Guidelines for the 2014 budget: other sections

2013/2003(BUD) - 29/01/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgets adopted the report by Monika HOHLMEIER (EPP, DE) on the guidelines for the 2014 budget procedure, Section I – European Parliament, Section II – Council, Section IV – Court of Justice, Section V – Court of Auditors, Section VI – European Economic and Social Committee, Section VII – Committee of the Regions, Section VIII – European Ombudsman, Section IX – European Data Protection Supervisor, Section X – European External Action Service.

Members note that the agreement on the new multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2014 to 2020 has still not been reached and, therefore, **the ceiling for Heading 5 for the EU's budget in 2014 has not yet been established**.

General framework and priorities for the 2014 budget: Members maintain that the institutions should continue to limit or freeze their administrative budgets in solidarity with the difficult economic and budgetary conditions in the Member States. They consider that the 2014 appropriations should be based on a careful analysis of appropriation outturn in 2012 and 2013, with a view to making savings on lines where problems have arisen in implementation. According to Members, real savings and efficiencies can be made by pooling and sharing of human and technical resources, for example in information technology systems, translation, interpretation and transportation services.

Parliament: Members state that the Parliament's budget has been reduced in real terms due to strict budgetary planning and control, the strong commitment of its responsible committee and work reorganisation, notably cuts in travel-related budget lines, reduced length and number of missions, and optimised translation and interpretation services. They encourage the continuation of structural and organisational reforms that aim to achieve greater efficiencies without jeopardising legislative excellence and the quality of working conditions. In this regard, they call for the continuation and further development of a paperless Parliament and e-meetings. Overall, Members call for the implementation of lean and efficient management methods in Parliament in order to reduce administrative burdens and thereby save the institution time and money.

As regards work carried out in Parliament, Members focus in particular on the preparation of the **2014 European elections**. They call on the Secretary-General to provide information on the costs of the transition arrangements for the previous European Parliament elections and to present a detailed record of how costs have developed to date as they affect the three places of work.

On building policy, Members ask for information about the Secretary-General's findings on, and schedule for, the renovation works and office relocation, including information about an intermediate building for Parliament's staff, in the coming years, especially in relation to the **structural problems in the Paul-Henri Spaak (PHS) building** and the acquisition of the Trebel building.

Members believe that, in the context of the growing majority among Members in favour of new working arrangements, **Parliament's building projects need to be handled cautiously**, and that caution should prevail over ambition. They encourage the continuation of this fruitful dialogue, and ask that the information requested be delivered in a timely manner.

Other institutions: Members consider any unjustified, across-the-board cuts, and any undifferentiated approach to the institutions' budgets, as counter-productive. They intend, instead, to continue its case-by-

case approach. They repeat the position adopted in previous budget cycles that they expect all the institutions to continue to demonstrate efforts in seeking savings and maintaining a high degree of budgetary discipline when drawing up their budget estimates.