2024 budget: estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2024, Section I – European Parliament

2022/2185(BUI) - 20/04/2023 - Parliament's opinion on budgetary estimates/guidelines

The European Parliament adopted by 367 votes to 150, with 38 abstentions, a resolution on Parliament’s estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2024.

General framework

Parliament approved the agreement reached at the conciliation between the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets on 21 March 2023 to set the increase over the 2023 budget at 6.06%, bringing the overall level of its estimates for 2024 to **EUR 2 383 401 312**, and to reduce the appropriations proposed for certain budget lines by EUR 12 195 000. In addition, it was decided to increase the level of expenditure in the preliminary draft estimates approved by the Bureau on 13 March 2023 by EUR 3 195 000.

Members noted that out of the increase of EUR 136 million compared to the 2023 budget an increase of EUR 120 million is due to statutory obligations, mainly for salary indexation (EUR 62.9 million) and financial obligations resulting from an electoral year (EUR 32.9 million). The increase for non-mandatory expenses is EUR 17 million, representing an increase of 1.97% compared to 2023.

Parliament believes that more substantial savings could be achieved in addition to the EUR 15 million foreseen to be generated due to the reduction in the volume of parliamentary activities in an election year. It also noted that the Committee on Budgets will closely monitor the official forecasted evolution of the salary indexation.

Communication for the 2024 European Elections

Members welcomed the communication campaign of the 2024 elections in order to explain to citizens the purpose of Parliament and its achievements in the current legislature and why voting in the elections can make a difference. They underlined that communication by the political parties and the Members themselves is the main driver for a high participation rate and the involvement and interest of Union citizens in the European elections. The role of Europa Experiences as an integral part of the communication plan to the electoral campaign was highlighted.

Parliament recalled that EUR 27.5 million was allocated for the electoral campaign run by the Parliament administration in the 2023 budget procedure. The remaining 25 % will be allocated in 2024 (EUR 9.5 million).

The Bureau us encouraged to consider supporting communication activities that are in line with the needs of national, regional and linguistic minorities in Member States. In this regard, Members underlined the importance of the active participation of European Parliament **Liaison Offices** in the implementation of Parliament's work on citizenship education through multiple programmes involving local communities and linguistic minorities, schools and universities.

Recognising the value that visitor groups bring in increasing the participation rate, involvement and interest of Union citizens, especially in an election year, Parliament called on the Bureau to revise the rules governing sponsored visits in order to ensure the proper functioning of visitor group programme.

Cyberthreats

Members considered it is of utmost importance that Parliament is **properly equipped against disinformation and cyberattacks**, especially in view of the upcoming elections. They called on the administration to take all the necessary measures to protect the election process from undue interference. They urged the administration to fill the 40 cybersecurity posts agreed during the 2023 budgetary procedure by the end of 2023 in order to continue increasing Parliament's cyber defence capabilities and reach an adequate level of internal capacity before the elections in 2024.

Buildings policy

Parliament recommends that the annual budget planning should take into account the regular renovation of all buildings. Buildings policy should focus on **environmentally friendly renovation of the building stock** and ensure that Parliament strives to maximise energy efficiency by reducing energy consumption, CO2 emissions and the cost of running Parliament's facilities.

Members noted that no budget is foreseen for major building investment in the 2024 estimates. They reminded the Bureau that it is essential to inform and consult the Committee on Budgets before adopting any major decision on buildings due to their important budgetary implications. They invite the Bureau to urgently implement the vote of the Plenary regarding the reconsideration of the future of the Spaak building in Brussels.

Recalling that the single seat is supported by a large majority of Members, Members stressed the need to find solutions to **optimise the work of the parliamentary institution, the financial costs and the carbon footprint**. They point out that under the EU Treaty, Parliament is to have its seat Strasbourg and that any permanent change would require a Treaty change for which unanimity is needed.

Green Parliament

Members reiterated their full support for the targets set by the Parliament's environmental management system (EMAS) for 2024. They welcomed the fact that most of the targets are likely to be met by 2024 and called for continued ambition to meet all targets as soon as possible.

Noting the increase in carbon credit prices, Members called on the Parliament to make energy efficiency investments and on-site production a priority rather than compensating a low ambition with the purchase of carbon credits. They encouraged investment in renewable energy and the phasing out of fossil fuels, including the installation of heat pumps, in view of the energy crisis and the geopolitical context.

Members called for a shift to **low-carbon travel** and a review of the new working arrangements introduced during the pandemic. They welcomed Parliament's actions to encourage staff to use sustainable means of transport to get to work.

The resolution also called on Parliament to introduce a cooling-off period for former Members equal to the time during which they receive a transitional allowance during which they cannot engage in lobbying or representational activities with Parliament. It reiterated its call for a revision of the implementing provisions governing the work of delegations and missions outside the Union.

Lastly, a genuine commitment to making the principle of multilingualism a reality was requested.