply chains and to ensure a level playing field for European fishers; calls therefore for adequate and increased funding for the EU's policy to combat IUU fishing worldwide, including by strengthening checks on goods at the EU's borders or development aid and by furthering cooperation with national navies; notes that only 296 million euros of the envelope allocated to control have been used out of the 488 million foreseen by the

EMFF 2014-2020, meaning that around 40 percent of the envelope has not been used; therefore calls for full use of the budget allocated to fisheries control to implement the upcoming reform Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 on fisheries control agreed in trilogue;

12. Welcomes the Commission's communication entitled 'On the Energy Transition of the EU Fisheries and Aquaculture sector' (COM(2023)0100); calls on the Commission to adequately fund measures aiming to effectively make the EU fleet less dependent on fossil fuels and more fuel efficient; calls on the Commission, further, to fund research on adapting zero-emission propulsion systems, such as e-fuels, wind propulsion and batteries, for use on fishing vessels and with different gear types;
13. Stresses the importance of monitoring for securing the objectives of the CFP; underlines the role of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) in ensuring a level playing field for the EU fleet, and especially in discouraging and curbing IUU fishing in European waters and also at a global level, which requires more ambitious funding in the long term if the objectives of the CFP are to be achieved; calls on the Commission to beef up the tripartite working arrangement between the EFCA, the European Maritime Security Agency (EMSA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex);
14. Stresses that generational renewal, including diversifying the profession, is one of the European fishing sector's priorities; invites Member States to draw on the EMFAF to finance programmes specifically designed to help young people to take up careers in fisheries and the wider sustainable blue economy sector, to make the sector more diverse and to encourage people from underrepresented groups, particularly women, to join the sector; calls, in this regard, on the Commission to support the mobilisation of budgetary resources to adapt and improve the working conditions on board fishing vessels and to implement projects to support the creation of an association of young European fishers;
15. Reiterates the need to provide substantial support for disadvantaged coastal areas and European outermost regions. Calls for the European Commission to allow financial support for fleet renewal in the European outermost regions by ending the ban on State aid for vessel replacements. Recalls that, contrary to the provisions of the EMFAF, this objective has not received any European funding in any region.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	18.7.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>20</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>3</div> </div>
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Clara Aguilera, François-Xavier Bellamy, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Isabel Carvalhais, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Asger Christensen, Rosanna Conte, Rosa D'Amato, Niclas Herbst, Ladislav Ilčić, France Jamet, Predrag Fred Matić, Francisco José Millán Mon, Ana Miranda, Caroline Roose, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Marc Tarabella
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Ska Keller, Gabriel Mato, Stéphanie Yon-Courtin
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Elsi Katainen, Margarida Marques

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

20	+
ECR	Ladislav Ilčić, Bert-Jan Ruissen
ID	Rosanna Conte, France Jamet
NI	Marc Tarabella
PPE	François-Xavier Bellamy, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Niclas Herbst, Gabriel Mato, Francisco José Millán Mon, Annie Schreijer-Pierik
Renew	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Asger Christensen, Elsi Katainen, Stéphanie Yon-Courtin
S&D	Clara Aguilera, Isabel Carvalhais, Margarida Marques, Predrag Fred Matić
Verts/ALE	Ana Miranda

0	-

3	0
Verts/ALE	Rosa D'Amato, Ska Keller, Caroline Roose

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

19.9.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 – all sections

(COM((2023)0300) – C9-0336/2023 – 2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Morten Løkkegaard

