2021 general budget: all sections

2020/1998(BUD) - 12/11/2020 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 471 votes to 102, with 116 abstentions, a resolution on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021.

General overview

Parliament set the overall level of appropriations in the budget for 2021 at EUR 181 762 377 716 in commitment appropriations, an increase of EUR 15 016 195 740 over the draft budget. It increased the funding levels, up to those established in the interim report on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) of 14 November 2018, for the fifteen flagship programmes identified in its resolution of 23 July 2020 as well as for the relevant European agencies and the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

Members decided to increase funding for Parliament's priorities, in particular in the areas of climate change, energy, digital and transport interconnectivity, space, SMEs, tourism, security, migration, fundamental rights and external action. They called for a level of expenditure of 10% for biodiversity and 30% for climate mainstreaming by 2021. They also reiterated their call for a concept of gender mainstreaming.

Parliament recalled that in order to finance this budget, new categories of own resources should be put in place from 2021.

While welcoming the EU recovery plan, Members insisted, however, on the need to clearly enshrine the role of the budgetary authority in authorising external assigned revenue, in particular under the Next Generation EU recovery instrument, as part of the annual budgetary procedure.

MFF Heading 1

Parliament increased the level of commitment appropriations by EUR 6 313 980 774 above the draft budget, of which EUR 5 996 664 225 was for flagship programmes. It also allocated to the heading an amount of EUR 1 631 420 001 in commitment appropriations, following decommitments under Article 15 (3) of the Financial Regulation.

The resolution underlined the important added value of the Horizon Europe programme and stressed the need to strengthen cancer research.

Members stressed: (i) the need to ensure sufficient funding for the InvestEU programme; (ii) the crucial role of the Connecting Europe Facility, (iii) the importance of the Digital Europe programme in the context of the crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic and (iv) the fundamental value of the European Space Programme.

Parliament reiterated its request for support to SMEs, in particular in the tourism, creative and transport sectors, in order to strengthen their capacity to recover from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Headings 2a and 2b

Parliament decided to endorse the Council's reading of heading 2a. It increased the overall level of appropriations in heading 2b by EUR 5 894 270 074 in commitment appropriations above the draft budget, including EUR 6 041 509 293 for flagship programmes.

Members stressed the urgency of allocating additional resources to the EU Health Programme, which helps to meet the needs identified during the COVID-19 crisis. They reiterated the importance of Erasmus + and called for solutions and adequate funding to mitigate the losses suffered by the cultural and creative sector.

They also decided to create a new budget line entitled ‘Protect and promote Union values’, to reinforce the funding focus on protecting and promoting democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights.

Heading 3

Parliament increased the overall level of appropriations by EUR 867 937 490 in commitment appropriations compared to the draft budget, of which EUR 739 100 000 was for flagship programmes.

In line with the overall priority given to tackle climate change and biodiversity decline, Members emphasised substantial increases of EUR 237 000 000 in commitment appropriations on the budget lines pertaining to the LIFE programme. They also approved targeted reinforcements to the budget lines for market support measures under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), which aim at mitigating the effects of the crisis caused by the COVID pandemic.

Heading 4

Parliament increased the overall level of appropriations by EUR 710 251 000 in commitment appropriations above the draft budget, of which EUR 500 251 000 was earmarked for flagship programmes.

Members increased the funding allocated to Parliament's priorities in the areas of migration and border management, in particular the appropriations for the Integrated Border Management Fund and the Asylum and Migration Fund. They called for additional financial and human resources for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

Heading 5

Parliament reinforced the overall amount under this heading by EUR 372 320 760 above the draft budget, EUR 312 829 132 of which is for flagship programmes. It stressed the importance of a progressive framing of the EU’s common security and defence policy. It also called for increased funding for the European Defence Fund in order to fully foster an innovative and competitive defence industrial base that will contribute to the much-needed strategic autonomy of the EU.

Heading 6

Parliament increased the overall level of appropriations by EUR 372 320 760 above the draft budget, of which EUR 312 829 132 was earmarked for flagship programmes.

Members stressed that the external dimension of the EU's budget must be adequately funded and allow for an immediate response to current, emerging and future challenges. They called for increased funding levels for all geographic and thematic programmes under the NDICI. They also proposed the creation of a specific budget line for ‘the support to the political process in Libya’ and stressed the need for substantial funding for the Western Balkans in view of the accession process.

Heading 7

Parliament decided not to restore, at this stage, the Council’s cuts in Heading 7 and asked the Commission to grant the budgetary authority access to the COVID-19 vaccines-related contract before the end of 2020.

Payments

In order to avoid accumulating unpaid debts dating back to the 2014-2020 MFF and to finance the frontloading of expenditure related to the health crisis, Parliament considered it essential to provide a credible payment plan for the entire 2021-2027 MFF, with sufficient payments in the first years.

Lastly, expressing concern about the cuts proposed by the Commission in Parliament's budget, Members restored the appropriations set out in the estimates after an analysis of Parliament's needs for 2021.