2006 budget: other sections

2005/2002(BUD) - 13/10/2005

The committee adopted the report by Valdis DOMBROVSKIS (EPP-ED, LV) on the EU's draft general budget for 2006 (institutions other than the Commission). In its general remarks, the report reiterated Parliament's commitment to providing "the necessary means to consolidate the 2004 enlargement, to prepare for the next enlargement and to ensure the proper functioning of the institutions". While agreeing that budgetary rigour must be applied to administrative expenditure, the committee nevertheless criticised the Council's method of "undifferentiated across-the-board cuts". It wanted an adequate margin to be left under the ceiling of heading 5 (Administrative expenditure) and proposed to restore some EUR 7.4 million of the EUR 15.1 million which the Council had cut at first reading from the budgets of the other institutions (excluding Parliament and the Council).

- **Section I - European Parliament**: the report stressed that over the years Parliament had successfully respected its self-imposed ceiling of a 20% share of heading 5. Having prudently examined Parliament's real needs, MEPs decided that there was potential for reducing Parliament's budget for 2006 by EUR 20 million. They therefore set the budget at EUR 1 321.6 million, while stressing that this reduction did not constitute a precedent for subsequent years.

Although 2006 marked a pause in Parliament's successful buildings policy, the committee decided to set aside EUR 15m for the purchase of buildings in case opportunities arose in 2006. MEPs also said that, in line with Parliament's priorities, EUR 20 m should be entered in an 'Information and Communication' reserve for improving communication between the EP and the citizens. They also wanted to see "a more comprehensible and attractive structure for debates in plenary" and further improvement of provision of linguistic services to Members. Finally, they decided to increase the amount of EUR 13.8 m earmarked for preparations for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania by EUR 9.7m, bringing the total to EUR 23.5m;

- **Section II - Council**: the committee expressed concern at the appropriations allocated to cover expenditure on CFSP activities as well as the introduction of multiple new budget lines for ESDP/CFSP-related activities. It pointed out that other institutions' budgets should cover administrative expenditure;

- **Section IV - Court of Justice**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by EUR 3.4 m, mainly for salaries, freelance transation and information technology;

- **Section V - Court of Auditors**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by EUR 1.55 m, mainly for salaries;

- **Section VI - Economic and Social Committee (ESC)**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by EUR 1.19 m, mainly for salaries and adjustments to buildings-related expenditure;

- **Section VII - Committee of the Regions (CoR)**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by around EUR 1.26 m, mainly for salaries and adjustments to buildings-related expenditure;

- **Section VIII(A) - European Ombudsman**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by EUR 173 056;

- **Section VIII(B) - European Data Protection Supervisor**: MEPs increased the appropriations made available by the Council by EUR 136 600.