2001 budget: EP's estimates

2000/2092(BUD) - 18/05/2000 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted the report drafted by Markus FERBER (EPP/ED, Germany) on the preliminary draft budget estimates for Parliament's 2001 budget. The amount required by Parliament totalled EUR 987.8 million. Its own resources amounted to EUR 60.8 million. The contribution due from the European Communities is therefore EUR 926.9 million. Parliament needs adequate resources to prepare for enlargement, including timely measures in the linguistic sector. It decided to increase the appropriations for item 2101 (distributed data-processing systems) by EUR 1.5 million to improve the level of technical support for Members, and in particular, to meet the costs of providing a second networked computer for all Members in Brussels. The Council is expected to cooperate with Parliament in the most constructive way possible to adopt the Statute of Members of the European Parliament, and to adopt also the Statute for Members' assistants. On political group funding, Parliament referred to the Court of Auditors document, which recommends a provisional solution based on a separate budget line to record the appropriations for European political parties, and stated that there must be complete transparency regarding the use of appropriations for a transitional period up until the entry into force of the statute on European political parties. On the question of new staff, Parliament rejected the proposal to occupy the 35 vacant posts from the "enlargement" reserve in the language sector, but requested its Secretary-General to present a report before Parliament's first reading of the 2001 budget, on the measures to be taken to prepare Parliament's language service for enlargement. The necessary appropriations for certain posts in the Parliament were agreed, including posts in the Data Processing and Telecommunications Directorate and the Directorate-General for Committees and Delegations. Parliament postpones its decision on certain posts until September 2000, including those in the Legal Service and the Security Service. It awaits the information requested from other institutions before deciding on staff upgradings. With regard to buildings policy, Parliament noted that the estimates for 2001 are partly based upon an interest rate of 4% and that this rate might increase further. It may re-examine in September the level of appropriations for the repayments for the Parliament buildings, accordingly. It regretted that the Council once again refuses the direct financing procedure for buildings. Parliament approved increasing the value of the Sakharov prize to EUR 50 000, as well as the opening of an 'Info-Point' within the Parliament's premises in Brussels. Finally, the Parliament observed that, although it is by nature an open institution, certain security standards are required and that the quality of Parliament's Security Service must be improved.