2002 budget: other sections

2000/2325(BUD) - 22/03/2001

The committee adopted the report by Kathalijne BUITENWEG (Greens/EFA, NL) on the guidelines for the 2002 budgetary procedure for the Community institutions other than the Commission (the sections other than Section III). One of the committee's key concerns was the need for all institutions to continue the policy of budgetary rigour and sound financial management and further improve their value for money, for example through the use of activity-based budgeting and activity-based management. On the question of staffing, the committee agreed that an early retirement scheme could help to improve the efficiency of the institutions' administration. It also wanted the various Secretaries-General to examine the full scope for interinstitutional cooperation in the area of staff policy and coordination of work schedules. On the subject of buildings policy, the committee felt that direct financing would provide the most cost-effective way for the institutions and the taxpayer to cover needs in the building sector, especially with a view to enlargement. It endorsed the current policy of capital injections in order to purchase Parliament's buildings in as short a time as possible and thereby reduce the interest burden to a minimum, resulting in considerable savings. Turning to the key issue of enlargement, the report reiterated the need to adjust the financial perspective to take account of the new expenditure requirements and called on all institutions to present a joint interinstitutional strategy before Parliament's first reading of the 2002 budget, together with detailed plans from each institution of its preparations for enlargement. As far as Parliament was concerned, the committee stressed that the 2002 budget must enable Parliament to start preparing for enlargement by 2004 and take account of the increased number of Members and the additional resources (such as staff and buildings) needed to enable them to discharge their duties. Expenditure to be allowed under the 2002 budget for enlargement preparations must be contained in the preliminary draft budget.