Building our common future : policy challenges and budgetary means for the enlarged Union 2007-2013

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The committee adopted the report drawn up its chairman, Terry WYNN (PES, UK), in response to the Commission's presentation of its proposals for the 2007-2013 financial perspective. MEPs wished to send a clear signal to the Council: without an agreement with Parliament on the financial package, there would be no new financial perspective. Under the current treaty, the EU is not obliged to use this method of budget planning, since the treaty only provides for annual budgets. MEPs were astonished that the Commission was planning to try to cope with the needs of an EU of 27 Member States (the next financial framework would almost certainly coincide with the accession of Bulgaria and Romania) with payment appropriations capped at 1.14% of Community GDP, leaving a margin of 0.10% under the own-resources ceiling. The committee took the view that the EU's financial arrangements must reflect the needs of Community policies in an enlarged EU. The opposite approach, of adjusting policies to a financial framework which can vary at the whim of governments, must be avoided. Lastly, MEPs restated their wish for the duration of the next financial perspective to move in step with the term of office of the Commission and Parliament. This would mean introducing a five-year programming period without waiting until 2013, the date chosen by the Commission and implicitly dictated by the Council.