2000 budget : section III

1998/2186(BUD) - 26/11/1999

On its second reading, the Council approves the Budget 2000 as a whole, compulsory and not-compulsory spendings. Nervertheless, for not-compulsory expenditures, the Parliament has the last word (in particular, for the reconstruction in Kosovo). The Budget, as voted by the Council, is 92.51 billion euro in commitment appropriations and 87,9 billion in payment appropriations, distributed as follows, in billion of euro : - agriculture : 40,53 in commitments and as much in payments; - structural policy : 32,67 in commitments, and 30,97 in payments; - internal policies : 5,93 in commitments and 5,60 in payments; - external actions : 4,61 in commitments and 3,49 in payments; - administration : 4,69 in commitments and as much in payments; - reserves : 0,91 in commitments and as much in payments; - aid to pre-accession : 3,17 in commitments and 1,69 in payments. For Kosovo, the Council is sticking to its position by refusing the Parliament proposal to revise the multi-annual financial perspectives. The Council recommended, as expected, adding 360 million euro to the 140 million already included in the preliminary draft budget proposed by the Commission, by redeployment of credits from heading 4 of the budget. In addition, the Council agreed on the granting of 55 million euro for "improving the processing and marketing of agricultural products" mainly intended to remedy the consequences of the dioxin crises, notably in Belgium. Concerning the dialogue between the Council and the Parliament on the budgetary procedure, both of the institutions agreed on one essential aspect : the Community budget will contribute 360 million euro to Kosovo in the year 2000 (the Commission has pledged 500 million at the second Donor Conference, but the remaining 140 million would be provided from the 2001 budget). There is widespread disagreement about the manner of financing this 360 million euro. The Council proposes that it would be funded as follows : 1) 90 million euro from what remains of the 1999 OBNOVA programme's credits and other credits from the year 2000 (OBNOVA); 2) 50 million euro from humanitarian assistance (30 left over from 1999); 3) 180 million in the redeployment of credits from heading 4, as suggested by the Commission; 4) 40 million in additional redeployment of this heading. The Parliament, on the other hand, calls for a multi-annual commitment of some 1 billion euro, corresponding to about half the requirements estimated by the World Bank and the Commission for 2000-2003. At the same time, it is demanding a corresponding review of the multi-annual financial perpespectives for heading 4 of the budget after evaluation of Kosovo's needs in the first months of year 2000.