2023 budget: estimates of revenue and expenditure, Section I – European Parliament

2021/2227(BUI) - 07/04/2022 - Parliament's opinion on budgetary estimates/guidelines

The European Parliament adopted by 337 votes to 119, with 38 abstentions, a resolution on the estimates of revenue and expenditure of the European Parliament for the financial year 2023.

Parliament approved the agreement reached during the conciliation between the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets on 30 March 2022, consisting of (i) **setting the increase in relation to the 2022 budget at 6.24%,** bringing the overall level of its estimates for 2023 to EUR 2 244 696 416, (ii) decreasing the level of expenditure in the preliminary draft estimates approved by the Bureau on 7 March 2022 by **EUR 33.96 million**, (iii) providing for 60 new posts related to cybersecurity and safety, but requesting only 52 additional posts in the establishment plan for 2023 and (iv) reducing the proposed appropriations for a number of budget lines accordingly.

Furthermore, given the extraordinary effects of the international crisis on inflation, statutory expenditure and the need to strengthen Parliament's resilience by investing in, *inter alia*, security and cyber security, it is foreseen to increase the level of expenditure in the preliminary draft estimates approved by the Bureau on 7 March 2022 by EUR 62 million and to increase the appropriations proposed for the relevant budget lines accordingly.

Members consider that the overall increase of 6.24% compared to 2022 should be considered as an increase of 2.46% for the part under normal conditions and, due to the current exceptional situation, an increase of EUR 79.8 million corresponding to a part due to the crisis, intended to cover exceptional inflation, the resulting increase in statutory expenditure and investments in security and cyber security.

Security against growing hybrid threats

Stressing that Parliament's **cyber security** is a key priority, Parliament decided to support the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen DG ITEC by 40 posts in order to increase Parliament's cyber defence capabilities. Parliament's security resources must be increased to protect the integrity of its IT systems.

Members considered that **inter-institutional cooperation** is essential to increase synergies amongst administrations and adequately protect the Union institutions from cyber-threats. They strongly supported that 2 AD posts (out of 40 additional posts in cybersecurity) be temporarily detached to CERT-EU along with an additional annual budget of EUR 1.564 million.

Recalling that threats are evolving into hybrid threats, Parliament supported the additional 20 posts for DG SAFE to strengthen the Parliament's capacity to detect, prevent and counter these **new hybrid threats** and to modernise and digitise security processes.

Communication strategy towards citizens

The resolution stressed Parliament's role in building European political awareness and disseminating the Union's values.

Parliament called for coordination between the Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM) and the press services of the political groups in order to deliver a **coordinated, appropriate and clear message** to citizens. It noted the additional resources (EUR 27.5 million) allocated to DG COMM for the

communication strategy for the 2024 European Parliament elections. In this context, it recalled the need for Parliament to interact continuously with the citizens of the Union through various communication channels, in the spirit of a diversified political dialogue, not only during the election year but also throughout the legislature.

Members also called for enhanced cooperation between DG ITEC, DG SAFE and DG COMM to detect, monitor and counter **disinformation campaigns**, especially on social media.

Parliament said it was in favour of setting up **'Europa Experience' centres** in all Member States by 2024. These centres should give all citizens a better understanding of how the EU institutions work. Parliament should also be present in information campaigns in the countries that have officially applied for EU membership, namely the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia.

Greening and energy independence

Parliament should be at the forefront of adopting more digital, flexible and energy-efficient **working methods** and meeting arrangements, building on the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and the technological investments already made.

Members called for a **strategic assessment of the costs of buildings policy**, including taking stock of new working methods, such as teleworking, while recognising that physical presence at political negotiations, debates or exchanges of views is still more effective for public policy-making. They called for urgent and targeted investment to ensure the highest possible degree of multilingualism.

Parliament recommended that the annual budget planning should take into account the regular renovation of all buildings. Buildings policy should focus on **green renovation of the building stock** and ensure that Parliament strives to maximise energy efficiency with a view to reducing energy consumption and the cost of Parliament's facilities.

Recalling that almost two-thirds of Parliament's carbon footprint is attributable to the transport of goods and people, Members called for **low-carbon modes of transport** to be favoured for missions. They called on the Parliament to further increase the share of renewable energy in its energy mix, especially in power generation. They encouraged the services to continue improving the infrastructure for bicycles on Parliament's premises and called for a sufficient increase in the number of electric vehicle chargers in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg.

Lastly, recalling that the majority of Member are in favour of a single seat, Parliament stressed the need to find solutions to **optimise the work of the parliamentary institution**, financial costs and carbon footprint. It also recalled that under the Treaty on European Union, the European Parliament must have its seat in Strasbourg, noting that permanent changes would require a treaty amendment.