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Calls for significant increases for important EU programmes focussing on European citizens, including the European youth, culture, free press and education, namely Erasmus+ and Creative Europe; reiterates its call to ensure sufficient resources for youth policies and for the continuation of the legacy of the European Year of Youth to result in tangible outcomes for the young;
2. Calls for a significant increase of EUR 60 million for the Erasmus+ Programme;
3. Underlines the importance of Erasmus+, as the most successful EU flagship programme, to strengthen European identities and promote European values through education and learning in different Member States;
4. Stresses that some learners, particularly youths from disadvantaged backgrounds face significant financial obstacles and other difficulties, which may also affect teachers and educational staff, this causes the programme to remain inaccessible to a high number of people;
5. Highlights the role of the DiscoverEU initiative as a tool to bring young people closer to the EU;
6. Underlines the role of Erasmus+ in encouraging young people to participate in Europe's democratic life;
7. Highlights that the Programme should also continue to support Ukrainian students in the light of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine by supporting learners, teachers, schools, education and training systems, youth organisations and NGOs;
8. Believes that a budgetary increase will help ensure future inclusion measures and the

continued greening and digitalisation of the Erasmus+ Programme;

9. Highlights the importance of additional funds to support the achievement of the European Education Area;
10. Highlights the potential of European University networks, in particular for further research cooperation and the gathering of educational resources;
11. Emphasises the need to support sport under Erasmus+ to promote its role in improving health and social inclusion while also fighting discrimination;
12. Highlights Esport and the significant potential in the gamification of educational material which, among other things, can help disadvantaged people learn and study better, including key European values; Furthermore underlines that new technologies require the development of new skills essential for the future of the labour market;
13. Highlights that Creative Europe, as the only EU Programme directly supporting the cultural and creative sector and industries, needs a significant reinforcement of all its strands to fulfil its goals in 2024, including ensuring the sector's full recovery after the pandemic and its resilience against the currently high inflation, which also undermines European citizen's purchasing power; besides, the increase in funding is needed to further implement cross-cutting actions linked to improving the overall inclusiveness of the programme and the green and digital transitions;
14. Highlights the need to support the cultural and creative sectors and industries, journalists and media professionals and the educational sector to manage multiple crises, including the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, continued high inflation and particularly high energy prices;
15. Reiterates the need to support editorial and news media to help counter the constant and intensifying information warfare, which is threatening the public debate in European democracies and their elections, including the elections of the European Parliament in 2024; therefore, insists that the Cross-Sectoral strand under Creative Europe should be reinforced with an additional EUR 15 million;  
  
Recalls furthermore, the need to increase support for the cultural and creative sectors and industries to align the programme with the objectives of the 2018 New European Agenda for Culture, and the priorities and corresponding actions of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026; therefore, the cultural strand under Creative Europe should be reinforced with an additional EUR 15 million; additionally, underlines the need to strengthen the media strand with an additional EUR 13 million to support the audio-visual sector;
16. Calls for an increase of the very limited budget for the European Solidarity Corps to be able to accommodate the increasing interest in the programme and to allow it to address unexpected challenges and to support young people engaged in civic engagement, mobility and solidarity actions; emphasises the need to strengthen the humanitarian strand to improve the programme's efforts related to the consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;

