



Amplify our joint call to reinforce AgoraEU

Advocacy & Outreach Infopack (April 2026)

Background

The urgency to prioritise democracy in the next budget

Europe is facing structural challenges: geopolitical instability, technological transformation, increasing inequalities, declining trust in democratic institutions, coordinated and institutionalised attacks against fundamental rights — particularly affecting excluded groups.

While these challenges are exerting growing pressure on democracy, structural funding gaps have emerged following the retrenchment of major international funders, including significant reductions by actors such as USAID and large philanthropic foundations.

Culture, independent media, and civil society are not peripheral sectors; they form part of Europe's democratic infrastructure. A pluralistic, vibrant, and participatory public sphere safeguards the rule of law, protects fundamental rights, strengthens social cohesion and underpins long-term competitiveness.

The Union has recognised this through its commitment to a “free and democratic Europe”, the European Democracy Action Plan, the European Democracy Shield and the Civil Society Strategy. These ambitions can only be implemented if they are given sufficient financial resources. As the EU's next long-term budget for 2028-2034 is being negotiated, policymakers must ensure that funding democracy is a top priority.

The negotiations of AgoraEU's envelope

The European Commission

Last July, the Commission presented its proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034. Following a “simplification” approach, the new architecture proposes a merger of Creative Europe and CERV into a single standalone programme, **AgoraEU**.

With a proposed financial envelope of €7.61 billion, AgoraEU would be composed of three strands, the Culture strand (Creative Europe), the Media+ strand (audiovisual and news), and the CERV+ strand. While such envelope represents a relative increase of the funding available for the relevant policy areas, it still falls short in meeting the demands and the needs of the different sectors.



The European Parliament

The Committee on Budgets (BUDG) is responsible for defining the size of the envelope dedicated to the different MFF programmes, including AgoraEU. This will be defined in the MFF interim report which is being drafted by the co-rapporteurs for the MFF: MEP Mureşan (EPP, Romania) and MEP Tavares (S&D, Portugal).

In their **draft report**, the co-rapporteurs propose an increase of €880 million for the AgoraEU programme, bringing its total envelope to €8.49 billion. In parallel, the Committee on Culture, which is co-leading the AgoraEU negotiations, has called for a total envelope of €12 billion in **its opinion to the MFF interim report**.

The BUDG committee should be meeting on April 15th to formally vote on the *MFF interim report* – the report that will define the Parliament’s positioning on the MFF, once adopted in plenary.

The Council of the European Union

Given that the adoption of the MFF follows a special legislative procedure, Member States, through the Council, hold a key role in negotiating and defining the Union expenditure. The Council has created the ad hoc working party on the MFF (“ADWP MFF”), dedicated to examining the Commission’s proposals for the next EU’s long-term budget. Composed of national experts from each Member state, the ADWP MFF will shape the Council’s position regarding AgoraEU’s envelope.

Our action

More than 500 organisations from across Europe and beyond have joined forces to call on European policymakers negotiating the next MFF to support an increase of the AgoraEU’s programme, as proposed by the European Parliament, and to prioritise funding for democracy in the future budget.

Joint Letter: **Call to support a reinforced AgoraEU in the next MFF**

The signatories together represent a diversity of sectors, from culture and creation to journalism, from fundamental rights to civic participation, from independent media to equality and the rule of law.

What you can do

Spread the word online

Publish the **letter** on your website and use your social media channels to amplify our joint statement and to call on EU policymakers to support an increase of the budget of AgoraEU – the EU funding programme for the culture and creative sectors (CreativeEurope), media and journalism (MEDIA+), as well as democracy, equality, and civil society (CERV+).



More than 500 organisations call for increasing the funding for European democracy

In a joint letter, a coalition of 522 organisations calls on EU policymakers **to defend a substantial budget increase for AgoraEU**, the dedicated funding instrument for culture, independent media and journalism, fundamental rights and civil society.

Despite its strategic importance, the programme currently represents only 0.43% of the total EU budget — a level the coalition considers is insufficient to match the scale of the challenges facing these sectors.

