

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Committee on Foreign Affairs*

**2008/2026(BUD)**

11.9.2008

## **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 2009  
(C6-0309/2008 – 2008/2026(BUD))

Section III – Commission

Rapporteur: Véronique De Keyser

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## SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Reiterates that, in order to enable the European Union to meet its external action obligations and to play an active role in facing global challenges, sufficient funds need to be allocated in the EU budget;
2. Is disappointed by the share of appropriations envisaged for Heading 4 under the Council's Draft Budget (DB) 2009 and by the fact that, while the EU's international obligations are increasing, the growth in commitment appropriations with regard to the 2008 budget is below the rate of inflation for the same period; insists that all the budget lines of Heading 4 falling within the remit of Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs be increased by at least +2% compared to the 2008 budget (deflator);
3. Calls on the Commission not to use the Flexibility Instrument or the Emergency Aid Reserve for programmable long-term activities;
4. Is aware of the limits of the financial framework 2007-2013; insists that the current amounts under Heading 4 do not allow for the provision of assistance to conflict-affected areas without endangering the implementation of long-term commitments; requests the allocation of additional sources to activities financed under Heading 4 above the ceiling provided for in the financial framework 2007-2013; urges the Commission and the Council to take the increasing role of the EU as a global player duly into account when preparing the review of the EU financial framework;
5. Takes note of the pledge made by the Commission at the Donors' Conference for Kosovo to donate a total of EUR 508 million to support Kosovo's institution-building and socio-economic development, consisting of EUR 358 million under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and EUR 150 million in macro-financial assistance over the next three years; is waiting for the amending letter of the Commission on this issue to be presented this autumn;
6. Expresses its dissatisfaction with the appropriations envisaged in the DB 2009 for Palestine; is of the view that, when programming the assistance needed, the Commission can build in this case on experience gathered and needs estimated, and should therefore be able to allocate the funding needed to contribute to the viability of the Palestinian authorities and to the Middle East peace process; therefore insists that the amount envisaged for 2009 be, as a minimum, the same as that spent in 2007;
7. Supports the humanitarian aid allocated by the Commission immediately after the outbreak of the Georgia crisis, which is needed in order to alleviate the suffering of conflict-affected people in Georgia and of refugees who have fled to the Russian Federation; notes the intention of the IMF and Georgia to agree on a loan in the form of a USD 750 million stand-by arrangement as well as the US pledge of USD 570 million as emergency budget support in 2008 and possibly a further USD 430 million in the next year; urges the Council and the Commission to examine the possibility of a major EU

plan, with additional means under Heading 4, to provide financial support for the rebuilding of the affected areas of Georgia, to mitigate the negative impacts of the conflict on its economy and to ensure a stronger EU presence in the country as well as in the whole region; insists that international donors must be strongly involved in carrying out this plan, and welcomes the Council's decision to convene an international donors' conference;

8. Reaffirms its support for the implementation of a deepened and differentiated European Neighbourhood Policy; underlines the need to provide the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) with an adequate financial envelope reflecting the EU's commitment vis-à-vis its east European and southern neighbours; notes the modest increase in appropriations envisaged for 2009, and stresses that the recent initiative entitled "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" must neither hinder the efforts to establish a balance between the commitment appropriations for the eastern and southern European neighbours nor in any case increase the budgetary tensions within the ENPI;
9. Having regard to the growing political importance of election observation and the fact that it is not possible to forecast the annual cost thereof, in particular because of the increase in security-related costs, calls for greater flexibility under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) so that annual funding requirements can be met;
10. Recognises that the risks associated with the implementation of the policy options chosen under the EIDHR, namely as regards giving support to civil society organisations and/or human rights defenders in countries and regions where fundamental freedoms are most at risk, are greater than those normally identified in relation to other policy options; points out that this is linked to the innovative and political requirements to which implementation gives rise, including the provision of support to organisations that do not have legal personality and grants made through umbrella organisations, in line with the provisions of the Financial Regulation;
11. Insists that at least 20% of the amount envisaged for Iraq in 2009 must be managed by the Commission directly through its Delegation on the ground; moreover, asks the Commission to focus on projects presented by civil society;
12. Emphasises the political importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions adopted by the budgetary authority under Heading 4; calls for the timely and proactive implementation thereof by the Commission, making full use of allocated commitments;
13. Appreciates the continuation of the dialogue with the Council presidency on the priorities of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP); is committed to reinforcing that dialogue so as to ensure timely inter-institutional coordination in shaping the course of the CFSP and to enhance its effectiveness and democratic legitimacy; underlines that the quality of the information provided needs to be improved and its continuity ensured.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	10.9.2008
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 54 - : 3 0 : 3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Vittorio Agnoletto, Robert Atkins, Christopher Beazley, Bastiaan Belder, Colm Burke, Philip Claeys, Véronique De Keyser, Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos, Michael Gahler, Jas Gawronski, Georgios Georgiou, Maciej Marian Giertych, Ana Maria Gomes, Alfred Gomolka, Klaus Hänsch, Jana Hybášková, Anna Ibrisagic, Ioannis Kasoulides, Metin Kazak, Helmut Kuhne, Vytautas Landsbergis, Johannes Lebech, Willy Meyer Pleite, Francisco José Millán Mon, Philippe Morillon, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Cem Özdemir, Ioan Mircea Paşcu, Béatrice Patrie, Alojz Peterle, Tobias Pflüger, João de Deus Pinheiro, Samuli Pohjamo, Bernd Posselt, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Libor Rouček, Christian Rovsing, Flaviu Călin Rus, Katrin Saks, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, György Schöpflin, Marek Siwiec, István Szent-Iványi, Inese Vaidere, Geoffrey Van Orden, Marcello Vernola, Kristian Vigenin, Luis Yañez-Barnuevo García, Josef Zieleniec
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Laima Liucija Andrikiienė, James Elles, Glyn Ford, Kinga Gál, Milan Horáček, Tunne Kelam, Mario Mauro, Nickolay Mladenov, Rihards Pīks, Aloyzas Sakalas, Inger Segelström, Karl von Wogau
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	Costas Botopoulos, Antonio Masip Hidalgo, Pierre Pribetich