17. Recalls the importance of the citizens' engagement strand in Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV), in particular as regards town twinning and remembrance activities, and the essential role of Civil Society Organisations in related projects and activities; expresses its continuous support for the programme and specifically the citizens' engagement strand;
18. Welcomes the development of the New European Bauhaus(NEB) initiative; reminds that financing of NEB should not come at the expense of already existing programmes in the field of culture and education like Creative Europe, Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps; considers the deployment of existing funds insufficient to achieve the objectives of the initiative; reiterates its call for the Commission to ensure sufficient funding for the initiative in the 2024 budget and to consider establishing a separate budget as a part of the revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF);
19. Asks the Commission, in view of the next MFF, to consider establishing a permanent Union news media fund to contribute to the digital development of media, safeguard the independence of European journalists and journalism and guarantee freedom of the press;
20. Asks the Commission, in view of the next MFF, to propose sufficient funding for the European Education Area (EEA) and to reflect on a more appropriate budgetary structure to cover the EAA related actions; asks that this includes the financial contributions from the EU to the European School System (ESS) in future EU budgets, in order to increase transparency, ensure strategic planning and facilitate parliamentary scrutiny under the discharge procedure, and requests that the ESS be included in the further development of the EEA to become a 'laboratory' and source of experience for pedagogical innovation and the exchange of best practices for the benefit of all European students;
21. Asks the Commission, in view of the next MFF, to propose increased funding for the European Capitals of Culture, as they represent a great added value for European society, and the "Melina Mercouri Prize" as the only direct EU funding opportunity for European Capitals of Culture has been endowed with only 1.5 million euros for years.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	19.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 21 -: 3 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Asim Ademov, Andrea Bocskor, Ilana Cicurel, Laurence Farreng, Tomasz Frankowski, Catherine Griset, Hannes Heide, Petra Kammerevert, Niyazi Kizilyürek, Predrag Fred Matić, Niklas Nienass, Peter Pollák, Diana Riba i Giner, Marcos Ros Sempere, Massimiliano Smeriglio, Sabine Verheyen, Theodoros Zagorakis, Milan Zver
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	David Cormand, Morten Løkkegaard, Rob Rooken, Domènec Ruiz Devesa
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Angel Dzhambazki, Mónica Silvana González, Ivan Štefanec

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

21	+
PPE	Asim Ademov, Tomasz Frankowski, Peter Pollák, Ivan Štefanec, Sabine Verheyen, Theodoros Zagorakis, Milan Zver
Renew	Ilana Cicurel, Laurence Farreng, Morten Løkkegaard
S&D	Mónica Silvana González, Hannes Heide, Petra Kammerevert, Predrag Fred Matić, Marcos Ros Sempere, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Massimiliano Smeriglio
The Left	Niyazi Kizilyürek
Verts/ALE	David Cormand, Niklas Nienass, Diana Riba i Giner

3	-
ECR	Rob Rooken
ID	Catherine Griset
NI	Andrea Bocskor

1	0
ECR	Angel Dzhambazki

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

22.9.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections (2023/0264(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Salvatore De Meo

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. Whereas 2024 will be the year of European elections;
1. Welcomes the proposed increase of 68 % in commitment appropriations and 147 % in payment appropriations for the ‘Citizens engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union’, as compared to the 2023 budget, as it finances programs and initiatives like Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) and the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI), that contribute to enhancing the overall civic participation in Union politics and the exercise of the rights deriving from Union citizenship; asks to increase funds to enable a deeper involvement of the youth concerning the Union’s democratic values and policies;
  2. Notes the increase in funding for ‘Commission Representations’ by 0,9% in commitment and 1,6% in payment appropriations and regards that increase insufficient, especially since 2024 is the European election year; proposes a 20% increase of the commitment and payments appropriations as compared to the 2023 levels; deems this increase necessary for the purpose of encouraging proactive dialogues on EU matters with citizens across the Union ahead of European Parliament elections, and developing communication activities to fight disinformation;
  3. Regards as insufficient the 0,9 % and 1,7 % increase in the commitment and payments appropriations respectively for ‘Communication services for citizens’ compared to the 2023 budget; proposes a 15 % increase of the commitment appropriations as compared to the 2023 budget in view of intensified communication activities related to the European elections information campaign; underlines that adequate financial means must be made available to enable and further develop the participation of citizens in both the strategic and day-to-day decision-making of the Union, including through dedicated funds for an online one-stop-shop for all the existing participation instruments as well as an EU Citizens' Agora; recalls that communication activities should have

content available in all EU languages, as well as considering the use of native languages for EU citizens living in other member states; stresses that local authorities, smaller NGOs and other relevant stakeholders should be involved in the communication activities;