 **The EU must reinforce AgoraEU in the next budget!** 🙌

Invite more organisations to sign the letter

We have received the signatures of 522 organisations in the first collection phase. We are now re-opening the signatures. In order to continue building political momentum, please **invite organisations from your network to join our collective call by adding their signature via [this form](#)**.

Engage in advocacy outreach

Consider amplifying the impact of our Joint Letter by contacting EU policymakers and ask them to defend an increase of AgoraEU funding. Please find below some **strategic advocacy targets** that can play a key role in the coming weeks in supporting a reinforced AgoraEU during the MFF negotiations.

Feel free to reach out to the policymakers from **your country** and/or **your policy area**, but also to use your own existing contacts, including **your national ministry**.

European Parliament – Members of the Committee on Budgets (BUDG)

**Substitute members in grey*

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------|------------|
| Johan Van Overtveldt | johan.vanoverveldt@europarl.europa.eu | Belgium | ECR |
| Olivier Chastel | olivier.chastel@europarl.europa.eu | Belgium | Renew |
| Karlo Ressler | Karlo.ressler@europarl.europa.eu | Croatia | EPP |
| Michalis Hadjipantela | michael.hadjipantela@europarl.europa.eu | Cyprus | EPP |
| Danuše Nerudová | danuse.nerudova@europarl.europa.eu | Czechia | EPP |
| Stine Bosse | stine.bosse@europarl.europa.eu | Denmark | Renew |
| Rasmus Nordqvist | rasmus.nordqvist@europarl.europa.eu | Denmark | Greens/EFA |
| Jüri Ratas | juri.ratas@europarl.europa.eu | Estonia | EPP |
| Aura Salla | aura.salla@europarl.europa.eu | Finland | EPP |
| Jussi Saramo | jussi.saramo@europarl.europa.eu | Finland | The Left |
| Fabienne Keller | Fabienne.keller@europarl.europa.eu | France | Renew |
| Jean-Marc Germain | jean-marc.germain@europarl.europa.eu | France | S&D |
| Younous Omarjee | younous.omarjee@europarl.europa.eu | France | The Left |
| Céline Imart | celine.imart@europarl.europa.eu | France | EPP |



| | | | |
|------------------------|--|-------------|------------|
| Rima Hassan | rima.hassan@europarl.europa.eu | France | The Left |
| Valérie Hayer | valerie.hayer@europarl.europa.eu | France | Renew |
| Monika Hohlmeier | monika.hohlmeier@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | EPP |
| Rasmus Andresen | rasmus.andresen@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | Greens |
| Matthias Ecke | matthias.ecke@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | S&D |
| Joachim Streit | joachim.streit@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | Renew |
| Christian Ehler | christian.ehler@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | EPP |
| Niclas Herbst | niclas.herbst@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | EPP |
| Moritz Körner | moritz.koerner@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | Renew |
| Kai Tegethoff | kai.tegethoff@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | Greens/EFA |
| Damian Boeselager | damian.boeselager@europarl.europa.eu | Germany | Greens/EFA |
| Nikolas Farantouris | nikolas.farantouris@europarl.europa.eu | Greece | The Left |
| Georgios Aftias | georgios.aftias@europarl.europa.eu | Greece | EPP |
| Kinga Kollár | kinga.kollar@europarl.europa.eu | Hungary | EPP |
| Nina Carberry | nina.carberry@europarl.europa.eu | Ireland | EPP |
| Ignazio Roberto Marino | ignazio.marino@europarl.europa.eu | Italy | Greens/EFA |
| Giuseppe Lupo | giuseppe.lupo@europarl.europa.eu | Italy | S&D |
| Ruggero Razza | ruggero.razza@europarl.europa.eu | Italy | ECR |
| Michele Picaro | michele.picaro@europarl.europa.eu | Italy | ECR |
| Raffaele Topo | raffaele.topo@europarl.europa.eu | Italy | S&D |
| Nils Ušakovs | nils.usakovs@europarl.europa.eu | Latvia | S&D |
| Roberts Zile | roberts.zile@europarl.europa.eu | Latvia | ECR |
| Mohammed Chahim | mohammed.chahim@europarl.europa.eu | Netherlands | S&D |
| Anouk van Brug | anouk.vanbrug@europarl.europa.eu | Netherlands | Renew |
| Hélder Sousa Silva | helder.sousasilva@europarl.europa.eu | Portugal | EPP |
| João Oliveira | joao.oliveira@europarl.europa.eu | Portugal | The Left |
| Carla Tavares | carla.tavares@europarl.europa.eu | Portugal | S&D |
| Janusz Lewandowski | janusz.lewandowski@europarl.europa.eu | Poland | EPP |
| Andrzej Halicki | andrzej.halicki@europarl.europa.eu | Poland | EPP |
| Jacek Protas | jacek.protas@europarl.europa.eu | Poland | EPP |
| Siegfried Mureșan | siegfried.muresan@europarl.europa.eu | Romania | EPP |
| Victor Negrescu | victor.negrescu@europarl.europa.eu | Romania | S&D |
| Nicolae Ștefănuță | nicolae.stefanuta@europarl.europa.eu | Romania | Greens/EFA |
| Lucia Yar | Lucia.yar@europarl.europa.eu | Slovakia | Renew |
| Matjaž Nemeč | matjaz.nemec@europarl.europa.eu | Slovenia | S&D |
| Isabel Benjumea | isabel.benjumea@europarl.europa.eu | Spain | EPP |
| Sandra Gómez López | sandra.gomezlopez@europarl.europa.eu | Spain | S&D |
| Adnan Dibrani | adnan.dibrani@europarl.europa.eu | Sweden | S&D |
| Dick Erixon | dick.erixon@europarl.europa.eu | Sweden | ECR |



