2002 budget: EP's estimates

2001/2062(BUD) - 03/05/2001

The committee adopted the report by Kathalijne BUITENWEG (Greens/EFA, NL) on Parliament's revenue and expenditure estimates for 2002, in which it called for Parliament to continue its policy of budgetary rigour. It proposed a total amount of EUR 1,035m for 2002 (an increase of 4.8% over 2001), corresponding to 20% of Heading 5 (administrative expenditure) of the financial perspective. It also stressed that, in preparation for enlargement, Parliament needed to modernise its working methods and organisational set-up and improve its efficiency. It backed the suggestion that a study of the preparations needed should culminate in a three-year plan, which should be ready before Parliament's summer recess to enable the appropriate budget forecasts for 2002 to be completed. The report said that, with a view to 2004, ways should be found to allow MPs from the 12 accession countries to take part in the work of EP committees. Information offices should be set up in those countries, in conjunction with the Commission, to inform the public about the implications of enlargement and about Parliament's activities. Preparations were also needed to cope with new requirements in the areas of translation, interpreting and infrastructure. The committee thus welcomed the Bureau's proposal to enter a reserve for property investments so as to speed up repayments, thus producing major savings in this area. It accordingly agreed to accelerated funding to purchase the Louise Weiss building in Strasbourg. The committee added that all options must be carefully examined to prepare Parliament's building stock for enlargement and insisted that the relevant political decisions should be guided by the principles of transparency, legality and cost-effectiveness. The committee hoped that Parliament and Council would adopt a Statute for Members of the European Parliament as soon as possible. It also believed the staff mobility policy should continue, in conjunction with an overall staff training policy. Lastly, the committee wanted proper measures to be implemented to combat discrimination and ensure equal treatment.