# 2001 budget: conciliation procedure

2000/2064(BUD) - 22/06/2000

The committee adopted the report by Jutta HAUG (PES, D) on the 2001 budget with a view to the Parliament/Council budgetary conciliation meeting scheduled to take place before the Council held its first reading of the 2001 budget. The committee reiterated Parliament's position that appropriations to fund aid for Kosovo and the Balkan region must be "fresh money". It pointed out that, of the EUR 5.5bn proposed by the Commission for the multiannual programme for the Balkans, only 1.86bn was covered by the financial perspective (FP). It was therefore essential to carry out a revision of the FP and make a multiannual increase in the overall budget (the "ceiling") for the EU's external action (Category 4 of the FP). The committee rejected the idea of "a compulsory multiannual redeployment of EU traditional priorities" to finance new needs solely through reductions in the EU's existing commitments. It confirmed its willingness to review in October the agriculture forecast to be entered in the 2001 budget. Pending the updated figures to be supplied by the Commission in the autumn, it considered it inappropriate to reduce the ceiling for Category 1 (agricultural expenditure) as proposed by the Commission. As regards the funding of international fisheries agreements, the committee approved in principle the proposals put forward in the Commission's preliminary draft budget and called on the Commission to present, before Parliament's first reading, the revised figures for these appropriations, taking account of the state of negotiations on the fisheries agreements. On the common foreign and security policy (CFSP), and in particular the Member States' plans to develop a common security and defence policy (CSDP), the report noted that the latter would have an impact on the budget and the financial perspective (Category 4 - external action; Category 5 - administrative expenditure). It called on the Council and Commission to present a thorough evaluation of the expenditure required for this new policy up until 2006 and proposals on how it would be financed. The committee also called on the Commission to present as soon as possible its proposals on the legal framework, structure and mandate of the various instruments for the "externalisation" of certain tasks currently carried out by the Technical Assistance Offices (TAOs). These proposals should include the creation of a new category of Community bodies - to replace the TAOs - which would be responsible for implementing Community programmes and actions. As regards staff requirements, the Commission must indicate in its assessment (long awaited by Parliament) the staff needed to maintain core activities and run existing programmes as well as its estimates for additional staff for new facilities.