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*Committee on Constitutional Affairs  
The Chair*

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23.1.2024

Mr Johan Van Overtveldt  
Chair  
Committee on Budgets  
BRUSSELS

Subject: Opinion on General guidelines for the preparation of the 2025 budget, Section III  
– Commission (2023/2220(BUI))

Dear Mr Chair,

Under the procedure referred to above, the Committee on Constitutional Affairs has been asked to submit an opinion to your committee. At its meeting of 7 December 2023, the committee decided to send the opinion in the form of a letter.

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs considered the matter at its meeting of 23 January 2024. At that meeting<sup>1</sup>, it decided to call on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution.

Yours sincerely,

Salvatore De Meo

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<sup>1</sup> The following were present for the final vote: Salvatore De Meo (Chair and rapporteur for opinion), Gabriele Bischoff (1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair), Charles Goerens (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair), Giuliano Pisapia (3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-Chair), Loránt Vincze (4<sup>th</sup> Vice-Chair), Gerolf Annemans, Damian Boeselager, Gilles Boyer, Ana Collado Jiménez, Jonás Fernández (for Domènec Ruiz Devesa pursuant to Rule 209(7)), Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Pascal Durand, Sandro Gozi, Brice Hortefeux, Othmar Karas, Gilles Lebreton, Niklas Nienaaß, Max Orville, Antonio Maria Rinaldi, Helmut Scholz, Pedro Silva Pereira, Sven Simon and Rainer Wieland.

## 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:

1. Underlines that – 2025 being the post European election Year – effective communication and dialogue with citizens should be among the top priorities of the budget as fostering awareness of the EU's decision-making and Union policies is vital for the functioning of European democracy, next to the support of the legislative work of Parliament's committees;
2. Highlights that, pending the conclusions of the European Council - including the possible convening of a Convention - the budget for 2025 should provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the Treaty changes procedure, and support information campaigns as well as the dialogue with European citizens following the Conference on the Future of Europe; underlines that the reform of the Treaties is linked to the deepening of the political integration of the Union in view of possible future enlargements and points out that the challenge of future EU enlargement cannot be met without increasing the EU budget and with additional own resources; calls for the start of discussions of the relevant financial reforms in 2025 in parallel with the ongoing accession negotiations;
3. Demands that the necessary resources are safeguarded to permanently and structurally counter disinformation and fake news, and to fight foreign interference within the EU; reminds of the need to secure proper financing for the structures within the EU institutions that are responsible for communication with citizens and countering disinformation such as the Commission Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices/ Antennae, in order to enable them to effectively fulfil their tasks;
4. Recalls the need for the adequate financing of the Union's programmes, activities and initiatives, in particular the European Citizens' Initiative as well as other participatory instruments and the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme, which facilitate the participatory democracy processes in the EU, build citizens' trust and enhance their understanding of the Union's policies; calls for means to be made available to enhance citizens' participation, especially the youth; recalls the need to promote a budget line on demonstrative and voluntary primary and secondary curriculum for EU and global citizenship education;
5. Calls for adequate resources to ensure transparency in the activities of interests groups and lobbies; requests in this regard to strengthen the Parliament's Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members as well as the Joint Transparency Register Secretariat by providing both with adequate staff and financial resources to fulfil their tasks; suggests also to ensure sufficient resources for the set up and functioning of an interinstitutional ethics body, commensurate with its mandate and tasks, in the event of its establishment;
6. Recommends that the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations receives adequate resources, in particular for staffing purposes in view of the significant enlargement of its tasks as foreseen by the Commission proposal for the

recast of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 1141/2014 and considering the importance of the 2024 European election year and the additional workload created for the Authority;

7. Highlights the need to devote proper resources for the EU's actions to strengthen the rule of law, in particular to increase the resources of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in view of the enlargement of its tasks as foreseen by the revised mandate based on the Council Regulation (EU) 2022/555 of 5 April 2022;
8. Recalls the importance to enhance the participation of the Union's local entities, towns and villages, beyond Member States capitals in the democratic life of the Union in particular, and to support the implementation of *BELC - Building Europe with local Councillors*<sup>2</sup> – the network of locally elected politicians aimed at communicating the European Union through an unprecedented alliance between the European and local government structures;
9. Calls on Council and Commission to apply Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget in full; stresses that funds cannot be disbursed if Member States do not comply with all relevant requirements set forth by the Court of Justice;
10. Reiterates its long standing call for full co-decision powers, the European Parliament's right of legislative initiative, and the abolition of vetoes for the adoption of the multiannual financial framework.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://building-europe-with-local-councillors.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://building-europe-with-local-councillors.europa.eu/index_en)

**ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS  
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The Chair in his capacity as rapporteur for the opinion declares under his exclusive responsibility that he did not receive input from any entity or person to be mentioned in this Annex pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure.