

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Constitutional Affairs

2005/2001(BUD)

15.9.2005

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 2006
(C6-0000/2005 – 2005/2001(BUD))

Section III - Commission

Draftsman: Alexander Stubb

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas the negative outcomes of referendums on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in two founding Member States demonstrate the continued need for political debate and educational information in the constitutional field,
- B. whereas the European Parliament as the most open and the only directly elected European institution now carries a particular responsibility for the continuation of the process of ratification of that Treaty and for the objective presentation of the quality of the compromises prepared, among others, by its own members in the Convention on the Future of Europe, agreed by the Brussels Intergovernmental Conference of June 2004 and signed by the heads of state or government of all member states in Rome in October 2004,
- C. whereas the phase of reflection should be used to search for options to safeguard the political development of a strong European Union sharing the same objectives and to explore also the possibilities for new ways of involving and informing the European citizens,
- D. whereas Parliament has stressed in its previous resolution, of 13 April 2005, on the budget 2006 and the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy report that the 2006 budget plays an essential role in "guaranteeing the continuity of actions and in serving as the bridging instrument for the multiannual programme after 2006"¹,
 1. Intends to strengthen its own means, as well as other financial instruments, to improve media coverage of European affairs, taking due account of cost-effectiveness and the likely number of interested citizens and including not only the constitutional debate but also other issues of immediate interest for citizens which are to be decided at the European level; undertakes to improve audio-visual accessibility to its own activities beyond part-sessions to include committees and hearings;
 2. Continues its support for academic bodies and think tanks working in the European constitutional field; asks the Commission in addition to focus more on activities aimed directly at non-specialists and opinion leaders;
 3. Backs the Commission's programmes and information campaigns in the framework of the debate on the future of Europe and stresses that the financial means spent on such programmes are minute in comparison to many other EU activities; hence, the amounts proposed for some of these programmes are insufficient to inform effectively 450 million European citizens on the stakes involved in the constitutional evolution of the Union;

¹ *Texts Adopted* of that date, P6_TA-PROV(2005)0126, paragraph D.

4. Stresses that the mostly small educational and cultural centres working in fields of European interest constitute a valuable resource for the European institutions as well as for the broader public; assures them of its clear purpose to maintain the current level of spending and to consider an increase in funds in cases presenting an exceptional interest for the future of the Europe.

PROCEDURE

Title	The draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2006: Section III - Commission
Procedure number	2005/2001(BUD)
Committee responsible	BUDG
Committee asked for its opinion Date announced in plenary	AFCO
Enhanced cooperation	
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Alexander Stubb 20.4.2005
Discussed in committee	13.7.2005 14.9.2005
Date suggestions adopted	14.9.2005
Result of final vote	for: 11 against: 2 abstentions: 0
Members present for the final vote	James Hugh Allister, Jens-Peter Bonde, Carlos Carnero González, Richard Corbett, Jean-Luc Dehaene, Andrew Duff, Maria da Assunção Esteves, Bronisław Geremek, Jo Leinen, Rihards Pīks, Alexander Stubb
Substitutes present for the final vote	Raimon Obiols i Germà, György Schöpflin
Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	