4. Highlights the need to increase the resources of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in view of the enlargement of its tasks as foreseen by the recently revised mandate based on the Council Regulation (EU) 2022/555 of 5 April 2022;
5. Considers that adequate resources should be devoted to strengthening the transparency and integrity of all EU institutions and agencies, especially, by increasing budgetary appropriations of the Joint Transparency Register, and by securing sufficient resources for the proper establishment and full functioning of the Interinstitutional ethics body;
6. Strongly emphasises the need for further investment and resources dedicated towards increasing citizen's understanding and role in EU democracy, including through education and the involvement of local communities, schools or universities, particularly in light of the findings and results of the Conference on the Future of Europe; Asks to foresee the adequate funding for a Convention for the revision of the Treaties, which will provide a follow up to the Conference's conclusions;
7. Demands a 20 % increase in the resources devoted to Union citizenship, which have remained static despite repeated demands for policymaking and regulatory interventions, and a foreseeable need for further increases, including as a result of new Member States and treaty reforms. This is especially the case if calls for the creation of an EU citizenship statute are to be met. This initiative requires widespread public consultation and expert input ahead of the European elections. The process should be dynamic, linked to the European dimension of citizenship education and an expansion of citizenship-specific rights;
8. Calls for specific resources for increased and strengthened projects of interaction between the institutions and national and regional institutions, in order to enhance national participation at Union level;
9. Urges the Committee on Budgets to incorporate the above mentioned budget lines augmentations in its position, as they serve the purpose of delivering concrete results and quality communication to citizens.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	20.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 21 - : 3 0 : 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Ana Collado Jiménez, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Salvatore De Meo, Daniel Freund, Charles Goerens, Sandro Gozi, Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Jaak Madison, Victor Negrescu, Max Orville, Paulo Rangel, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Helmut Scholz, Pedro Silva Pereira, Loránt Vincze, Rainer Wieland
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	François Alfonsi, Vladimír Bilčík, Mercedes Bresso, Pascal Durand, Alin Mituța
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Sara Skyttedal

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

21	+
PPE	Vladimír Bilčík, Ana Collado Jiménez, Salvatore De Meo, Paulo Rangel, Sara Skyttedal, Loránt Vincze, Rainer Wieland
Renew	Charles Goerens, Sandro Gozi, Alin Mituța, Max Orville
S&D	Mercedes Bresso, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Pascal Durand, Victor Negrescu, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, Pedro Silva Pereira
The Left	Helmut Scholz
Verts/ALE	François Alfonsi, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Daniel Freund

3	-
ECR	Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski
ID	Jaak Madison

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

20.9.2023

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**

for the Committee on Budgets

on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024 - all sections (2023/0000(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Robert Biedroń

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Commission on Budgets 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 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', thus establishing the principle of gender mainstreaming, which stipulates that the gender equality perspective must be integrated across all policies and programmes, including all levels of the budgetary process;
- B. whereas budgets are never gender neutral and therefore need to be established with the clear objective of anti-discrimination and the goal of reaching everyone and their specific needs; whereas Parliament has repeatedly called for sufficient funding for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Daphne Strand and Equality and Rights Strand of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme, which is urgently needed to combat gender-based violence and ensure gender equality across the Union;
- C. whereas the Commission has further developed a methodology to track gender equality-related spending in the 2021-2027 MFF, which focuses on policy design and resource allocation and in particular the presentation of an ex-post gender impact assessment on a more granular level and reporting on expenditure;
- D. whereas, even taking into account the balance of personal, family and professional life, the Union budget should include an increase in investment in high-quality public care services, including public networks of nurseries and crèches and public services of free time activities for children and a public health care network, as well as the defence of public, accessible and quality health systems and a public social security system, ensuring their universality;
- E. whereas it is important to focus on enhancing women's potential in all sectors of the

economy, including the digitalised economy, information and communication technologies (ICT) and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM);

