2002 budget: implementation profile, transfers and Supplementary and amending budgets

2002/2084(BUD) - 02/07/2002 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by its rapporteur Guido PODESTA (EPP-ED, Italy) on certain aspects of the 2002 budget. (Please refer to the summary dated 19/06/02.) For December 2002, the Commission is forecasting an average implementation rate of 100% for commitments and 97% for payments. Parliament hoped that these were realistic forecasts, particularly as regards payments given that the implementation rate for them was only 72% in 2001. With regard to transfers, Parliament was concerned to emphasise that these must not simply be used to shift budgetary funds from one area to another so that the final budget would contradict the priorities voted by the budgetary authority. More than EUR 2 billion in payment appropriations was transferred during the 2001 budgetary procedure. The Commission should present a schedule for the transfers it intends to request from one chapter to another, in particular during the last quarter. In principle, Parliament will not accept any transfer request that reduces budget lines unless convincing justifications can be provided and adequate proposals are presented to improve the implementation of the donor line. Heading 6 (emergency reserve) could cover additional needs, particularly if natural disasters, wars or crises make EU aid important for the population concerned. Parliament went on to deplore the fact that most of the programmes where the Commission is forecasting about 10% divergence from the budgetary authority's decision, in terms of commitments or payments, represent political priorities for Parliament, such as e-learning, information and communication, social dimension and employment, JHA, and cooperation with Latin America. The Commission is asked for detailed reasons. With regard to the individual headings, there was concern on heading 2 and the increasing volume of outstanding commitments, which rose form EUR 38418 million to EUR 56 765 million in the calendar year 2001 and totalled EUR 82 710 million in May 2002. There needs to be new control instruments to ensure effective quarterly monitoring and thus improve implementation of structural operations. On heading 3, Parliament expressed concern about the low implementation rate for pilot projects and preparatory actions at the end of May 2002 (less than 5%.) It was unacceptable that objections to implementation raised by the Commission, which had already been considered by the budgetary authority, continued to be invoked by the commission after the budget had been established. On heading 4, Parliament noted that the budget line for support for Asian developing countries was at only 13% in terms of commitments at the end of May, which it considered surprising given the situation in Afghanistan and the conflict between India and Pakistan. Finally, on heading 5, the Commission was asked to explain why the budget line on women's organisations had apparently been restricted to only one field of action. The original intention of the budgetary authority was to open it to a wide range of organisations not covered by the European Women's Lobby.