Budget 1998: other sections

1997/2209(BUD) - 09/10/1997

Adopting the report by Mr John TOMLINSON (PSE, UK), the committee came out in favour of giving the administrative budgets of the EU institutions the necessary resources to ensure that they are run correctly, while supporting austerity efforts in the Member States. Heading 5 (administrative expenditure) has been increased by 4.34% in comparison with 1997 to ECU 4 541 million. The report reiterates the need to comply with the principles of sound financial management, the need to continuously improve the working of the administrative apparatus, the spirit of innovation and the application of interinstitutional cooperation. It makes provision to freeze the staff of the institutions, with the exception of the Court of Auditors, where new posts have been created in order to meet the need for stricter controls. The European Parliament budget of ECU 908.15 million is up 2.66% over 1997 but is within the European Parliament's self-imposed limit of 20% of total administrative expenditure. Formal note has been made in the resolution of the decisions on the organization of the system of allowances, charges and expenses for MEPs in the exercise of their office in order to guarantee greater transparency. The committee considers nonetheless that these decisions merely constitute a framework and do not qualify as intermediate measures. It invites the Bureau to propose additional measures in order to increase transparency pending the adoption of a basic instrument for MEPs. The administrative budgets of the other institutions should also rise by less than 3% in comparison with 1997. The report also calls for an objective evaluation of the building needs of the institutions, a revision of the system of costs and subsidies for certain activities and services (telecommunications, restaurants and canteens), better use of new technologies on the basis of clear objectives and a well-ordered and accessible information policy.