| Council of the EU – Financial Attachés | | |
|--|--|--|
| Austria | Maximilian.Flesch@bmeia.gv.at | |
| Belgium | info.belgourop@diplobel.fed.be | |
| Bulgaria | Mission.BrusselsEU@bg-permrep.eu | |
| Croatia | vienceslav.rupcic@mvep.hr | nensi.marin@mvep.hr |
| Cyprus | lbakalouris@mof.gov.cy | cmasonos@mof.gov.cy |
| Czechia | aneta.vondrova@mzv.gov.cz | |
| Denmark | frelis@um.dk | elskro@um.dk |
| Estonia | Karin.KONDOR-TABUN@mfa.ee | |
| Finland | Elina.Poikonen@gov.fi | |
| France | thibaud.fournales@diplomatie.gouv.fr | |
| Germany | wi-9-eu@brue.auswaertiges-amt.de | Philipp.Thomsen@bkm.bund.de |
| Greece | oikon.politic@rp-grece.be | |
| Hungary | ecofin.beu@mfa.gov.hu | |
| Italy | elisabetta.holsztejn@esteri.it | |
| Ireland | Pat.Casey@dfa.ie | Rose.OConnor@dfa.ie |
| Luxembourg | Amir.Motahari@fi.etat.lu | Juliette.Leclerc@fi.etat.lu |
| Latvia | Baiba.Jurisone@mfa.gov.lv | baiba.jurisone@fm.gov.lv |
| Lithuania | Vaida.Vilimaite-Zubrickiene@urm.lt | Ruta.Reklaitiene@urm.lt |
| Malta | claudes-james.a.marsh@gov.mt | |
| Netherlands | Contact form - Financial Affairs - PR EU, Brussels | |
| Portugal | adelaide.carranca@mne.pt | |
| Poland | karol.kempinski@msz.gov.pl | |
| Romania | adrian.peticila@mae.ro | |
| Slovakia | jan.ridzon@mzv.sk | |
| Slovenia | darja.regorsek@gov.si | |
| Spain | Pilar.jurado@reper.maec.es | Finanzas@reper.maec.es |
| Sweden | gustav.peldan.carlsson@gov.se | isak.kupersmidt@gov.se |

