2001 Budget: section III

1999/2190(BUD) - 26/10/2000 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mrs Jutta HAUG (PES, D) on the draft general budget of the European Union for 2001 (430 votes for, 59 against and 23 abstentions). The Parliament recalls that new needs unforeseen at the time the financial perspective was agreed in principle require a revision of that financial perspective. The revision of the ceiling in heading 4 is a political necessity. Moreover, the Council is invited, taking into consideration the evolutions in Serbia, to forward its estimates on the financial needs for the region to be presented at the Balkan Summit in Zagreb on 24 November 2000 without delay. In addition, the Parliament considers that the two arms of the budgetary authority should establish jointly, as part of the 2001 budget, the multiannual allocations for the MEDA and CARDS programmes. With regard to the administrative reform, the European Parliament accepts the creation of 400 new posts and approves in principle, the introduction of an early retirement scheme in the framework of the reform of the Commission. Furthermore, it underlines the need to find sustainable and realistic solutions to the problem of the backlog in payments for structural operations, internal policies, external actions and preaccession aid and points to the need to make available sufficient payment appropriations for the new commitment appropriations entered in the 2001 budget. The Commission is asked to speed up the creation of the bodies replacing the Technical Assistance Offices. The Parliament underlines the need for better monitoring of budget implementation throughout the financial year and rejects the attitude shown by the Commission in refusing to implement programmes on the grounds of lack of resources, thus going against the decisions of the budgetary authority without even consulting the Parliament. As regards agriculture, the report decides through its budget amendments to restore the PDB in heading 1a, pending the Commission Letter of Amendment No 2/2001 and invites the Council to review its position concerning appropriations on the reading of this Amended Letter. The Commission is called upon to draw up by 30 June 2001 an assessment of the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy. Consequently, and in order to avoid a potentially serious shortage of payment appropriations, this report underscores the budget decisions to restore the PDB as regards the payment appropriations of the Structural Funds and creates a substantial reserve in order to assess the likely supplementary needs. In the field of internal policies, the European Parliament notes the considerable reduction (14,6%) made by the Council compared to the 2000 budget and adopts the amendments which safeguard its political priorities concerning internal policies. It deplores the fact that the information and communication activities lack dynamism and that insufficient coordination takes place within the Commission and at interinstitutional level. As a consequence, it has entered appropriations for information policies in the reserve. The European Parliament reiterates its support for a statuteon European political parties and underlines its determination to see a substantial increase in the allocations for SMEs. In addition, the Parliament underscores the considerable efforts it has undertaken to find more resources in the budget for the Balkans than the Council was prepared to see allocated. It considers the level of funding for that region still to be insufficient. The Parliament provides EUR 60 million supporting democratisation in that country. It also creates a specific new line in the budget with a token entry, pending a decision by the budgetary authority. Finally, the report expresses support for the for the enlargement process by reinstating the payment appropriations entered by the Commission in the PDB for the preaccession instruments SAPARD and ISPA. It calls on the Commission to submit to the Parliament by 30 June 2001 a report explaining its view on the consequences that enlargement will have on the administrative structure of the Commission.