2002 ECSC operating budget

2001/2100(BUD) - 10/10/2001

The committee adopted the report by Esko SEPPÄNEN (EUL/NGL, FIN) on the 2002 ECSC operating budget. It felt that the total amount proposed was insufficient, bearing in mind that the number of jobs lost in the steel industry would be considerably larger than previously estimated, and therefore recommended increasing the operating budget by EUR 16m (thereby bringing it to EUR 167m) to aid redeployment efforts. The report also criticised the Commission for ignoring Parliament's previous calls for crucial ECSC measures, such as redeployment aid and social aid, to be incorporated in the EU's general budget as part of the arrangements for the period following the expiry of the ECSC Treaty (with effect from 23 July 2002). The committee accordingly recommended that the requisite funding for the continuation of measures funded from the ECSC operating budget should be entered in the general budget as from 2002. Noting that, according to the joint statement on financial programming adopted on 20 July 2000, "the budgetary authority must have accurate information about the financial consequences of each new proposal presented by the Commission, in order to be able to assess the impact of the proposal on the ceilings of the Financial Perspective", the committee stressed that the Commission must present a financial assessment of the new activities being incorporated into the general budget so as to ensure that neither existing programmes nor the ceiling in the Financial Perspective were jeopardised. Lastly, it called on the Commission to clarify how it intended to support the modernisation of the coal and steel sectors in the Central and Eastern European applicant countries.