1999 budget: ad hoc procedures

1998/2007(BUD) - 02/07/1998 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

In adopting the report by Mrs Bárbara DÜHRKOP DÜHRKOP (PSE, E) on the 'ad hoc' procedures for the 1999 budget (for agriculture, fisheries agreements and the CFSP), the European Parliament regretted that the Council had not demonstrated any readiness to examine seriously the matter of classification, in spite of the commitments given in 1995. It confirmed its attachment to the principle that the nature of the legal act alone determined the nature of the expenditure, and presented in an annex to the resolution a redistribution of budget lines under the 1999 nomenclature, a redistribution which Parliament said represented its position for the dialogue to be held between the Institutions as part of the 1999 budget procedure. Parliament called on the Council to conduct a dialogue with Parliament on the classification of the budget lines in 1998 in order to arrive at an agreement on the maximum rate of increase for the 1999 budget. Still on the subject of the legal basis, Parliament noted that for some of the appropriations entered in the preliminary draft budget the legal basis was still pending before the Council and called on the Council not to enter amounts on the budget lines until a legislative decision was taken. It approved the creation of a special reserve of ECU 700 m for market uncertainties and accompanying measures in the field of agriculture with a corresponding provisional reduction of all B1 lines (EAGGF - Guarantee lines). It considered that when the Commission presented its Letter of Amendment to the preliminary draft budget the final appropriations per budget line should be determined on the basis of the most recent estimates. It called on the Commission to draw up an evaluation report on the effectiveness of the actions undertaken with regard to agricultural production methods compatible with environmental requirements, expenditure on early retirement and forestry. It considered that the present requirements on sustainable agriculture were too imprecise and requested the Commission to present at the time of the presentation of the Letter of Amendment on the preliminary draft budget specific proposals in this field (e.g. codes of good agricultural practice and environmental standards or indicators). It called on national Ministries of Agriculture, farming organisations and farmers themselves to assume their responsibilities concerning food safety and the avoidance of the spread of animal diseases on a large scale, such as BSE and swine fever, in order to avoid passing on to the Union's budget the financial consequences of the costs of redressing the effects of the outbreak of such diseases. For this purpose, a European guarantee fund should be created to compensate for damage or disadvantage suffered as a result of animal diseases. As regards fisheries, Parliament noted that the amounts entered on the line 'International fisheries agreements' were overestimated, and proposed transferring ECU 0.5 m into the reserve. It welcomed the commitment to extend to international fisheries agreements the procedure entailing a Letter of Amendment to the 1999 preliminary draft budget and hoped that this would reflect the real situation of the negotiations on new international fisheries agreements. As regards the CFSP, Parliament proposed a modification of the breakdown of the funding to reduce funding for emergency measures in order to increase support for democratic transition and electoral processes, European Union Special Envoys and prevention of conflicts and support for the Middle East peace process. Parliament recalled that the Council had still not communicated to Parliament an estimate of the actual cost of CFSP joint actions, and called on the Council and Commission to state their views on the Interinstitutional Agreement on this subject.