



Parliament gives Council extra time to sort out its position on the EU budget

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The European Parliament deplores the fact that, almost at the end of the 21-day conciliation period, the Council is still ignoring the urgent need to deliver a budget for the EU and is instead completely preoccupied with its own disputes over the member states' GNI contributions for 2014. Parliament will give the Council extra time to come up with its stance and will resume talks on deadline day on Monday 17 November.

Parliament's position has been known since Day 1 on 15 October: it wants the EU's debts to be paid and its political promises kept.

Parliament's political groups are unanimous in their demand that member states put money behind their earlier political promises and not let EU citizens down by not paying the bills incurred as a consequence of the commitments made.

Therefore, Parliament wants firstly to stabilize the ever-growing pile of unpaid bills, which cause difficulties for beneficiaries awaiting payment. The most urgent bills, amounting to €4.7 billion must be paid in 2014 using an unexpected windfall of €5 billion, mostly from fines. The windfall must not be redistributed to the member states instead.

Accepting the Council's approach would mean that students on Erasmus+ grants, small and medium sized enterprises participating in EU programmes, researchers working to bring about growth, and people receiving EU humanitarian aid would be left without support.

The snowballing of debt, caused by repeatedly putting off the settlement of bills to the next year, must stop now. If the €4.7 billion in urgent bills is not paid, the EU will start 2015 with a backlog of €26-28 billion, according to the Commission.

Parliament wants to see a roadmap drawn up with a precise schedule for reducing the mountain of unpaid bills. It requests a long-term solution to settle the outstanding claims.

For 2015, Parliament insists on a budget that is able to inject much-needed capital into projects that generate growth. Member states, which argue for more investment in the economy, should match their words with acts and should not slash funding to the EU investment budget.

Jean Arthuis (ALDE, FR), chair of Parliament's Budgets Committee

Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D, ES), rapporteur on budget 2015, European Commission

Monika Hohlmeier (EPP, DE), rapporteur on budget 2015, other sections

Gérard Deprez (ALDE, BE), rapporteur on budget 2014

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