# 2009 budget: Parliament's estimates

2008/2022(BUD) - 06/05/2008

The Committee on Budgets unanimously adopted the report by Janusz **LEWANDOWSKI** (EPP-ED, PL) approving Parliament's 2009 estimates, recalling that the 2009 budget should respond to a number of main challenges, as identified in its resolution of 10 April 2008 on the budgetary guidelines (see BUD/2008/2021: namely, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty; the fact that 2009 is an election year for the Parliament; and the entry into force of the new Statute for Members), However, this budget should make every effort to ensure the most efficient use of resources. It is for this reason that MEPs call for an efficient use of resources, with a view to identifying savings wherever possible.

Moreover, MEPs recall that the 2009 budget will stay below the traditional voluntary share of 20% of heading 5 (administrative expenditure) of the financial framework. They, therefore, endorse the draft estimates for the financial year 2009 as adopted by the Bureau on 21 April 2008 (the formal adoption of the draft budget will take place in October 2008).

**Lisbon-related issues**: MEPs point out that human resources and overall resources for Lisbon-related issues are essential: 65 new posts have subsequently been integrated into budgetary estimates, placing 15% of those appropriations in reserve pending the submission, by the end of June 2008, of complementary information on possible redeployment operations in 2008. Overall, MEPs agree with the principle of budgeting all foreseeable needs in the Bureau's preliminary draft estimates, including a "Lisbon reserve" of EUR 2 million awaiting further evaluation of needs in terms of human and financial resources. In this respect, they reiterate that the tasks and responsibilities, which can genuinely be regarded as new following the new Treaty, as well as activities that can be discontinued or re-prioritised, are especially important to identify. Furthermore, MEPs consider that the new Treaty will certainly have an impact on political groups, which will need strengthening in terms of staff.

**Visitors' Centre**: MEPs note that an additional need, not currently budgeted, might arise for the Visitors' Centre. This amount would be of a multi-annual nature. Furthermore, they confirm their intention to continue the financing of priorities established in the 2008 budget (notably to improve services to Members in connection with interpretation and with the analytical service of the library).

**Buildings policy**: MEPs note that a long-term strategic plan on buildings policy including maintenance costs and environmental issues will be presented before the end of May 2008. Recalling the importance they attach to this issue, MEPs reaffirm their wish to be informed about the work of the Bureau in this area, notably concerning any agreement on the purchase of buildings. They take note of the fact that the buildings reserve included in the draft estimates amounts to EUR 30 million, an increase of EUR 10 million compared to 2008.

**Statute of MEPs and parliamentary assistants**: satisfied that reasonable estimations have been carried out as concerns the expenditure relating to the new Members' Statute, MEPs insist that they be kept informed of any updated figures in this area. They also welcome the contact that has been made with Member States, the Council and the current and forthcoming Council Presidencies, concerning the new regime for parliamentary assistants, recalling the importance they attach to resolving this issue.

Lastly, MEPs stress that, notwithstanding the positive outcome of the enhanced cooperation so far, and the results of the pre-conciliation meeting in particular, a more detailed examination of individual budget items should take place before the first reading of the budget. They note that they will examine and take the final budgetary decisions at that time.