DRAFT 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 2022 -
General Introduction - Total expenditure - General statement of revenue -
Statement of revenue and expenditure by section
(2021/0227(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Antonio Tajani
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. Welcomes the proposed 18% increase in commitment appropriations and 104% increase in payment appropriations of the 2022 Draft Budget as compared to the 2021 budget for the ‘Promoting citizens engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union’; recalls that the participation in the democratic life of the Union is a fundamental right of the EU’s citizens laid down in Article 10.3 of the TEU; therefore believes that a further increase is necessary to secure enough financial means for the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme and adequate support of the European Citizens’ Initiative, among else, and consequently proposes a further 5% increase for this budgetary line;

2. Disagrees with the Council’s position to reduce by 3.6% funding proposed on the draft budget for the line on ‘Commission Representations’; proposes a 5% increase for this line as compared to the Commission’s proposal in the 2022 Draft Budget and deems this increase necessary for the purpose of encouraging proactive dialogues on EU matters with citizens in the Member States, including virtual and hybrid formats, organising events in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe as well as developing communication activities to fight disinformation;

3. Regards as insufficient the proposed levels of increase by 0.9% in commitment appropriations and by 3% in payment appropriations for ‘Communication services for citizens’ compared to the 2021 budget; consequently, opposes the Council’s position to reduce by 3.1% funding for this budgetary line; points out that communication services for citizens ought to be state of the art in order to reach EU citizens and engage with them through different communication channels, substantially rendering the Union’s policies more visible; therefore proposes a 5% increase compared to the 2022 Draft Budget levels for ‘Communication services for citizens’ inter alia in view of funding awareness raising and information activities on the European Citizens’ Initiative in cooperation with the Commission Representations and local Europe Direct Centres in the Member States;

4. 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.