- F. whereas the non-compliance with the rule of law in Poland has had an adverse impact on women, girls and LGBTI individuals;
  - G. whereas the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is under greater and unsustainable strain due to an increased workload and requests for research, in particular in the context of the backlash against women's rights and gender equality across the Union and the situation of women fleeing Ukraine; whereas EIGE has repeatedly called for eight contract agents with the established general cost to the budget of exactly EUR 327 500; whereas increasing the staff of EIGE would prevent downscaling of its critical activities and the refusal of requests coming from the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies for technical assistance on gender mainstreaming due to insufficient human resources;
  - H. whereas there is a worrying and increasing backlash against gender equality, women's rights and the LGBTIQ+ community, including the proliferation of rampant transphobia; whereas economic precarity can contribute to the rise of gender based violence in all its forms; whereas there is a need to increase public, financial and human resources to intervene among groups at risk of poverty and to address situations posing particular risks for women, LGBTIQ+ people children and young people, the elderly, or persons with disabilities, as well as those experiencing homelessness;
  - I. whereas sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are human rights, protected under international and European law; whereas Parliament in its resolution of 7 July 2022 called for the right to safe and legal abortion to be included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; whereas abortion must be a voluntary decision at the request of women, freely taken, in line with medical standards based on World Health Organisation guidelines; whereas access to free safe and legal abortion services must be guaranteed;
- 1. Underlines that a gender perspective should be fully integrated at all levels of the budgetary process; calls for mandatory implementation of gender budgeting and the inclusion of gender related objectives in all Union programmes as well as for identification of relevant budget lines, effective monitoring of the Union budget's contribution to gender equality and a gender-sensitive review of all programmes and spending in order to make necessary adjustments in the following MFF period; reiterates its calls for the need to accelerate progress in gender equality, including through the promotion of budgets and funds that advance gender equality, as well as for greater investment in gender statistics; underlines that this is crucial for the Union that is facing crises and conflict and backlashes against women's rights and gender equality;
  - 2. Recommends that funds, in particular, be increased to enable the protection of motherhood, parenthood and early childhood through appropriate programmes; calls, therefore, for maternal and child health to be given particular importance in the 2024 Union budget; further recommends that funds be secured for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding and breastfeeding, thus contributing to the achievement of the World Health Organisation's objective of ensuring that, by 2025, the global rate of

exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of the baby's life is at least 50 %, which requires, among other measures, the adequacy of the duration and remuneration of maternity and paternity leave;

3. Calls on the Commission to ensure that there are enough budgetary allocations to ensure that official communication of the Union and Member States is gender inclusive and, where possible, also in braille;
4. Calls on the Commission to increase budget allocation to civil society organisations that promote women's rights, gender equality, LGBTIQ+ rights, and social justice in Europe and beyond, including in conflicts such as Ukraine; 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 tenders and other financial support to such intermediaries; stresses that sexual and reproductive health and rights are fundamental rights and highlights the continued importance to fund organisations working in the field, such as those that facilitate cross-border cooperation between organisations providing safe and legal abortions; calls for budgetary allocations under EU4Health programme for the research into gender specific conditions such as endometriosis and fibroids with an intersectional perspective, along with the provision of cross-border services to ensure the provision of safe and legal abortion to all citizens;
5. Repeats its concern at the correlation between the attacks on the rule of law and the backlash on gender equality and women's and LGBTIQ+ rights; 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 Union funds; 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 human rights, particularly women's rights and gender equality; therefore calls on the Commission to freeze all funds to Poland until the Polish authorities comply with the rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union;
6. Calls on the Member States to safeguard sexual and reproductive health and rights and reiterates the need for the Union budget to play a more active role, inter alia, by ensuring the existence and awareness of reproductive health programmes and services, including by guaranteeing free access to contraceptive methods, thereby safeguarding the fundamental right to health and ensuring essential care and medicines for voluntary family planning, specifically covering, inter alia, the issues of reproduction, preparation for childbirth maternal and neonatal health and fertility treatments;
7. Reiterates the need for the Union budget to play a more active role in pursuing the UN Sustainable Development Goals; calls, therefore, for it to support measures and projects aimed at eradicating female and child poverty, promoting greater and better integration into the labour market, eliminating labour and wage inequalities between men and women, improving access to and delivery of healthcare, and combating violence against women, children and young people;
8. Recalls the important role played by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in understanding and addressing the extent and causes of gender inequality in the

Union, especially in the context of the backlash against women's rights and conflict related, economic and health crises; recalls that EIGE has experienced persistent issues with understaffing, which were further aggravated through the sharp increase in requests for technical assistance as a result of the prioritisation of gender mainstreaming in all Union policies and initiatives in the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025; calls on the Commission to allocate the sum of EUR 327 500 as a minimum to EIGE to ensure that EIGE can employ the eight contract agents that it needs to fulfil its mandate, meaning that additional funding as well as additional staff is needed to enhance its research capabilities, expand its data collection and analysis activities, and support the development of innovative tools and methodologies to effectively address gender inequalities in the Union and ensure that the current staff have an adequate work-life balance; underscores that EIGE's request for contract agents is based on budgetary appropriations and only will secure the minimal levels necessary to enable it to execute its mandate and to respond to the needs of its stakeholders;

9. Recalls that one in three women in the Union has been affected by gender-based violence, at an estimated economic cost of EUR 290 billion per year<sup>1</sup>; calls for additional ongoing funding of the Equality and Rights Strand of the CERV programme and the Daphne programme to combat all forms of gender based violence in the Union, including in the framework of the effective implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence and sexual abuse against women, girls and other forms of domestic violence (Am 53); Underlines the requirement to allocate at least 40 % of the funds dedicated to the Equality, Rights and Gender Equality strand and to the Daphne strand of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme to activities to prevent and combat at all levels all forms of gender-based violence, and at least 15 % to activities promoting women's full enjoyment of rights, gender equality, including work-life balance, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming;
10. Laments the scourge of gender based violence that is pervasive not only in the Union, but throughout the world; highlights that women in armed conflicts suffer disproportionate consequences, including conflict based gender-based violence, sexual violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation; calls on the Commission to increase budget allocation to civil society organisations that promote women's rights in Europe and beyond, including organisations dealing with combatting gender based violence, including women's rights organisations, LGBTIQ+ organisations and organisations providing services and support for victims of conflict gender based violence; calls on the Commission to increase budget allocations to the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument specifically to fund civil society organisations working on the prevention of gender based violence in conflict and providing support to survivors, including actions and organisations preventing conflict based GBV and for additional appropriations to be used for trainings for civil society organisations in order to raise their capacity and provide training to law enforcement to deal with such cases;
11. Underlines that any equality strategy should address all forms of violence against women, including setbacks and violations of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights; reiterates that access to health care and public services, including access to abortion and psychological support for women victims of violence, should be

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/publications/costs-gender-based-violence-european-union>

considered a priority;

12. Stresses the importance of using European Structural and Investment Funds such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) to promote gender equality, women's employment and access to the labour market, childcare and long-term care facilities, particularly in the light of the Union's 14% average gender pay gap; underlines the need for budgetary allocations to support women's entrepreneurship and women's economic independence and promote a progressive approach to ensure and encourage access for women to loans, equity finance, venture capitalists, business angels and investors through Union programmes and funds, such as the European Social Fund; calls for an increase in the budget of ESF+ in order to increase funds for the EaSI strand; stresses the importance of cohesion policy in promoting gender equality, welcomes that a gender equality related expenditure tracking system was included for the ESF+, the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, which will allow for better monitoring of the investments related to gender equality;
13. Underlines there needs to be greater emphasis on strategic investment and sustainable growth in the Union and within Member States in order to improve economic cohesion and create jobs, in particular for young women and girls in all their diversity; highlights 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 and ensuring equal pay for equal work of equal value; stresses the importance of creating high quality jobs in those sectors, aiming at achieving a just transition towards a less carbon intensive society;

