

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Committee on Culture and Education*

**2005/2146(INI)**

28.11.2005

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

on the period of reflection: the structure, subjects and context for an assessment  
of the debate on the European Union  
(2005/2146(INI))

Draftswoman: Helga Trüpel

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## SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Considers that the Commission and the European Parliament are upholders of the European ideal, and therefore expects the Commission to make a strong and unified commitment to the adoption of a Constitution for Europe;
2. Calls for a debate on the future of the European Union from the international geostrategic point of view, in so far as such a debate can provide a better approach for deciding what kind of Europe its citizens want for the future;
3. Underlines the great importance of a more effective European communication strategy, which would better explain the European Union and the added value of common European action and more assiduously seek dialogue with the people and between them, making use of local activities to overcome the present distance between the European Union and its citizens; emphasises that the public's perception of the European project is determined largely by those acting at the national level; has great hopes for the Commission White Paper and for the Citizens for Europe Programme;
4. Considers that the Member States, regions and local authorities must contribute to the debate on the Union's future, because of their greater closeness to the public, and do their part to ensure that the European Union is more efficient and effective in solving its citizens' problems;
5. Shares the Commission's view that the success of a new communication strategy depends on cooperation as partners between the Institutions and the Member States' Governments; offers the Commission its support in the spirit of its resolution of 12 May 2005 on the implementation of the European Union's information and communication strategy<sup>1</sup>;
6. Wishes nonetheless to point out that, to be effective, a communication strategy must be backed up by the implementation of socially, environmentally and culturally balanced policies at Union level, and suggests that the Commission, Council and each Member State should show that in every action they take they are moving in the direction desired by the people, namely preservation of the European model;
7. Calls for adequate financial resources, simpler procedures and shorter funding delays for the EU's information programme, including Prince and the other promotional programmes for social groups that support the European idea, in the coming budget year, so that the communication strategy can be implemented effectively; the latest Eurostat surveys, showing that people are losing confidence in the EU, its institutions and their policies, are proof that solidly-funded information campaigns are urgently needed;
8. Notes that the debate on the Constitutional Treaty is also a debate on European identity

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<sup>1</sup> *Texts adopted*, P6\_TA(2005)0183.

and its many and diverse values; takes the view that the EU's programmes on culture and education policy make a substantial contribution to building up an awareness of being European and preserving and further developing European cultures; draws attention therefore to the importance of a suitable budget for culture and education, in the financial perspective as well as elsewhere;

9. Recommends that the Commission sets up a timetable for adopting a European project on the same day in all the Union countries at the time of the 2009 European elections;
10. Recommends that the European Union's information and communication strategy gives pride of place to the measures needed, first, to make the Council's debates transparent, so that citizens can understand how and by whom decisions are taken, and second, to make the right of petition effective.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	Period of reflection: the structure, subjects and context for an assessment of the debate on the European Union
<b>Procedure number</b>	2005/2146(INI)
<b>Committee responsible</b>	AFCO
<b>Opinion by</b> Date announced in plenary	CULT 7.7.2005
<b>Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary</b>	
<b>Draftswoman</b> Date appointed	Helga Trüpel 23.8.2005
<b>Discussed in committee</b>	3.10.2005
<b>Date adopted</b>	24.11.2005
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 13 -: 2 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	María Badía i Cutchet, Marie-Hélène Descamps, Jolanta Dičkutė, Milan Gaľa, Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, Luis Herrero-Tejedor, Manolis Mavrommatis, Rolandas Pavilionis, Miguel Portas, Nikolaos Sifunakis, Henri Weber, Thomas Wise
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Giulietto Chiesa, Michael Cramer
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	Catherine Trautmann