2003 budget: implementation, credit transfers, amending and supplementary budgets

2003/2026(BUD) - 03/07/2003 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted, by 407 votes for, 10 against and 34 abstentions, the report by Mr Göran FÄRM (PES, S) on the 2003 budget: implementation profile, transfers of appropriations and supplementary and amending budgets. The Parliament followed the decision of the committee responsible (please refer to the document dated 17/06/03) except for an amendment approved by the House concerning fisheries expenditure. The Parliament notes that the Council has not established its position on the financing of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and in particular has not yet agreed on financing the scrapping fund under the 2003 budget. It expresses its readiness to provide for appropriations for the scrapping of fishing vessels in the context of the global evaluation of the implementation of the budget, ahead of the end-of-year transfer procedures, once the Member States have put forward their requests. Concerning external policies, the Parliament criticises the fact that the Commission had to cancel an amount of EUR 6,48 million of appropriations, that had been carried over from 2002, because the implementation deadline of 31 March was missed. It is particularly disappointed that this deadline was missed by one single day for a number of projects. As regards the RAL and the implementation plan, Parliament notes that notes that, as at 30 April 2003, total outstanding commitments (RAL) had risen to EUR 126.1 billion from an amount of EUR 110.7 billion at the same date in 2002, an increase of 14%. Is concerned at this general increase, although final opinion must be reserved until new information on the abnormal part of these RALs is available. It recalls the Commission's undertaking to submit, with the PDB for 2004, an action plan examining all potentially abnormal outstanding commitments and a timetable for their elimination by the end of 2003. It states that these documents will contain information, broken down per Member State, on items falling under the N+2 rule and indicate the measures to be taken. It also recalls that the Implementation Plan for 2003 should take into account and reflect the political priorities of the European Parliament as set out in the already adopted 2003 budget. The House believes that there is a problem with the general debate on RALs (outside purely budgetary circles) as the total figures are so often confused with what is the "abnormal" part, even within the Institutions themselves, let alone by the general public and considers that the abnormal part of the RAL must be made more visible and, as a first step, that it should appear separately and regularly in documents produced by the Commission.