2026 budget: estimates of revenue and expenditure, Section I – European Parliament

2024/2111(BUI) - 03/04/2025 - Parliament's opinion on budgetary estimates/guidelines

The European Parliament adopted by 432 votes to 127, with 54 abstentions, the European Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2026.

As a reminder, the budget proposed on 10 February 2025 by the Secretary General for the preliminary draft of the Parliament's budget for 2026 is EUR 2 641 609 620 and represents an increase of 4.30%, or EUR 108 914 512, compared to the 2025 budget.

Parliament approved the agreement reached at the conciliation between the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets on 18 March 2025, consisting of setting the increase at **4.09%** compared to the 2025 budget, which brings the overall level of its forecast for 2026 to **EUR 2 636 241 620**, and consequently reducing the proposed appropriations for a number of budget lines (e.g. overhead allowance, external translation services, rent, building construction and fitting out of premises) by EUR 12 378 000.

Members noted that, of the EUR 103.5 million increase compared to the 2025 budget, EUR 85.3 million is due to statutory financial obligations, mainly the adjustment of the salaries of civil servants and temporary staff (EUR 52.7 million), contract staff (EUR 9.2 million) and accredited parliamentary assistants (EUR 15.1 million). For the third consecutive year, Parliament is not requesting additional posts for 2026.

Parliament welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to undertake a wide-ranging review to identify opportunities for **administrative simplification**, eliminate inefficiencies and ensure tangible cost reductions in order to improve efficiency and ensure the intelligent use of resources.

Strengthening the core functions of Parliament

Members called on the Secretary-General to regularly report to the Committee on Budgets on the development of activities and staffing in the four new thematic Directorates-General (DGs) created in September 2024 to improve Parliament's functioning as co-legislator. They note the EUR 16.75 million budget to strengthen Parliament's administrative capacity to support Members in their parliamentary work.

Digital transition

Members welcomed the increase in appropriations for **cybersecurity**. They supported the planned gradual increase of the cybersecurity financial appropriations to **10%** of Parliament's ICT budget by 2027. They welcomed the EUR 1 million investment in **artificial intelligence** (AI) and called for greater use of AI to achieve efficiency gains while bearing in mind the risks it entails, particularly in terms of ethics and data protection.

Ecological transition

Parliament noted the **EUR 8.45 million** budget allocated to energy efficiency and environmental investments in the 2026 estimates, with a view to improving the environmental performance of its buildings. It also recommended reasonably reducing travel for meetings that can be held effectively remotely or in hybrid formats, and promoting a **transition to low-carbon alternatives** for all other travel. It also welcomed the introduction of an enhanced train service for missions to Strasbourg from July 2025, as a positive step towards reducing CO2 emissions.

Multilingualism, communication and disinformation

Members stressed that multilingualism is a key principle underlying Parliament's work and called for Parliament to take advantage of major technological developments in services related to multilingualism, including the development and use of AI, where appropriate.

Members highlighted the role of the European Parliament's liaison offices in combating foreign interference and disinformation, as well as the role of Parliament in strengthening European civic education, recalling the importance of the European Parliament's 'Ambassador School' programme to promote the active engagement of young Europeans.

Parliament recognised the importance of visitor groups as a vital tool for connecting citizens with the work of Members. It welcomed the increase, as of 1 January 2025, in the ceiling and cost factors for calculating the financial contribution paid to sponsored visitors. However, it expressed concern about the internal regulations applicable to Members' visitor groups.

Infrastructure

Members acknowledged the **new approach** related to buildings, where, after a period of acquisition, Parliament has entered an era of consolidation of buildings, taking into account sustainability, accessibility and mobility of Members and staff.

Parliament is allocating EUR 4 million to prepare for the renovation of the SPAAK building, the total cost of which is estimated at EUR 36 million. It supports the pilot project aimed at removing Legionella, plans to invest EUR 11.45 million in the Europa Experiences, plans to open offices in Moldova and the Balkans without requiring additional funding, improves the Wayenberg daycare centre, and calls for better facilities for families within Parliament to make it more child-friendly.

Other issues

The European Parliament: (i) reaffirmed the importance of remote voting for Members on leave or sick, (ii) encouraged competence-based recruitment ensuring geographical balance, (iii) promoted the inclusion of persons with disabilities, (iv) proposed the reduction of mission costs (which amount to EUR 116 million), (v) called for measures to be taken to allow Members who so wish to use their general expenditure allowance to cover the costs of parliamentary assistants' (APA) missions and (vi) welcomed the exceptional 10% increase in the grants that will be awarded to each trainee in 2026.

Lastly, Parliament recalls that under the Treaty on European Union, Parliament is to have its seat in Strasbourg. Any permanent change would require a revision of the treaty, which requires unanimity.