Press release

EU budget 2013: pay the bills and reverse growth and jobs cuts too, say MEPs

Committees: Committee on Budgets

To enable the EU to pay incoming bills, the European Commission's budget proposal for payments must be reinstated, to restore funds cut by the Council, said Parliament's Budgets Committee in its position, voted Thursday, on the EU's 2013 budget. MEPs also reversed other cuts proposed by the Council in investments to stimulate growth and jobs.

Budgeting to stimulate growth and jobs

In areas that MEPs believe are vital to boost the economy, such as research, entrepreneurship and employment measures, the committee recommended reversing the cuts of €1.9 billion proposed by the Council in July.

The programmes at stake include Life Long Learning, the 7th Framework programme for Research and Development, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme, Erasmus Mundus, Intelligent Energy, and also funding for the newly established European Banking, Securities and Markets, and Pensions authorities.

"I firmly believe that the EU and its policies are the way out of the crisis", said Mr Giovanni La Via (EPP; IT), who is steering the lion's share of the budget through Parliament. "We need to invest, in a responsible way, in research, small and medium-sized enterprises and innovation. One euro spent at EU level returns more than the same euro spent at national level. For example, in the field of research, one euro invested from the EU budget results in a return of 14 euro", he said.

For regional policy, MEPs sought to reverse proposed cuts amounting to €1.6 billion, and added a provision, amounting to €16 million for some small pilot projects. For agriculture, they also voted to restore most of the funding cut by the Council.

Schengen budget lines in reserve

Due to a conflict with the Council over the legal basis of decisions on the Schengen border check-free area, MEPs decided to put 75% of the budget for four Schengen-related programmes in a reserve, pending a resolution of the issue.

Within the citizenship heading, MEPs decided to reinstate the draft budget in many areas and also increase it to support a number of smaller programmes, such as the European Year of Citizens and Youth in Action.

Support for the Middle East peace process

For Palestine and the Middle East Peace process, MEPs voted not only to reinstate the €200 million foreseen in the Commission draft budget, but to add €100 million to this heading

Administration

Press Service
Directorate for the Media
Director - Spokesperson : Jaume DUCH GUILLOT
Reference No:20120928IPR52545
Press switchboard number (32-2) 28 33000

MEPs agreed on further cuts of €8.9 million to Parliament's own budget, as compared to the initial proposal by the Commission. In effect, this would increase Parliament's budget by 1.9% as compared to 2012, which equals estimated inflation. However, since this budget includes the extra costs of Croatia's EU accession, it would be reduced in real terms.

The MEP responsible for administrative budgets, Mr Derek Vaughan (UK, S&D), welcomed the outcome of the vote: "We have achieved a real-terms freeze in Parliament's budget, by cutting the travel budget and freezing members' allowances, and have also managed to include the extra costs for Croatia's accession. I am pleased that other institutions have also taken bold steps to reduce expenditure where possible".

Next steps

The plenary vote is scheduled for 23 October. Conciliation with the Council will start on the evening of Friday 26 October, with a closing meeting on Friday 9 November. If conciliation produces an agreement, it will be put to a final plenary vote at the November session.

Figures are now available via the link to the right.

Contact :

Ron KORVER
BXL: (+32) 2 28 44659
STR: (+33) 3 881 74903
PORT: (+32) 498 98 35 88
EMAIL: budg-press@europarl.europa.eu

Sara AHNBORG
BXL: (+32) 2 28 34018
STR: (+33) 3 881 72420
PORT: (+32) 498 98 13 36
EMAIL: budg-press@europarl.europa.eu