



2023/0264(BUD)

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

PA_NonLeg

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

Date adopted	20.9.2023
Result of final vote	+: 21 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	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
Substitutes present for the final vote	François Alfonsi, Vladimír Bilčík, Mercedes Bresso, Pascal Durand, Alin Mituța
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	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

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ECR	Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski
ID	Jaak Madison

0	0

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention