

# 2006 budget: the European Parliament's estimates

2005/2012(BUD) - 12/05/2005 - Parliament's opinion on budgetary estimates/guidelines

Parliament adopted a report by Valdis DOMBROVSKIS (EPP-ED, LV) which aims to identify Parliament's financial needs for the year 2006. Proper preparation for the 2007 enlargement, as well as the consolidation of the 2004 enlargement and the reinforcement of information and linguistic services are identified as key priorities for the coming year (please refer to the summary dated 20/04/2005).

As regards the quality and efficiency of Parliament's work, Parliament takes note of the proposals by the Secretary-General to consolidate the "Raising the Game" reform of Parliament's Administration so as to improve services for Members. It calls for the proposals to be put into practise, especially those for assisting Members in their legislative work, including the setting-up of project teams. Improvements in language support for parliamentary work are also sought. An expansion in translation capacity so that Members can work on documents in their own languages has been called for. Moreover, Parliament expresses its reservations concerning the development of actions related to the transposition and implementation of legislation, falling within the competence of the Commission. It points out that citizens and media should have easy access to an improved "Legislative Observatory" on Parliament's website.

On personnel policy, it is considered essential to improve, simplify and speed up staff recruitment procedures to avoid making them exceedingly long. It stresses the need to create a truly merit-based promotion system for staff to provide accelerated promotion opportunities for the best-performing officials. Parliament is concerned about the high number of the as yet unfilled enlargement posts created in the 2004 and 2005 budgets, of which probably only 78% will be filled by the end of 2005. It finds the delays in enlargement-related recruitment procedures regrettable and requests that its Secretary-General submit a report by 1 July 2005 on the recruitment situation.

On the global level of Parliament's budget, it notes that the Secretary-General's preliminary draft estimates proposal is to set the level of the budget, at this stage, at 20% of heading 5 (Administrative expenditure) of the financial perspective, which corresponds to EUR 1 341 600 000 and represents an increase of 5.5% over the 2005 budget. It reserves its final position on the total amount for Section I until Parliament's first reading.

Parliament reiterates its position on the importance of determining the level of Parliament's budget on the basis of justified, real needs to avoid cancellation of appropriations at the end of 2006. The proposal to enter a margin of EUR 90 456 885 in the contingency reserve until the new priorities have been formulated has been noted. A more realistic margin for new priorities and unforeseen expenditure should be set aside in the contingency reserve at first reading.

Lastly, it is recalled that Parliament's policy of purchasing its main buildings has led to significant savings. An updated plan on building policy for acquisition of property in the short and medium term is called for, including options to purchase premises for Information Offices and Europe Houses.