Budgets MEPs welcome draft budget for 2016

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Budgets MEPs welcomed next year’s “restricted” but well focused draft budget presented by Commission Vice-President Kristalina Georgieva on Wednesday immediately after it was approved by the Commission.

MEPs emphasized that the budgetary priorities of job and growth creation and solidarity among EU countries and with ailing regions met Parliament’s demands in the resolution it passed in March.

Several MEPs welcomed the comfortable margins - the gap between program allocations and the ceiling set by the multiannual financial framework (MFF) - as a possible solution in the ongoing negotiations between Parliament and Council on the financing of the Juncker Plan.

Quotes from the meeting

"This budget is restricted by treaties and MFF. It is not enormous, at only 1% of the gross national income (GNI) of the European Union. (...) Parliament accepted the MFF with the proviso that the budgetary flexibility it provides is utilised to the full. The other institutions must not lose sight of this, in particular the Council must be reminded that promises must be kept." José Manuel Fernandes (EPP, PT), rapporteur for the budget of the European Commission.

"The margin seems to be relatively big. This could well influence the currently ongoing [Juncker Plan] negotiations. (...) On administrative expenses, actions like the opening of a delegation in Tehran will have to be discussed in detail." Gérard Deprez (ALDE, BE), rapporteur for the 2016 budget of the European Parliament.

"There is a €2.2 billion margin for the next year, if you look at the history of the EU budget, it has rarely been this high, so obviously there is money available for [an alternative financing of the Juncker Plan]." Eider Gardiazábal Rubial (S&D, ES), rapporteur in charge of the budget for 2015.

Main figures

(source: Commission)

- Commitments: €153.5 billion (1.04% of EU GNI, +2.4% without reprogramming of €21 billion from 2014) Margin: €2.2 billion
- Payments: €143.5 billion (0.98% of EU GNI, +1.6%) Margin: €1.6 billion

Next steps

The budgets committee will now prepare a mandate for a negotiating delegation that will discuss the draft with the Council. Following a discussion between Parliament, the Council and the European Commission, the budget negotiations proper will start in the autumn,
after the Parliament has stated its opinion on the Council position.

**Further information**


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