

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Constitutional Affairs

2006/2018(BUD)

11.9.2006

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 2007
(C6-0000/2006 – 2006/2018 (BUD))

Section III - Commission

Draftsman: Carlos Carnero González

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas the Presidency conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 15 and 16 June 2006, expressed its commitment to a successful continuation of the process of ratification of the constitutional treaty, presented a roadmap for the next two years and declared that it followed from the interim assessment of the period of reflection on the future of Europe that "reinforced dialogue with the citizens requires adequate means and commitment",
- B. whereas in its resolution of 14 June 2006 on the next steps for the period of reflection and analysis on the Future of Europe, the Parliament, asked the Commission "to adjust its 'Plan D' for the second phase of the period of reflection and to provide sufficient funding for the activities envisaged"¹,
- C. whereas in its proposal for a decision establishing for the period 2007-2013 the programme "Citizens for Europe" to promote active European citizenship², the Commission stated that the global aim of the programme was, inter alia, to support activities and institutions that give citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever closer Europe and forge a European identity,
- D. whereas, following up on the adoption of the Financial Framework 2007-2013, the Preliminary Draft Budget (PDB) 2007 entails some restructuring of the expenditures related to the debate on the constitutional treaty by integrating the permanent funding of several institutions and organisations of European interest into three legislative programmes (Citizens for Europe, Culture 2007 and Lifelong Learning),
 1. Recalls that communication and educational programmes are the instrument of choice for better informing and including citizens in the debate on the constitutional treaty and that they are the principal means for providing support for the constitutional roadmap laid out in the President's conclusions of the European Council in June 2006;
 2. Regrets that many European citizens at present do not perceive any benefits of the further integration of the European Union; notes, however, that at the same time a majority of citizens in most Member States would welcome a more transparent and effective constitutional settlement of the EU and its policies;
 3. Reiterates that communication activities can only work satisfactorily if academic institutions, foundations (including those of the political parties), regional and local authorities, social partners, and civil society (especially youth and women's organisations) are actively contributing to them and that they need financial resources from the EU budget to carry out these tasks; considers, therefore, that the amounts proposed in the PDB 2007 for the Prince budget line for the future of Europe debate and the EU's information outlets are insufficient and must be substantially increased, compared to the 2006 expenditures with a view to the ongoing period of reflection and

¹ *Texts Adopted*, P6_TA(2006)0263.

² COM(2005)0116.

analysis;

4. Stresses that a number of institutes and organisations have provided outstanding support for the debate on the future of Europe; is hence concerned about the Council's intention, as displayed in the legislative procedure leading to the adoption of the Europe for citizens programme, to limit the structural assistance for some of the institutes of European interest to three years (2007-2009); is determined to ensure adequate permanent funding for these research and educational groups beyond the horizon of the present period of reflection and analysis because it is convinced that they have important tasks of a permanent character;
5. Insists that the increase proposed by the Commission of the funds made available to these institutes is not in all cases sufficient to tackle the challenging tasks before them;
6. Welcomes the Council's and the Parliament's recent efforts better to include citizens in their daily work, especially as concerns transparency of legislation and political debate on sensitive issues such as globalisation and enlargement; undertakes further to step up these activities and invites the Council to do so likewise.

PROCEDURE

Title	Draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2007 : Section III - Commission
Procedure number	2006/2018 (BUD)
Committee responsible	BUDG
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	AFCO
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary	
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Carlos Carnero González 21.2.2006
Previous drafts(wo)man	
Discussed in committee	12.7.2006 11.9.2006
Date adopted	11.9.2006
Result of final vote	+: 9 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	James Hugh Allister, Carlos Carnero González, Andrew Duff, Ingo Friedrich, Bronisław Geremek, Genowefa Grabowska, Daniel Hannan, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Rihards Pīks, Johannes Voggenhuber, Bernard Piotr Wojciechowski
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	
Comments (available in one language only)	