

2008 budget: other sections

2007/2019B(BUD) - 10/09/2007 - Council draft budget

The Council established, by unanimity, the European Union's draft budget for 2008 at first reading. It used the preliminary draft budget of the European Communities for 2008, submitted by the Commission, as the basis for establishing the draft budget.

In keeping with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and budgetary management, a conciliation meeting between the Council and a delegation from the European Parliament, with the participation of the Commission, was held on 13 July 2007, prior to the discussions in the Council.

As a result of the Council's discussions, the draft budget of the other institutions (except the Commission) has been approved.

In establishing the draft budget for 2008, the Council followed a number of guidelines:

A. Generally

- to limit the global increase of the Council's budget to 0.2% in comparison to the budget 2007;
- to apply for the other institutions a reduction of 2% on current expenditure requested for 2008, taking into account efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation;
- to retain specific decreases on some individual budget lines for some institutions, taking into account real needs;
- to increase the standard flat rate abatement on salaries for some institutions, taking into account their current vacancy rate;
- to accept new posts requested in relation to the 2004 and 2007 enlargement. In this context, the Council reiterated its willingness to monitor closely the ongoing recruitment process. It agreed to accept only a few new posts requested by the institutions for new tasks on the basis of justified needs; to accept conversions, transformations and upgradings related to career development under the Staff Regulations.

It should also be noted that the European Parliament and the Council note with concern the low occupancy of posts at Middle Management level, the rather high ratio of permanent posts occupied by temporary agents and the lack of a sufficient number of appropriate competitions.

The European Parliament and the Council insist that all efforts should be made by the institutions and specifically by EPSO to ensure that the necessary action is taken to rectify the situation and to speed up the whole process of filling up the posts granted by the budgetary authority with officials. The criteria should be as stipulated in Article 27 of the Staff Regulations and to arrive at the broadest possible geographical proportional basis as soon as possible.

The European Parliament and the Council intend to continue to monitor closely the ongoing recruitment process. To this effect, they request each institution and EPSO to provide twice a year an information to the budgetary authority on the state of affairs regarding recruitments in relation with the 2004 and 2007 enlargement. The European Parliament and the Council invite the Secretaries-general of the institutions to present a report on the progress made in the field as follows:

- concerning the filling of the posts granted in 2004-2007 budgets by the end of January 2008;
- concerning the filling of the posts granted in 2008 by 15 June 2008 and by 31 October 2008.

B. Amounts allocated by the Council for each institution (except for the Commission):

- **European Parliament - Section I:** under the "gentlemen's agreement", the Council included the European Parliament estimate in the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 2008 without any changes (EUR 1 436 400 000); the estimate represents an increase of EUR 38 939 826 (+2.79%) over the 2007 budget.
- **Council - Section II:** EUR 594 715 268, which represents an increase of EUR 1 187 056 (+0.20%) over the 2007 budget. The standard flat rate abatement on salaries has been maintained at 7% as proposed in the PDB, taking into account the current vacancy rate. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 0.9%. With regard to staff levels, the Committee approved the transformations for career development.
- **Court of Justice - Section IV:** EUR 290 975 591, which represents an increase of EUR 18 756 201 (+6.89%) over the 2007 budget. The standard flat rate abatement on salaries has been fixed at 4% taking into account the current vacancy rate. Targeted reductions were retained by applying a specific decrease to appropriations related to data processing, equipment and movable property expenditure linked to the moving into the new "Palais". The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the transformations for career development. It rejected the request for 22 non-enlargement posts.
- **Court of Auditors - Section V:** EUR 129 507 979, which represents an increase of EUR 8 427 979 (+6.96%) over the 2007 budget. The standard flat rate abatement on salaries has been fixed at 6.07% taking into account the current vacancy rate. Targeted reductions were retained by applying a specific decrease to appropriations related to the renewal of Members of the Court and to the publication of special reports outside the Official Journal. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the creation of 18 new AD 5 posts for auditors. The Council also approved the transformations for career development. It rejected the request for a further 4 posts.
- **Economic and Social Committee - Section VI:** EUR 114 197 998, which represents an increase of EUR 1 503 656 (+1.33%) over the 2007 budget. The standard flat rate abatement on salaries has been fixed at 4% taking into account the current vacancy rate. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the transformations for career development. It rejected the request for 10 non-enlargement posts.
- **Committee of the Regions - Section VII:** EUR 70 149 529, which represents an increase of EUR 3 050 297 (+4.55%) over the 2007 budget. The standard flat rate abatement on salaries has been fixed at 7% taking into account the current vacancy rate. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the creation of 15 new posts requested in relation to enlargement. It also accepted the transformations for career development. It rejected the request for a further 17 enlargement posts and 2 non-enlargement posts.
- **European Ombudsman – Section VIII:** EUR 8 365 770, which represents an increase of EUR 212 970 (+2.61%) over the 2007 budget. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the requested transformations for career development.
- **European Data Protection Supervisor – Section IX:** EUR 5 224 695, which represents an increase of EUR 268 969 (+5.43%) over the 2007 budget. The rate of reduction on current expenditure related to efficiency gains and the impact of interinstitutional co-operation has been fixed at 2%. With regard to staff levels, the Council approved the creation of 3 new posts for 6 months (instead of 12 months). It also accepted the transformations for career development. It rejected the request for 1 requested post.