| European Commission – Relevant Officials for AgoraEU | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Commissioners | | |
| Piotr Serafin | Budget | Piotr.SERAFIN@ec.europa.eu |
| Henna Virkkunen | Digital, Democracy | Henna.VIRKKUNEN@ec.europa.eu |
| Michael McGrath | Democracy, Justice, Rule of Law | Michael.MCGRATH@ec.europa.eu |
| Glenn Micallef | Youth, Culture | Glenn.MICALLEF@ec.europa.eu |
| Hadja Lahbib | Equality | Hadja.LAHBIB@ec.europa.eu |
| Commission's Services Leadership | | |
| Ana Gallego | Director General, DG JUST | Ana.Gallego@ec.europa.eu |
| Pia Ahrenkilde-Hansen | Director General, DG EAC | Pia.Ahrenkilde-Hansen@ec.europa.eu |
| Roberto Viola | Director General DG CNECT | Roberto.VIOLA@ec.europa.eu |
| Stéphanie Riso | Director General, DG BUDG | Stéphanie.RISO@ec.europa.eu |



EMAIL TEMPLATES

Email to MEPs in BUDG committee

Subject: Champion democracy: over 500 organisations count on your vote to strengthen AgoraEU in the MFF interim report

Dear [Member of the European Parliament],

I am writing to draw your attention to a **civil society-led joint letter** highlighting the urgent need to support a strengthened AgoraEU – the future flagship programme for defending culture, free and independent media, European values, and ultimately democracy.

More than 500 organisations from across Europe have joined forces to call on European policymakers negotiating the next MFF to support an increase of the AgoraEU's programme, and to prioritise funding for democracy in the future budget.

In their draft interim report, the MFF co-rapporteurs have already proposed an increase of €880 million for the AgoraEU programme, bringing its total envelope to €8.49 billion.

Furthermore, we welcome the CULT committee's opinion which goes even further by advocating for a total allocation of €12 billion for AgoraEU – this would still represent less than 0.6% of the overall MFF.

As a Member of the Committee on Budgets, you have a key role to play in supporting an increase of AgoraEU's budget during the upcoming vote on the interim report on the MFF 2028-2034.

I hope you will champion this important moment in shaping the European Parliament's priorities for the next MFF.

Email to Permanent Representations

Subject: Champion Democracy: over 500 organisations call to strengthen AgoraEU in the next MFF

Dear [Attaché's Name],

I am writing to draw your attention to a **civil society-led joint letter** highlighting the urgent need to support a strengthened AgoraEU – the future flagship programme for defending culture, free and independent media, European values, and ultimately democracy.

More than 500 organisations from across Europe have joined forces to call on European policymakers negotiating the next MFF to support an increase of the AgoraEU's programme, and to prioritise funding for democracy in the future budget.

The European Parliament has clearly signaled its commitment. While the co-rapporteurs for the MFF interim report have proposed an increase of €880 million, the CULT committee's opinion has called for a total allocation of €12 billion for AgoraEU – this would still represent less than 0.6% of the overall MFF.

We now count on the Member states, through the Council, to demonstrate equal determination by supporting an increased budget for AgoraEU in the negotiations on the MFF. This will ensure that the EU can respond effectively to growing democratic challenges, reinforce shared values, and maintain its credibility on the global stage.

I hope you will champion this crucial moment for Europe's democratic resilience by supporting the European Parliament's call to strengthen AgoraEU in the next MFF.

Email to European Commission

Subject:

Dear [Official's Name],

I am writing to draw your attention to a **civil society-led joint letter** highlighting the urgent need to support a strengthened AgoraEU – the future flagship programme for defending culture, free and independent media, European values, and ultimately democracy.

More than 500 organisations from across Europe have joined forces to call on European policymakers negotiating the next MFF to support an increase of the AgoraEU's programme, and to prioritise funding for democracy in the future budget.

While we welcome the European Commission's proposal for the AgoraEU programme, the challenges facing the cultural, media, and civil society sectors continue to grow. New EU initiatives – including the Culture Compass, the European Democracy Shield, the Equality Strategies, and the EU Civil Society Strategy – will require sufficient funding for their successful implementation.

The European Parliament has already signaled its support to a strengthened AgoraEU. While the co-rapporteurs for the MFF interim report have proposed an increase of €880 million, the CULT committee's opinion has called for a total allocation of €12 billion for AgoraEU – this would still represent less than 0.6% of the overall MFF.

We expect the European Commission to back the European Parliament's proposed increase during the negotiations with Member states.

