2001 Budget: section III

1999/2190(BUD) - 04/09/2000 - Amending/supplementary letter on draft budget

When setting its policy and budget priorities for the 2001 budget and in line with the commitments it made in its White Paper on reform, the Commission decided on 23 February 2000 to conduct a detailed evaluation of its activities and human resources. In the Preliminary Draft Budget (PDB) 2001 the Commission did not request additional posts. The Commission was conscious that first all possible efforts of reorganisation had to be explored to meet needs. Any request of additional posts had to flow from a rigorous, quantitative analysis of needs for core political activities and means to meet these needs internally. Only if after adjustments a shortfall was still evident than a request for further resources would be justified. This rigorous approach has led to the identification of overall genuine needs standing at around 1 254 posts, excluding research, the Commission will find two thirds through its own efforts and request the remainder to the Budgetary Authority by means of a net increase in its establishment plan. On this basis, the Commission believes that it is able to bring the political ambitions that it set itself before Parliament and the European citizens last February into line with the means available to it. It is also useful to recall that this phase of in-depth restructuring of the various departments the Commission follows the one carried out since autumn 1999, allowing it to redeploy staff to its core tasks and policy priorities, and involving 690 staff. This amending letter also translates the impact of the phasing out of a number of Technical Assistance Offices - as decided by the Commission as part of its overall externalisation strategy. The 2001 budget will have to finance the transitional arrangements - in particular the financing of outside personnel on the so-called 'BA lines' in part B of the budget - until most of the tasks of the present TAOs can be taken over by newly created implementing bodies, largely relying on staff with an appropriate new contractual regime.