2002 budget: other sections

2000/2325(BUD) - 25/10/2001 - Budgetary text adopted by Parliament

By adopting the report by Mrs Kathalijne Maria BUITENWEG (Greens/EFA, NL), the European Parliament approves the first reading of the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2002 concerning all the other sections of the budget as well as on the Letter of Amendment 1/2002. The Parliament notes that the Council decided at its first reading to cut administrative expenditure by EUR 59 million, thus leaving an apparent margin of EUR 53.4 million under the ceiling. Remaining concerned at the increasingly difficult situation in heading 5 (Administrative Expenditure); the Parliament points out that new needs have emerged that were not considered in the financial perspective, such as developments concerning the second pillar (European Security and Defence Policy) and the third pillar (Eurojust; Joint Data Protection Bodies) and expenditure for the European Data Protection Supervisor, which put additional pressure on the current margin. With regard to the European Parliament, it has decided, in principle, to remain within the self-imposed 20% ceiling of heading 5 of the financial perspective. It recalls that expenditure relating to the Statute for Members, buildings and enlargement remains excluded from that ceiling and underlines the fact that Parliament's willingness to finance enlargement- related costs without exceeding EUR 1 035 million is a measure of its budgetary rigour and by no means creates a precedent for subsequent budgets. It underlines that a Statute for Members must be adopted as soon as possible, together with new rules governing Members' expenses. It has decided to make available for enlargement-related expenditure in the 2002 budget an allocation of EUR 18.78 million (of which EUR 13.06 million has been placed in the reserve) to cover a certain number of measures relating to enlargement. It considers it essential that Parliament make its voice heard in the debate on the future of Europe and agrees, therefore, to place EUR 800 000 for publications, information and participation in public events and EUR 597 000 for auxiliary staff in the reserve, pending the submission of a report on a coherent strategy for Parliament in this debate. It has also decided to increase the appropriations against Item 2723 ("Organisation and reception of groups of visitors, Euroscola and invitations to opinion multipliers from third countries") by EUR 250 000. The Parliament is of the opinion that the Court has been given the necessary resources in the 2001 and 2002 budgets to resolve the problem of the backlog in translations and to meet the expected increase in workload in the Court of First Instance and requests the Court to present a report to the budgetary authority by 1 June 2002 on the situation concerning the translation backlog and on changes in the workload of the Court, in particular on the number of cases brought before the Court of First Instance. The European Parliament endorses the efforts by the Court to modernise its auditing methods as a further way of optimising the allocation of resources. It also notes that the European Commission intends to use the same computerisation project for its internal audit; has decided, therefore, to enter EUR 296 000 for this purpose in the reserve. It agrees with the Economic and Social Committee that the legitimacy of the Members of the institution derives primarily from their own expertise and asks to reduce appropriations concerning studies, surveys and consultations of a limited nature to EUR 575 000. With regard to the Committee of the Regions, it has decided to authorise measures concerning eight upgradings. With regard to the European Ombudsman, it has decided to authorise the conversion of several permanent posts to temporary posts estimating that these measures will contribute to finding an appropriate balance between permanent and temporary posts in the Ombudsman's secretariat and will avoid further disruption in its work. Lastly, the European Parliament has decided to establish a new section for the European Data Protection Supervisor. To this end, it considers it appropriate to enter an appropriation of EUR 1.2 million in the reserve, pending further decisions to be taken; awaits additional information to be submitted to the budgetary authority on the likely workload of this new body, precise job descriptions for the posts requested and a clear demarcation in relation to tasks under the responsibility of the European Ombudsman.