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	19.9.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 26 -: 6 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Isabella Adinolfi, Christine Anderson, Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Annika Bruna, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Livia Járóka, Arba Kokalari, Alice Kuhnke, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Karen Melchior, Johan Nissinen, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Pina Picierno, Evelyn Regner, Diana Riba i Giner, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Maria Veronica Rossi, Christine Schneider, Sylwia Spurek
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Abir Al-Sahlani, Laura Ballarín Cereza, Silvia Modig, Eleni Stavrou, Hilde Vautmans
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Martin Hojsik

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

26	+
PPE	Isabella Adinolfi, Maria da Graça Carvalho, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Arba Kokalari, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Christine Schneider, Eleni Stavrou
Renew	Abir Al-Sahlani, Martin Hojsík, Karen Melchior, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Hilde Vautmans
S&D	Laura Ballarín Cereza, Robert Biedroń, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Maria Noichl, Carina Ohlsson, Pina Picierno, Evelyn Regner
The Left	Silvia Modig, Eugenia Rodríguez Palop
Verts/ALE	Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Alice Kuhnke, Diana Riba i Giner, Sylwia Spurek

6	-
ECR	Johan Nissinen, Margarita de la Pisa Carrión
ID	Christine Anderson, Annika Bruna, Maria Veronica Rossi
NI	Livia Járóka

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## **JOINT STATEMENT ADOPTED AT THE BUDGETARY TRILOGUE OF 25 APRIL 2023**

### **Dates for the budgetary procedure and modalities for the functioning of the Conciliation Committee in 2023**

- A. In accordance with Part A of the annex to the interinstitutional agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agree on the following key dates for the 2024 budgetary procedure:
1. The Commission will endeavour to present the Statement of Estimates 2024 by early June;
  2. A trilogue will be called on 18 July (in the morning), after the adoption of the Council's position;
  3. The Council will endeavour to adopt its position and transmit it to the European Parliament at the end of week 36, in order to facilitate a timely agreement with the European Parliament;
  4. The European Parliament's Committee on Budgets will endeavour to vote on amendments to the Council's position by the end of week 40 (first week of October);
  5. A trilogue will be called on 12 October (in the morning), before the reading of the European Parliament;
  6. The European Parliament's Plenary will vote on its reading in week 42 (Plenary session of 16-19 October);
  7. The Conciliation period will start on 24 October. In agreement with the provisions of Article 314(4)(c) TFEU, the time available for conciliation will expire on 13 November 2023;
  8. The Conciliation Committee will meet on 26 October (in the morning), hosted by the European Parliament and on 10 November hosted by the Council (and may resume as appropriate); the sessions of the Conciliation Committee will be prepared by trilogue(s). A trilogue is scheduled on 26 October (in the morning). Additional trilogue(s) may be

called during the 21-day conciliation period, including on 9 November hosted by the Council.

- B. The modalities for the functioning of the Conciliation Committee are set out in Part E of the annex to the above-mentioned interinstitutional agreement.

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	9.10.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 16 - : 4 0 : 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Rasmus Andresen, David Cormand, Andor Deli, Pascal Durand, Alexandra Geese, Vlad Gheorghe, Niclas Herbst, Hervé Juvin, Joachim Kuhs, Janusz Lewandowski, Siegfried Mureşan, Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos, Bogdan Rzońca, Nils Torvalds, Nils Ušakovs, Angelika Winzig
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Attila Ara-Kovács, Sunčana Glavak, Hannes Heide, Jarosław Kalinowski, Sabine Verheyen

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

16	+
PPE	Sunčana Glavak, Niclas Herbst, Jarosław Kalinowski, Janusz Lewandowski, Siegfried Mureşan, Sabine Verheyen, Angelika Winzig
Renew	Vlad Gheorghe, Nils Torvalds
S&D	Attila Ara-Kovács, Pascal Durand, Hannes Heide, Nils Ušakovs
Verts/ALE	Rasmus Andresen, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese

4	-
ID	Joachim Kuhs
NI	Andor Deli, Hervé Juvin, Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos

1	0
ECR	Bogdan Rzońca

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention