

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

A6-0262/2008

20.6.2008

REPORT

on the 2009 budget: First reflections on the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget and
mandate for the conciliation
(2008/2025(BUD))

Section III – Commission

Committee on Budgets

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the 2009 budget: First reflections on the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget and mandate for the conciliation, Section III - Commission (2008/2025(BUD))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Preliminary Draft Budget for the financial year 2009 which the Commission adopted on 6 May 2008,
 - having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management¹,
 - having regard to Article 272 of the EC Treaty and Article 177 of the Euratom Treaty,
 - having regard to its resolutions of 24 April 2008 on the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy for 2009² and on the budgetary framework and priorities for 2009³,
 - having regard to Rule 69 and Annex IV of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets and the opinions of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Transport and Tourism, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee on Culture and Education, (A6-0262/2008),
- A. whereas, in 2009, the Lisbon Treaty, if ratified, will finally place the European Parliament on an equal footing with the Council in the legislative and the budgetary field and will grant new competencies to the European Union, all of which will have an important impact on the EU budget,
- B. whereas the annual budgetary procedure as a whole will have to undergo fundamental changes as a consequence of the provisions of the new treaty, and the differentiation between compulsory and non-compulsory expenditure as well as the (maximum) rate of increase for non-compulsory expenditure will be abandoned,
- C. whereas on 16 April 2008 the three institutions agreed in a declaration to undertake discussions, as soon as possible, on the necessary arrangements on budgetary issues related to the Lisbon Treaty, bearing in mind that 2009 will bring a new European Parliament and a new European Commission which will have to be fully prepared for the changes brought about by the new Treaty, if ratified,

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1. Agreement as last amended by Decision 2008/371/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 128, 16.5.2008, p. 8).

² Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0174.

³ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0175.

Preliminary Draft Budget 2009

1. Notes that the total for the preliminary draft budget (PDB) for 2009 is EUR 134 394,9 million in commitment appropriations and EUR 116 736,4 million in payment appropriations, leaving a margin of EUR 2 638,1 million under the ceiling in commitments and of EUR 7 443,6 million in payments, with compulsory expenditure accounting for 33% of commitments and 38% of payments;
2. Points out that commitments in the PDB 2009 correspond to 1,04% of GNI, which is an overall increase of 3,1% compared to the budget 2008, with compulsory expenditure having gone up by 4,7% due to the phasing-in of direct aids for the new Member States, and non-compulsory expenditure by 2,4%;
3. Notes with interest that PDB 2009 payments correspond to 0,90% of GNI, which is a decrease of 3,3% compared to the budget 2008, with payments for compulsory expenditure having risen by 4,8% in line with the development in commitments while those for non-compulsory expenditure have decreased by 7,6%;
4. Takes note of the PDB priorities as set out by the Commission:
 - Supporting sustainable growth and fostering an economic climate in which job creation can flourish; support for innovation;
 - Continuing cohesion policy in order to reduce inequalities between the Union's regions;
 - Combating climate change and promoting research into clean and efficient energy; developing an EU energy policy characterised by independence and security;
 - Developing a common integration policy and creating a common area of justice;
 - Supporting the Middle East peace process as well as stability in Kosovo and the wider Balkan region;
 - Supply of food aid and strengthening the environmental strand of development cooperation;

General reflections

5. Expresses its conviction that the European Union must be equipped with the level of resources necessary to fully implement its current policies and activities and at the same time to have enough flexibility to meet new policy challenges;
6. Notes that by far the largest portion of the overall margin of EUR 2 638 million in the PDB, i.e. an amount of EUR 2 027 million, stems from the margin of market related expenditure and direct payments under heading 2 (first CAP pillar); deplores the fact that the 2007-2013 multiannual financial framework (MFF) and the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 (IIA) allow this margin under heading 2 (first CAP pillar) to

be used only under extremely restrictive conditions and that the EU is therefore unable to respond to new political needs flexibly; stresses that this large margin should be usable to realise the Union's new priority objectives, as was the case in November 2007, following Council and Parliament agreement, for the Galileo project; points out that structurally, since 2007, real spending under heading 2 (first CAP pillar) is below the ceilings laid down by the MFF;

7. Points out that, as a result of the very small margins under the other ceilings of the MFF, in particular in headings 1a, 3b and 4, the Union's capacity to react to policy changes in budgetary terms is extremely limited; underlines, at the same time, the possibility for recourse to the provisions of the IIA to overcome financial shortfalls;
8. Considers it its responsibility as budgetary authority to ensure that the funding allocated to the EU budget is spent with a view to optimising the limited resources; intends to strive for a more ambitious, balanced and coherent budget in cooperation with, and taking into account the requests of, the specialised committees;
9. Cannot always see a clear correlation between the Commission's political priorities, as described in its Annual Policy Strategy (APS) and the PDB, and increases in the corresponding budget lines and policy areas; is still not satisfied with the attempts of the Commission to include Parliament's priorities in the PDB; is not convinced, for example, that the climate change priority really is reflected throughout the budget as proposed by the Commission; wishes to receive more information as to the methodology used to come to the conclusion that over 10%, or EUR 14 billion, of the EU budget is spent on environmental targets; requests a comprehensive presentation of all climate change related expenditure in the budget, including the structural funds, to be able to evaluate the correlation between political and budgetary priorities;
10. States its interest in cooperating closely with the Council and the Commission to find an effective agreement on the energy and climate change package soon; notes that the EU needs to continue to demonstrate that economic growth and development can be reconciled with a low-carbon economy;
11. Expresses its strong concern that a time has come in which the margins that are available are more and more frequently due to "creative budgeting" such as backloading existing multiannual programmes, excluding budgetary requirements that are already well known and foreseeable and other similar manoeuvres; considers such practices to be in breach of the principle of sound budgeting and requests once more a PDB that is an honest reflection of the budgetary needs to come in the following year; invites the Commission and the Council to cooperate with a view to taking the necessary decisions to reach a satisfactory level of appropriations for the 2009 budget;
12. Stresses the importance of clarity, consistency and transparency in the presentation of the EU budget, which is an absolute necessity also with regard to the need to communicate to European citizens how EU money is spent; is concerned that differentiating between operational and administrative expenditure of the Commission has become increasingly difficult and that an already substantial amount of expenditure of an administrative nature, that should realistically be financed under heading 5, is financed from operational allocations;

13. Deplores the fact that, at the moment, there is no clear indication of the exact changes made in a financial programming document newly presented compared to the previous one, nor of whether, or how, increases in a particular year are being compensated for or how back- and front-loadings are taking place; considers this not in line with the provisions of Point 46 of the IIA and calls on the Commission to fulfil its obligations in this respect;
14. Stresses that it is of particular importance to follow up the effects of front- and back-loading of multiannual programmes across the budget in order to ensure a coherent programming of commitments over the duration of the MFF respecting the priorities of Parliament as expressed in the IIA;
15. Is surprised at the extremely low level of payment appropriations (EUR 116 736 million) proposed by the Commission in its PDB; points out that commitment appropriations adopted under the 2007 and 2008 budgets totalled EUR 126 500 million and EUR 129 100 million respectively;
16. Requests the Commission to continue its screening exercise started in 2007 and to set out clearly further information regarding human resources policy, application of redeployment strategy and the degree of externalisation of tasks for 2009; asks for a follow-up report by 30 April 2009 including the conclusions the Commission will draw with regard to their internal organisation; takes note of the Commission's 2008 follow-up report on "Planning and optimising Commission human resources to serve EU priorities" whereby the Commission confirms its commitment not to request any new posts up to 2013, beyond the last tranche of enlargement-related posts in 2009;

On sub-heading 1a

17. Notes that PDB commitments for Competitiveness for Growth and Employment equal EUR 11 690 million, leaving a margin of EUR 82 million; this represents an increase of 5,5% compared to 2008; notes that payments also increase by 5,3% to a total of EUR 10 285,2 million;
18. Welcomes the Commission's intention to undertake key actions in the field of job creation and support for innovation, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and research; emphasises that present initiatives in this area, such as the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and other initiatives concerning SMEs, must be properly implemented and monitored;
19. Stresses the importance of providing the necessary budgetary resources for all measures facilitating the promotion and introduction of programmes of education in the media and new technologies;
20. Deplores the limited margin available in sub-heading 1a, which suggests that it will be impossible to fund new priorities by redeployment without severely undermining important existing programmes, and therefore recommends additional funding if new priorities are to be set;

21. Believes that, given the limited margin available in heading 1a, proper implementation and evaluation of ongoing pilot projects and preparatory actions should be the priority, but that the introduction of new pilot projects and preparatory actions has of course to remain possible;
22. Considers the planned Small Business Act an important strategy to support SMEs; is eagerly awaiting precise proposals for funding this new strategic tool; urges the Commission and the Member States to make enhanced use for this purpose also of the resources available through the Structural Funds in this context; notes that, since SMEs are particularly hard hit by late payments, the European Union has to avoid late payments by finding an efficient and transparent monitoring scheme to ensure that payments are effected within a specified period;

On sub-heading 1b

23. Notes that PDB commitments for Cohesion for Growth and Employment increase by 2,5% to a total of EUR 48 413,9 million, leaving a margin of EUR 14 million only in the technical assistance envelope; takes note that the overall increase of 2,5% is due to the substantial increase in the Cohesion Fund (+14% compared to 2008) while the appropriations for the Structural Funds remain at the same level;
24. Deplores the sharp decrease in payments which, compared to 2008, fall by 13,9% to EUR 34 914,1 million; is not convinced, in particular, of the reasons for the downward revision of payment level forecasts, viz. -30% in ERDF convergence, -13% in ERDF regional competitiveness and employment, -85% in ERDF territorial cooperation and -50% in the Cohesion Fund for the new programmes 2007 - 2013;
25. Intends to make sure that the necessary resources for cohesion policies will remain guaranteed in order to be able to deal with current and future challenges to the solidarity principle within the European Union;

On heading 2

26. Notes that PDB commitments for the Preservation and Management of Natural Resources are set at EUR 57 525,7 million, which is an increase of 3,5% compared to 2008, leaving a margin of EUR 2 113,3 million; payments rise by 3,0% to EUR 54 834,9 million; the part of heading 2 foreseen for market related expenditure and direct aids is EUR 42 860,3 million in commitments and EUR 42 814,2 million in payments;
27. Underlines that only 0,5% of appropriations under heading 2, notwithstanding the environmental measures under Rural Development programming and the environmental standards underpinning the cross-compliance system for direct payments, are used for environmental priorities, while the vast majority of funds are allocated to direct aids and market related expenditure;
28. Welcomes the increase of EUR 20,9 million for LIFE+, but notes with some regret that only part of this increase goes to intensified activities in the area of climate change; considers that the horizontal budgetary priority of combating climate change is not

properly reflected in these figures;

29. Recalls that the primary goal of the CAP is to guarantee market stabilisation, supply security and reasonable prices for consumers and therefore calls on the EU to foresee for the budget 2009 the necessary means to face the new needs arising from the current food crisis, especially an improvement in access to food for the most deprived people who are suffering the most from this crisis;
30. Welcomes the general downward trend in export refunds for agricultural products as a result of favourable market conditions and the savings which this implies;
31. Notes that PDB commitments for rural development remain nearly stable with EUR 13 401 million (including modulation) in commitments and EUR 10 926 million in payment appropriations, that is a decrease of 4% compared to 2008;
32. Considers these figures as indicative elements in the framework of the "Health Check of the CAP" presented by the Commission on 20 May 2008;
33. Points to the great difficulties regarding the implementation of the EAFRD; regrets that EUR 2 830 million of appropriations remained unspent in 2007, that EUR 1 361 million were carried over to the year 2008 and EUR 1 469 million were reprogrammed to the years 2008-2013 under Point 48 of the IIA; voices its concern with regard to the reprogramming of such considerable amounts, which will lead to a significant delay in funds being made available in the rural regions;

On sub-heading 3a

34. Notes that PDB commitments for Freedom, Security and Justice increase by 15% to EUR 839,1 million, resulting in a margin of EUR 32,9 million; payments increase by 11,7% to EUR 596,7 million;
35. Points out that this remarkable increase compared to 2008 is mainly due to a substantial increase in the chapters "Solidarity - External borders, visa policy and free movement of people" (+ EUR 44,4 million or + 15,6%), "Migration flows - Common immigration and asylum policies" (+ EUR 43,3 million or + 18,9%) and "Security and safeguarding liberties" (+ EUR 20,8 million or + 27,1%);
36. Takes note of the increase of 36,3% in commitment appropriations in the specific programme "Prevention of and fight against crime" and will examine the reasons for it;
37. Is concerned about the poor funding for the activity "Fundamental rights and justice" which is only increased by 0,2% in commitments and actually decreased by 10% in payments compared to the budget 2008;
38. Points to the fact that the PDB maintains the increase of the appropriations voted in 2008 for the Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX), but notes with some concern the rebalancing of the subsidy by shifting EUR 5,7 million from operational to administrative expenditure; calls for an increase in appropriations for 2009 for FRONTEX to enable it to sustain the commitment

to permanent and uninterrupted missions, notably at the southern borders of the Union (Hera, Nautilus and Poseidon);

39. Stresses that a European pact on migration policy should include issues related to tackling illegal immigration, managing legal immigration, integration of third country nationals and strengthening border protection, taking fully into account the principle of solidarity and the highest protection of fundamental rights;

On sub-heading 3b

40. Notes that PDB commitments for Citizenship total EUR 628,7 million, which is an increase of 1,0% if the 2008 appropriations are considered net of the Solidarity Fund appropriations and the Transition Facility for Bulgaria and Romania; the margin left is EUR 22 million, payments increase by 0,7% to EUR 669 million;
41. Regrets that the small margin of EUR 22 million left under this sub-heading leaves very limited room for manoeuvre for pilot projects and preparatory actions;
42. Draws attention to the need to increase the efficiency and improve the coordination of EU civil protection interventions, inter alia by developing common civil protection methodologies among the Member States, developing early warning and prevention systems, and upgrading the facility to transport civil protection assistance, in order to be better prepared to protect EU citizens;
43. Deplores the fact that the increase proposed by the Commission under this sub-heading, covering vital policies with a direct impact on the everyday life of European citizens, is significantly lower than the average increase of commitment appropriations of 3,1%; regrets, in particular, that especially those activities important for a citizens' Europe have received the smallest increase, or even suffered a decrease, compared to 2008;
44. Expresses its concern about the reductions proposed by the Commission for a number of budgetary lines under which communication activities are financed, particularly in the context of the tasks and new challenges in this area to be faced in 2009, such as the European elections or the possible entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty;
45. Considers that the core business of communication and information policy is to inform EU citizens on the actions and programmes realised by the EU and the improvements generated over the last years;
46. Recalls that all institutions have the right to implement communication policy as part of their institutional autonomy, as established in Article 49 of the Financial Regulation, within the limits of a common framework and with a certain degree of harmonisation in presentation that should allow for the development of a recognisable "EU trade mark" to be used in all communication measures;
47. Recognises the need for coordination of the different communication policies implemented by the institutions within the Interinstitutional Group on Information and Communication; recalls that communication has long been an important priority for Parliament; considers that Parliament's key role in this process is vital and guarantees the

continuity and efficiency of the policy, in particular in view of the coming European elections; points out in this context that information provided to citizens concerning their rights stemming from the application of EU law should be enhanced;

On heading 4

48. Notes that commitments for the EU as a Global Player increase by 1,8% to EUR 7 440,4 million with a margin of EUR 243,6 million available; payments decrease by 6,6% to EUR 7 579,5 million;
49. Observes that this increase of 1,8% is below the average overall increase of 3,1% for the general budget of the EU; considers this a very ominous sign given that heading 4 is traditionally one of the most challenging areas in the Union's budget;
50. Is deeply concerned by the under-financing of heading 4 and strongly condemns the vague budgeting approach chosen by the Commission which does not take at all into account the realistic needs to be expected in this area; notes that, in consequence, the current margin of EUR 243,6 million seems to be a rather arbitrary figure; believes that this problem can only be addressed through a comprehensive revision of the MFF leading to increases in the heading 4 ceiling for the period 2009-2013;
51. Points out that, prior to the PDB presentation, Parliament had requested in its abovementioned resolution of 24 April 2008 a realistic picture of all budgetary needs, especially in heading 4 of the MFF; does not consider the PDB, in this heading, to follow the principle of sound financial management;
52. Notes, therefore, with concern that the Commission has already stated, at this early stage of the budgetary procedure, that appropriations for Kosovo, the Middle East, food aid and macro-financial assistance will clearly not be sufficient to fulfil existing EU commitments in the world, let alone expected supplementary needs: the PDB proposes, for example, EUR 161 million in commitments and EUR 100 million in payments for assistance to Palestine and the Peace process, although final amounts for the 2008 Budget were EUR 300 million and EUR 200 million, respectively; regarding Kosovo, appropriations for the EULEX mission drop by 15,7% under the CFSP; considers this unacceptable and calls for a new approach to expenditure for Palestine and Kosovo; believes that, in view of the decision to vastly increase the original number of experts working in the EUPOL mission to Afghanistan, financial shortfalls can already be foreseen at this stage;
53. Reaffirms its support for the implementation of a deepened and differentiated European Neighbourhood Policy; underlines the need to provide the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) with an adequate financial envelope reflecting the EU's commitment vis-à-vis its eastern and southern European neighbours; notes the modest increase in appropriations envisaged for 2009, and stresses that the recent initiative "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" must neither hinder the efforts to establish a balance between the commitment appropriations for the eastern and southern European neighbours nor in any case increase the budgetary tensions within the ENPI;

54. Deplores the fact that neither budgetary solutions nor even indications for such solutions have been presented for the financing of these extra needs; calls urgently once again for clarification as to the total needs in heading 4, including the CFSP chapter;
55. Repeats its conviction that neither Flexibility Instrument nor Emergency Aid Reserve (EUR 244 million) must be diverted or misused to finance long-planned policies and activities of the EU, and is strongly determined, in the course of the budgetary procedure, to defend this line;
56. Points out with concern the growing world food crisis and the effects of climate change and underlines the need for the EU to be able to meet its commitments in respect of the supply of food aid and responding to disasters in developing countries; notes with real worry that, in the PDB 2009, food aid is only allocated an increase of EUR 6,8 million compared to 2008 (+3%) and that, already by the end of April 2008, the Commission is requesting a transfer of EUR 60 million to cover extra costs of food aid in 2008 (increase of 26,88% in commitment appropriations); calls for additional resources to be provided for this purpose in 2009 by all budgetary means available;
57. Welcomes the increase in appropriations envisaged for the Western Balkan countries under the institution-building component of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), and in particular the Commission's intention to step up the provision of additional scholarships and to increase funding for civil society dialogue; asks the Commission to support the Social Agenda for the Balkans;
58. Stresses that new Aid for Trade money should be additional to existing development aid and that new Aid for Trade pledges should not lead to the shifting of resources already earmarked for other development initiatives; reiterates the request made to the Commission to provide information on the origin of the EUR 1 000 million pledged;
59. Welcomes the Commission's initiatives to launch a Global Climate Change Alliance and a Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund as important steps to support developing countries in adapting to and mitigating climate change; stresses however that funds allocated so far are inadequate; calls for an increase in immediate funding for these initiatives in the 2009 budget, additional to planned development commitments; emphasises, furthermore, the importance of strengthening these initiatives by securing additional long-term funds;
60. Takes note that the Guarantee Fund for loans is included in the PDB 2009 with an amount of EUR 92,46 million as opposed to the original financial programming which foresaw EUR 200 million for its provisioning; points out that an important part of the margin available in PDB 2009, i.e. EUR 107,54 million of EUR 243,6 million, is artificial insofar as it is the result of this manoeuvre; underlines with strong concern that it is very likely that these "savings" in the budgeting of the Guarantee Fund in 2009 will need to be compensated by higher expenditure in the years to come, leaving even smaller margins in heading 4 than those programmed now;
61. Points out that, since the institutional set-up concerning the High Representative, the President of the European Council and the European External Action Service is not yet

determined, the necessary budgetary appropriations should be made available gradually as the scope and the role of the new organisational structures become clearer; underlines that neither the institutional changes nor the new CSDP provisions should further strain the current level of commitment appropriations under heading 4;

62. Emphasises the political importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions adopted by the budgetary authority under heading 4; calls for a timely and pro-active implementation thereof by the Commission with the full use of allocated commitments;

On heading 5

63. Notes that the overall Administrative Expenditure proposed increases by 5% compared to 2008 and now amounts to a total of EUR 7 647,9 million, compared to EUR 7 281,5 million for 2008, and that only a minor margin of EUR 129,1 million (corresponding to about 1,7% of the volume expenditure) is left under the ceiling of the financial framework;
64. While welcoming the fact that the new posts requested by the Commission only concern the previously announced final tranche of 250 for "EU-2", notes that the proposed increase of administrative expenditure is still higher than the average for the whole budget; recognises that this may be largely linked to indexed salary and pension costs, and to some extent buildings policy; points out that further modifications may become necessary during the financial year 2009 if the Lisbon Treaty enters into force; resolves, in that respect, to scrutinise administrative expenditure in an interinstitutional context in order to investigate the needs of the institutions for 2009 and beyond;
65. Considers, despite the increase in information received, and the Commission's preliminary conclusions that executive agencies enhance the quality of EU programmes, that various financial/administrative consequences on heading 5 still require further clarification; is for example astonished that the future creation of the equivalent of 947 new posts in the two research agencies (as stated in the screening follow-up) will only lead to the freeing up of 117 posts within the Commission departments over the same period;
66. Is concerned about the fact that, in general, the Commission's outsourcing tendencies, together with the latest changes in the Staff Regulations, have led to a situation where an increasing number of staff employed by the EU is neither visible in the institutions' establishment plans as adopted by the budgetary authority nor paid under heading 5 of the MFF; deeply regrets this lack of transparency which concerns also the employment of national experts; calls for a public and comprehensive discussion amongst all stakeholders on the future of European governance;
67. Welcomes the follow-up of the 2007 staff screening report recently received as a response to its budgetary amendments in the 2008 budget; intends to analyse this document thoroughly with a view to drawing budgetary conclusions for 2009;
68. Asks the Commission which measures are being taken to reach the goal of reducing administrative burdens in the EU by 25% by 2012, and to check if the principle of the one-stop-shop is achievable in the future to reduce bureaucracy;

69. Intends to examine the administrative appropriations and staffing requests for the other institutions with a view to increasing efficiency gains, including staff re-deployment according to identified priorities whenever possible; notes that the proposed average increase for the other institutions amounts to 4,8%, rising from EUR 2 673,8 million to EUR 2 803,2 million, only just below the rate of increase proposed for the Commission;

On heading 6

70. Notes that, in 2009, the last year of budgetary compensation to Bulgaria and Romania, commitments and payments are set at EUR 209,1 million, representing an increase of 1,2% compared to 2008; this leaves a small margin of EUR 0,9 million;

On Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions

71. Regrets that, as a general principle, the Commission's PDB does not include any commitments for pilot projects and preparatory actions, so that these will need to be financed from the margins of the relevant MFF headings; expresses its astonishment that there are a few exceptions to this general rule insofar as a small number of pilot projects and preparatory actions, in which the Commission seems to be interested, are already budgeted in the PDB with commitment appropriations;

72. Recalls the obligation for the Commission, according to Point 46(a) of the IIA, to provide, for annual actions, multiannual estimates and the margins left under the authorised ceilings;

73. Underlines that the IIA allows for a total amount for pilot projects of up to EUR 40 million in any budget year and for a total amount for preparatory actions of up to EUR 100 million out of which a maximum of EUR 50 million can be allocated to new preparatory actions;

74. Confirms its determination, as already stipulated in its abovementioned resolution of 24 April 2008, to use the full annual amounts provided for pilot projects and preparatory actions in the IIA if the number and volume of such proposed projects and actions should make this necessary, because it considers them an indispensable tool for Parliament to pave the way for new policies that are in the interest of European citizens;

75. Recalls that, for the budgetary year 2008, Parliament adopted pilot projects and preparatory actions for an amount of EUR 107,32 million in commitment appropriations; sub-heading 1a accounted for projects and actions amounting to EUR 38 million, heading 2 for EUR 25,15 million, sub-heading 3a for EUR 3 million, sub-heading 3b for EUR 9,5 million and heading 4 for EUR 31,67 million;

76. Underlines that, should Parliament decide in favour of a similar level of financing for pilot projects and preparatory actions in 2009, nearly half the available margins in headings 1a and 3b would already be used up, although the 2008 level of expenditure on pilot projects and preparatory actions did not even reach the maximum amounts granted by the IIA;

77. States its willingness to submit to the Commission before the parliamentary summer recess a first provisional list of its intentions as regards pilot projects and preparatory

actions for the 2009 budget procedure, in accordance with Annex II, Part D, of the IIA in order to facilitate the establishment of a balanced and coherent final package; points out that this list does not preclude the presentation of any other proposals or amendments on pilot projects and preparatory actions by individual MEPs, specialised committees and political groups at its First Reading in the autumn; insists that, for this exercise, all headings and sub-headings of the budget must have sufficient margins available;

78. Wishes to explore with the Commission and the Council how to give effect to Parliament's call for a European envoy on women's rights;

On agencies

79. Notes that PDB allocations for the decentralised agencies increase by 1,76% to EUR 563,9 million in commitments and decrease by EUR 6 million in payments (-1%);

80. Points out that, despite this overall minimal increase in commitments if all agencies are taken together, the sub-group of heading 1a agencies have been cut by 3,29% or EUR 8,9 million compared to budget 2008, in line with the decision taken by the budgetary authority in the November 2008 conciliation to implement a linear cut of EUR 50 million over the period 2009 - 2013 in order to finance Galileo;

81. Takes note of the fact that this cut for agencies in heading 1a has not been "linear" as formulated in the conciliation conclusions; intends to assess in detail the degree and distribution of the budgetary decreases; reiterates that it is up to the budgetary authority to decide upon these proposals by the Commission;

82. Will put particular emphasis on the budget implementation of the agencies and will closely scrutinise possible surpluses in order to make sure that assigned revenues are taken into account in the establishment of the agencies' budgets for 2009;

83. Deplores the fact that the Commission has still not presented to the budgetary authority the details of how it proposes to finance the two new agencies currently under discussion, one of which is already included in the PDB for 2009 with a pm entry, and urges the Commission to set out clearly further information on this issue as soon as possible; has come to the conclusion that, in the situation of current margins, for the financing of new bodies, which fulfil in part administrative tasks, all possibilities granted by the IIA should be explored; recalls that prior agreement of the budgetary authority on the financing of any new agency is required in line with Point 47 of the IIA;

84. Underlines once more that the financing levels of current and future decentralised agencies will directly affect the margins available under the headings of the MFF; notes that the IIA obliges the Commission to assess the budgetary implications for the expenditure heading concerned when drawing up a proposal for the creation of a new decentralised agency; will seek to ensure that the functioning of decentralised agencies brings added value and furthers the interests of EU citizens;

85. Welcomes the Commission's intention to stimulate an interinstitutional dialogue on the role of all bodies defined under Article 185 of the Financial Regulation and their place in European governance; reiterates the importance of securing on a systematic basis at

interinstitutional level the application of the procedure laid down in Point 47 of the IIA;

On executive agencies and other outsourcing tendencies

86. Notes that any further expansion of executive agencies and other similar ad-hoc bodies will be financed from the relevant programme envelope; expresses its concern, therefore, that all growth in executive agencies and other bodies will reduce the operational funds available within programme envelopes and will move administrative tasks from heading 5 of the MFF to be financed under the operational headings;
87. Is concerned that the creation of executive agencies and other ad hoc bodies may lead to an intransparent growth in the number of EU officials and contract staff, especially if posts in the relevant Commission Directorate-General are not reduced and/or redeployed accordingly; urges observance of the Working Arrangements for the Setting-up of Executive Agencies (revised Code of Conduct), in particular as regards parliamentary scrutiny of financing and staffing of the agencies;

Conclusions and possible mandate for the Conciliation

88. Considers the following points to be of specific interest for the budget conciliation due to take place in July 2008:
- adequate level of payments;
 - adherence to the principle of sound financial budgeting, in particular as regards a realistic picture of needs in heading 4;
 - commitment by the Commission to submit, where the EU Solidarity Fund and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund are concerned, amending budgets that have the mobilisation of these funds as their sole purpose in order to avoid any delay in the delivery of financial aid;
 - adequate response to food aid and food security requirements;
 - state of play regarding the implementation of Point 44 of the IIA and of point 5(N) of the Action Plan towards an Integrated Internal Control Framework (COM(2006)0009);
 - sufficient resources for a citizens' Europe;
 - provisional intentions of the budgetary authority with regard to pilot projects and preparatory actions;
 - clarity of budget presentation, especially concerning administrative expenditure and human resources including outsourcing of tasks;
 - adequate budgetary provision to enable a response to the EU priorities "competitiveness for growth and employment", "combating climate change and

promoting a sustainable Europe" and "making a reality of the Common Immigration Policy";

89. Strongly deplores the custom of the Council to make across-the-board cuts at its first reading of the Union budget without any precise reasons being provided; calls on the Council, when adopting its Draft Budget, to examine each element of the budget in turn using the criteria of efficiency, economy and European added value; points out that establishing the Union budget is a fundamental political act which is more than a mere accounting exercise, and looks to the Council to make arrangements for genuine political dialogue with Parliament during this budgetary procedure; ;

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90. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The purpose of the current resolution is twofold:

First, it should constitute a first assessment of the Commission's PDB for 2009 and should already point the direction for Parliament's First Reading resolution, traditionally to be voted in coming October; secondly and consequently, it should give a provisional mandate to Parliament's delegation for their negotiations with the other arm of the budgetary authority in the July conciliation.

The resolution is based on, and refers to, the resolution on the Budgetary Framework and Priorities for 2009 as adopted by Parliament on 24 April 2008, together with the political groups' resolution on the Commission's Annual Policy Strategy.

It will try and take fully into account the opinions delivered by the other committees which are considered an essential element in the decision-making process for the Budget 2009.

4.6.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget: first reflections on the 2009 PDB and mandate for the conciliation (2008/2025(BUD))

Draftswoman: Véronique De Keyser

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines that, in order to enable the European Union to meet its external action obligations and to play an active role in facing global challenges, sufficient funds need to be allocated in the EU budget;
2. Is disappointed by the share of appropriations envisaged for Heading 4 under the Commission's Preliminary Draft Budget (PDB) 2009 and by the fact that, while the EU's international obligations are increasing, the growth in commitment appropriations with regard to the 2008 budget is below the rate of inflation for the same period;
3. Considers the presented margin to be rather artificial and arbitrary; calls on the Commission not to use the Flexibility Instrument or the Emergency Aid Reserve for programmable long-term activities;
4. Is aware of the limits of the financial framework 2007-2013; therefore urges the Commission and the Council to take the increasing role of the EU as global player duly into account when preparing the review of the EU financial framework;
5. Points out that, since the institutional set-up concerning the High Representative, the President of the European Council and the European External Action Service is not yet determined, the necessary budgetary appropriations should be made available gradually as the scope and the role of the new organisational structures become clearer; underlines that neither the institutional changes nor the new Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) provisions should further strain the current level of commitment appropriations

under Heading 4;

6. Is concerned by the appropriations envisaged for Kosovo, particularly under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), in the PDB 2009, which are lower than the funding provided for in the adopted 2008 budget; asks the Commission and the Council to inform Parliament about funding absorbed out of the 2008 budget, given the current situation on the ground and probable delays in deployment of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX); urges the Commission to re-assess on this basis the requirements in respect of Kosovo's institution-building and socio-economic development, and of the EU's contribution to the international presence there in 2009;
7. Expresses its dissatisfaction with the appropriations envisaged in the PDB 2009 for Palestine, which are nearly 50% less than those provided for in the adopted 2008 budget and more than 60% less than those provided for in the final 2007 budget; is of the view that, when programming the assistance needed, the Commission can build in this case on experience gathered and needs estimated, and should therefore be able to allocate the funding needed to contribute to the viability of the Palestinian authorities and to the Middle East peace process;
8. Supports actions and appropriations aimed at enabling the EU to act in peace processes in conflict areas, for instance Iraq;
9. Reaffirms its support for the implementation of a deepened and differentiated European Neighbourhood Policy; underlines the need to provide the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) with an adequate financial envelope reflecting the EU's commitment vis-à-vis its east European and southern neighbours; notes the modest increase in appropriations envisaged for 2009, and stresses that the recent initiative "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" must neither hinder the efforts to establish a balance between the commitment appropriations for the eastern and southern European neighbours nor in any case increase the budgetary tensions within the ENPI;
10. Welcomes the increase of appropriations envisaged for the Western Balkan countries under the institution-building component of the IPA, and in particular the Commission's intention to step up the provision of additional scholarships and to increase funding for civil society dialogue; asks the Commission to support the Social Agenda for the Balkans;
11. Believes that in the context of cooperation with developing Middle Eastern (DCI) countries, particularly as regards Iraq, the stepping-up of scholarship programmes and city twinning could have beneficial effects for mutual rapprochement;
12. Reaffirms its support for democracy and human rights as key elements of the EU's foreign policy; considers the promotion of non-violent methods to be one of the most appropriate means for supporting democracy and human rights; notes with satisfaction the increase, albeit modest, in funding for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), including that allocated for electoral observation, and stresses that this amount provided for in the PDB 2009 should be preserved as a minimum; is concerned by the fact that European actors, such as independent political foundations, are

often de facto excluded from implementation of the EIDHR at the level of Commission delegations, and demands EIDHR implementation in line with existing legislation for more effective democracy promotion;

13. Supports actions promoting strategic use of resettlement with a view to opening up humanitarian space in acute refugee situations, so as to enable the EU to demonstrate a significant and concrete solidarity at European level that can have an added value within a broader approach on the provision of humanitarian support to a given country or region;
14. Reiterates that Latin America is a priority region for the European Union, and underlines that the EU's relations with that region need to be appropriately funded in line with the results of the Lima Summit and developed with respect to human rights, democratic principles and the environment;
15. Supports – given the need to strengthen the EU's relations with Central Asia on the basis of the strategy adopted in 2007 – the frontloading of assistance to that region for 2009;
16. Welcomes the increase in funding proposed for the Instrument for Stability; emphasises, however, that the criteria for allocating funds under that instrument need to be further developed, in order to make them more transparent and to ensure that resources are channelled in a consistent way to real priorities; reiterates that Parliament is to be involved in the development and specification of the relevant criteria; draws attention to the redundancy of the separate preparatory action on the Conflict Prevention Network, which should be abandoned and the financial means transferred to the Peace Building Partnership within the Stability Instrument;
17. Points out with concern the growing world food crisis and the effects of climate change; urges the Commission and the Council to reflect on the possible consequences for global security, and underlines the need for the EU to be able to react to this situation and related speculations, and to meet its commitments in respect of the supply of food aid and responding to disasters in developing countries;
18. Disapproves of the proposed increase in funding in respect of European Union Special Representatives (EUSRs), particularly since Parliament is yet to be involved in the process of creating new EUSR positions, setting their mandates and appointing the EUSRs; stresses that the Lisbon Treaty will enable the EU institutions to search for synergy between Commission delegations and Council EUSRs (double-hatting), thus avoiding duplication of tasks, improving coordination and increasing the effectiveness of the EU's external action;
19. Appreciates the continuation of the dialogue with the Council presidency on the CFSP priorities; is committed to reinforcing that dialogue so as to ensure timely inter-institutional coordination in shaping the course of the CFSP and to enhance its effectiveness and democratic legitimacy; underlines that the quality of the information provided needs to be improved and its continuity ensured;
20. Reaffirms its support for the activities of the working groups established by its Committee on Foreign Affairs to monitor the implementation of the external assistance instruments; looks forward to enhanced structured cooperation and

consultation with the Commission on the implementation and revision of the multiannual indicative planning documents;

21. Reiterates in this context its request for the conclusion of an inter-institutional agreement between Parliament and the Council defining, on the basis of the Treaty of Lisbon, their working relations in the field of external action, including the sharing of confidential information;
22. Emphasises the political importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions adopted by the budgetary authority under Heading 4; calls for the timely and pro-active implementation thereof by the Commission, making full use of allocated commitments;
23. Notes that the Commission proposes to reinforce the Thematic Programme for the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP); reiterates the need to build up a common external energy policy, and asks the Commission to inform Parliament about funding envisaged in the 2009 budget for the realisation of Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E) priority projects aimed at strengthening the EU's energy security.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.6.2008
Result of final vote	+: 36 -: 6 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	André Brie, Colm Burke, Philip Claeys, Véronique De Keyser, Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka, Bronisław Geremek, Maciej Marian Giertych, Ana Maria Gomes, Alfred Gomolka, Anna Ibrisagic, Ioannis Kasoulides, Maria Eleni Koppa, Helmut Kuhne, Willy Meyer Pleite, Francisco José Millán Mon, Philippe Morillon, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Alojz Peterle, Tobias Pflüger, João de Deus Pinheiro, Samuli Pohjamo, Libor Rouček, Christian Røvsing, Katrin Saks, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, György Schöpflin, István Szent-Iványi, Inese Vaidere, Ari Vatanen, Jan Marinus Wiersma, Luis Yañez-Barnuevo García, Zbigniew Zaleski, Josef Zieleniec
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Alexandra Dobolyi, Árpád Duka-Zólyomi, James Elles, Jaromír Kohlíček, Doris Pack, Rihards Pīks, Karl von Wogau
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	

28.5.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget: First reflections on the 2009 PDB and mandate for the conciliation (2008/2025(BUD))

Rapporteur: Maria Martens

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Expresses deep concern at the consequences of soaring global food prices for the provision of food aid in developing countries, and takes note of the drastic shortfall that has already been highlighted by funding agencies; calls on the Commission to adapt the budget line 23 02 02 to real needs that will arise in 2009 and to increase the budget line accordingly without jeopardising other EP political priorities; notes that food prices stem from structural causes and are not expected to fall in 2009 or subsequent years and that under the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid the European Union "aims to demonstrate its commitment to humanitarian response by mobilising adequate funding for humanitarian aid based on assessed need"; calls for additional resources to be provided for this purpose in 2009 by all budgetary means available, including traditional budgetary mechanisms such as the flexibility instrument or innovative means such as revision of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) to release 2008 underspends in Title 05;
2. Calls for the continuation of budget lines 19 09 02 (cooperation with middle income group countries in Latin America) and 19 10 01 05 (cooperation with middle income group countries in Asia) as preparatory actions for financing interventions in those regions which do not fulfil the criteria for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and therefore fall outside Regulation (EC) 1905/2006; stresses that such actions are desirable in order to respond to strategic EU interests or issues of mutual concern and calls on the Commission to propose a financing instrument for such actions without delay;
3. Draws attention to the problem of the precarious financing situation in Heading 4 resulting from needs in Kosovo and Palestine that could not be foreseen when the MFF was established; believes that this problem can only be addressed through a comprehensive revision of the MFF leading to increases in the Heading 4 ceiling for the

period 2009-2013; points out that the thematic programme "Investing in People" needs to serve a great number of policies and programme priorities and that, among these priorities, health has seen a reduction in spending since 2003-2006, and annual allocations for 2007 and 2008 have not reached their annual average, as programmed for the period 2007-2013;

4. Welcomes the Commission's initiatives to launch a Global Climate Change Alliance and a Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund as important steps to support developing countries in adapting to and mitigating climate change; stresses however that funds allocated so far are inadequate; calls for an increase in immediate funding for these initiatives in the 2009 budget, additional to planned development commitments; emphasises, furthermore, the importance of strengthening these initiatives by securing additional long-term funds;
5. Stresses the need for a comprehensive assessment of the results of EU development co-operation actions and their likely sustainability, including for assistance delivered as budget support; points out that transparency in this area is fundamental for parliamentary accountability; emphasises the need to meet the benchmark of dedicating, by 2009, 20% of its allocated assistance under country programmes covered by the Development Cooperation Instrument to basic and secondary education and basic health, through project, programme or budget support linked to these sectors; urges the Commission to strengthen its evaluation of results and forward its findings to Parliament;
6. Welcomes the Commission's plans to implement its proposed Millennium Development Goals (MDG) contracts as soon as possible; and calls for the principles behind the contracts to be extended to all other general and sectoral budget support;
7. Invites the Commission to further develop thinking and practice on how parliamentary scrutiny of budgetary aid in partner countries could be improved;
8. Calls for the gender performance indicators attached to budget support to be strengthened, and expanded into areas such as women's civil rights;
9. Supports the continued inclusion of targets to increase spending on health and education in budget support agreements; and suggests that agreements include clear timelines for reaching the Abuja Declaration target of spending 15% of a national budget on health, and the Global Campaign for Education target of spending 20% of a national budget on education.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	28.5.2008
Result of final vote	+: 29 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Margrete Auken, Alessandro Battilocchio, Thijs Berman, Danutë Budreikaitë, Marie-Arlette Carlotti, Corina Crețu, Beniamino Donnici, Fernando Fernández Martín, Juan Fraile Cantón, Alain Hutchinson, Filip Kaczmarek, Glenys Kinnock, Maria Martens, Gay Mitchell, Luisa Morgantini, Horst Posdorf, José Ribeiro e Castro, Frithjof Schmidt, Jürgen Schröder, Feleknas Uca, Anna Záborská, Jan Zahradil
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	John Bowis, Ana Maria Gomes, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Manolis Mavrommatis, Mihaela Popa, Renate Weber, Gabriele Zimmer

9.6.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget: first reflections on the 2009 PDB and mandate for the conciliation (2008/2025(BUD))

Draftsman: Göran Färm

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises that the challenges relating to sustainable energy and the fight against climate change must be reflected in the EU budget priorities; notes that these priorities will require additional budgetary resources, particularly for funding the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan and promoting energy efficiency; reiterates that these budgetary resources should be additional to and not to the detriment of existing funding for Community programmes in the field of research and innovation;
2. Is deeply concerned by the limited margin available in Heading 1A, which suggests that it will be impossible to fund new priorities by redeployment without severely undermining important existing programmes; therefore recommends additional funding if new priorities are to be set;
3. Stresses the importance of the reform of the Lisbon strategy, which must be backed by relevant funding, and emphasises that present initiatives in this area, such as the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and other initiatives concerning small and medium-sized enterprises, must be properly implemented and monitored;
4. Takes note of the recent budgetary decisions to fund the Galileo project and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), initiatives which will require intense monitoring and evaluation during their implementation;
5. Points out that the EIT must be seen as complementary to other Community initiatives on

research and innovation, mainly the Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (FP7) and the CIP, and that optimum allocation of research and innovation resources is therefore required in the context of the revision of the financial framework;

6. Stresses that implementation of FP7 and of the work of the Joint Undertaking implementing Joint Technology Initiatives and of the European Research Council in particular, should be closely monitored;
7. Calls on the Commission to promote the establishment of a regulatory framework for electronic communications which encourages coherent investments (for both established undertakings and new actors), ensures competition and consumer choice and is able to meet current challenges and those to come, such as the deployment of optical fibre in the Union;
8. Questions whether the present trend to establish new regulatory agencies entrusted with administrative tasks, such as the proposed European Electronic Communications Market Authority and the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators, is a useful development; suggests that proper staffing of Commission departments working within priority areas might prove a better way of achieving the policy goals;
9. Nevertheless suggests that adequate additional funding be provided for the new European Community agencies and for the expansion of existing agencies, based on decisions of the budget authority;
10. Believes that, due to the limited margin available in Heading 1A, proper implementation and evaluation of ongoing pilot projects and preparatory actions should be one of the priorities, together with new pilot projects and preparatory actions.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	5.6.2008
Result of final vote	+: 45 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Šarūnas Birutis, Jan Březina, Jerzy Buzek, Jorgo Chatzimarkakis, Dragoș Florin David, Den Dover, Lena Ek, Norbert Glante, Fiona Hall, Rebecca Harms, Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, Mary Honeyball, Romana Jordan Cizelj, Werner Langen, Anne Laperrouze, Eluned Morgan, Angelika Niebler, Atanas Paparizov, Aldo Patriciello, Miloslav Ransdorf, Herbert Reul, Teresa Riera Madurell, Mechtild Rothe, Paul Rübig, Britta Thomsen, Patrizia Toia, Nikolaos Vakalis, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Alejo Vidal-Quadras
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Christian Ehler, Göran Färm, Juan Fraile Cantón, Robert Goebbels, Françoise Grossetête, Satu Hassi, Gunnar Hökmark, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Esko Seppänen, Hannes Swoboda, Silvia-Adriana Țicău
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Giovanna Corda, Catherine Neris, Antolín Sánchez Presedo

29.5.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget: first reflections on the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget and mandate for the conciliation
(2008/2025(BUD))

Draftswoman: Eva Lichtenberger

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Transport and Tourism calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes the high level of importance that the EU attaches, at a global level, to a policy of reducing the impacts of climate change. Urges the Commission to give priority to those proposals that have the capacity to realise energy saving potential in transport;
2. Notes the importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions in determining the need for and efficacy of new budget programmes to respond to developing needs and requirements in transport policy; recalls that by their very nature pilot projects cannot substitute for fully developed programmes and policies; calls upon the Commission systematically to report on the implementation of pilot projects and preparatory actions and above all to report to Parliament on the conclusions which may be drawn from them; and, as with all budgetary expenditure, insists that the projects being piloted present genuine added value at the EU level and urges the Commission to pay special attention to all programmes with an impact on reducing CO₂ emissions in transport;
3. Urges the Commission to "follow through" on the pilot projects and preparatory actions related to transport and tourism, specifically on the facilitation of cross border traffic on EU North-East external border crossing points (06 07 05) and European Destinations of Excellence (02 02 08) in the context of the Preliminary Draft Budget and to report on what follow up might be required in respect of the completed pilot project on security along the Trans European Network (06 07 02) to be completed in 2009. This pilot project should be continued and extended to include a new component for the construction of safe parking places, placed along the pan-European transport corridors and Trans-European Network

(TEN) priority projects in the newest Member States situated in the south-eastern part of the European Union; recalls the importance of the preparatory action on control posts in relation to the transport of animals (17 04 03 03) given the sharp increase in trade in breeding stock between the EU and the Russian Federation;

4. Stresses the importance of developing the necessary rail and sea transport infrastructure and asks the Commission to ensure that this priority is reflected in the EU budget for 2009;
5. Urges the Commission to ensure that the development of urban public transport is promoted through the creation of a special fund for this purpose. Given the importance of State aid for the modernisation of the urban public transport fleet, calls on the Commission to lay down clear conditions governing the granting of such aid for the acquisition of urban public transport vehicles, similar to those applicable in the rail transport sector;
6. Insists that the resources in the Preliminary Draft Budget available to the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Aviation Safety Agency, the European Railway Agency and the Galileo Supervisory Authority are aligned to their existing and already by legislative act extended statutory duties and responsibilities and that these resources are not unnecessarily restricted with the effect of delaying any agreed transfer of competences to those agencies; notes the economies of scale and elimination of duplication, with consequent overall savings for the public purse including those of the Member States, which the transfer of such competences entails; nevertheless, insists that any delegation of work on technical standards from agencies to stakeholders in their respective domains must not lead to the creation or maintenance of an oligopolistic or monopolistic advantage for any commercial stakeholder;
7. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the Preliminary Draft Budget reflects Parliament's expressed priorities in the areas of transport and tourism, namely: encouraging a shift to more environmentally sustainable transport modes and practices; increasing awareness of and effective implementation of passenger rights; reinforcing transport safety; and using the EU budget as a catalyst for further public and private investment in the TENs; recalls the insufficiency of EU and Member State funds for Trans European Transport-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) priority projects in view of identified needs and asks the Commission to monitor and report on the consequences of this for TEN-T;
8. Calls on the Council to desist from implementing an indiscriminate across the board percentage cut in the Preliminary Draft Budget when adopting its Draft Budget and to examine each element of the budget in turn using the criteria of efficiency, economy and European added value.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	29.5.2008
Result of final vote	+: 27 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Inés Ayala Sender, Paolo Costa, Arūnas Degutis, Petr Duchoň, Saïd El Khadraoui, Robert Evans, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Francesco Ferrari, Brigitte Fouré, Mathieu Grosch, Georg Jarzembowski, Timothy Kirkhope, Sepp Kusstatscher, Jörg Leichtfried, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Erik Meijer, Willi Piecyk, Paweł Bartłomiej Piskorski, Luís Queiró, Reinhard Rack, Brian Simpson, Yannick Vaugrenard
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Nathalie Griesbeck, Zita Gurmai, Leopold Józef Rutowicz
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Rovana Plumb, Bart Staes

29.5.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget procedure: First reflections on the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget and mandate for the conciliation (2008/2025(BUD))

Draftsman: Kyösti Virrankoski

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Underlines the fact that, with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty foreseen for 1 January 2009, the differentiation between "compulsory" and "non-compulsory" payments will cease to exist, with the result that the transfers undertaken in 2009 will fall under the new procedure with the EP fulfilling its obligations;
2. Notes that currently agriculture and rural development spending combined still represent a substantial part of the EU budget; stresses that the predictability for planning purposes and the reliability of the multiannual financial framework, as decided, must be guaranteed; stresses the need to ensure that the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development is represented by the appropriate committee members in the conciliation committee meetings; stresses also the need to ensure coordination between the Committee on Budgets and specialised committees on budgetary aspects of their legislative activities given their impact on the multiannual financial framework and the annual budgetary procedure;
3. Notes that Rural Development is a specific priority provided for in the Multi-annual Financial Framework; notes the modulation and transfer of EUR 1 792 million of direct support and market measures to Rural Development in 2009, which leaves a maximum amount of EUR 44 887 million for direct support and market measures and EUR 13 402 million for Rural Development in 2009; reiterates that the budget should be fully

transparent with regard to the amounts modulated from direct aid;

4. Notes that there is still an available margin of EUR 2 113 billion under the ceiling of heading 2, proving the success of the reforms of the common agricultural policy (CAP);
5. Points to the great difficulties regarding the implementation of the EAFRD, regrets that EUR 2 830 million of appropriations remained unspent in 2007, that EUR 1 361 million were carried over to the year 2008 and EUR 1 469 million were reprogrammed to the years 2008-2013 under Point 48 of the Inter-Institutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management¹, despite the fact that Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)² was adopted early enough to avoid such procedural shortcomings; voices its concern with regard to the reprogramming of such considerable amounts, which will lead to a significant delay in funds available in the rural regions;
6. Calls on the Commission to include a more workable timeframe in the next rural development regulation (and to ensure that the Member States have sufficient time to present their operational programmes;
7. Is concerned about the difference in commitment and payment levels for Rural Development which was 25% for 2007, 30% for 2008 and a proposed 30% for 2009; requests, therefore, from the Commission a forecast for decommitments for 2009 and for the whole financial period for 2007-2013 and a forecast for the problems with clearing the build-up of overstatements still to be settled (currently the level of RAL \square under Rural Development is nearly € 9 billion) at the end of the financial period 2007-2013 since maximum payment levels under annex I of the aforementioned Inter Institutional Agreement fall from 1.06% GNI in 2007 to 0.94% GNI in 2013;
8. Recalls that the primary goal of the CAP is to guarantee market stabilisation, supply security and reasonable prices for consumers and therefore calls on the EC to foresee for budget 2009 the necessary means to face the new needs arising from the current food crisis, especially an improvement of access to food for the most deprived people who are suffering the most from this crisis;
9. Points out that further modulation foreseen in the Health Check of the CAP, which transfers funds from the EAGF to EAFRD, increases the amount needed for national co-financing; calls on the Commission to monitor carefully the programming of this money in the Member States and underlines that increased EU funds pre-empt co-financing by the Members States and warns that it should not lead to a reduction of existing co-financing;
10. Calls on the Commission to take a resolute stance on the implementation of the sugar

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1. Agreement as last amended by Decision 2008/371/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 128, 16.5.2008, p. 8.).

² OJ L 277, 21.10.2005, p. 1. Agreement as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 146/2008 (OJ L 46, 21.2.2008, p. 1.).

reform in order to treat Member States equally and in a more transparent way;

11. Considers that the pilot projects and preparatory actions currently running in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 17, which were adopted in the 2008 Budget, are at a very early stage of programming and underlines the need for timely and efficient implementation;
12. Underlines the need for a school fruit programme and emphasises the positive effects of such a programme on public health and nutrition awareness in children; regrets the fact that the Commission has still not tabled a proposal for such a programme; calls on the Commission to present its proposal without any further delay and to introduce a new budget line for that purpose in its amending letter; points out that participation by the Member States in such a programme should be a voluntary basis;
13. Reiterates its position on the creation of a milk restructuring fund, which should be used for adapting the milk sector to the new situation - especially in less favoured and sensitive regions - in view of the possible phasing-out of the quota system;
14. Calls for the elaboration of a pilot project to facilitate an exchange programme between young farmers in developing countries and young farmers in the Union to enable them to gain first-hand understanding of the functioning of their respective markets, of their respective use of technology and their solutions for adapting to climatic conditions;
15. Urges the Council and Commission to increase the budget for young farmers as this group is facing considerable new challenges (for example combating climate change and maintaining food production in the Union) and has been diminishing for years, for example by strengthening the means for education, training networks and exchange programmes for young farmers or by strengthening the policy tools for young farmers in the Rural Development programme.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	27.5.2008
Result of final vote	+: 37 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Vincenzo Aita, Peter Baco, Bernadette Bourzai, Niels Busk, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Giuseppe Castiglione, Giovanna Corda, Joseph Daul, Albert Deß, Gintaras Didžiokas, Constantin Dumitriu, Michl Ebner, Ioannis Gklavakis, Lutz Goepel, Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, Esther Herranz García, Lily Jacobs, Elisabeth Jeggle, Heinz Kindermann, Vincenzo Lavarra, Stéphane Le Foll, Mairead McGuinness, Rosa Miguélez Ramos, James Nicholson, María Isabel Salinas García, Agnes Schierhuber, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Alyn Smith, Petya Stavreva, Witold Tomczak, Donato Tommaso Veraldi, Janusz Wojciechowski, Andrzej Tomasz Zapałowski
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Liam Aylward, Esther De Lange, Brian Simpson, Struan Stevenson, Kyösti Virrankoski
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	

4.6.2008

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

for the Committee on Budgets

on the 2009 budget : first reflections on the 2009 PDB and mandate for the conciliation (2008/2025(BUD))

Draftswoman: Helga Trüpel

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Welcomes the Commission's view, as expressed in the 2009 Annual Policy Strategy, that the EU should continue to put citizens at the heart of its concerns, and therefore highlights the importance of EU funding in the area of lifelong learning and citizenship as these programmes directly support citizens' activities; insists on, prior to the 2009 European elections, a greater increase in expenditure for the programmes "Europe for Citizens" and "Youth in Action" - which enjoy broad support amongst citizens, as demonstrated by high implementation rates - compared to the provision made in the latest forecasts;
- 2.. Insists that - in light of the European elections and the importance of relevant information in the media - sufficient attention be given to information policy in general and investigative European journalism in particular, through the establishment of a European Fund for Journalism, whereby support would be given to small teams of journalists from several Member States doing research on a European issue in different European Member States for publication in those countries;
- 3 Supports the setting-up of a new preparatory action in the field of sport with an annual budget of EUR 5 million under Heading 3b - given that Article 149 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon on the functioning of the European Union, adds a new EU competence in the area of sport, including incentive measures - to be followed by an EU funding programme on sport; requests the continuation and full development of the pilot projects proposed by its Committee on Culture and Education, especially the project on artist mobility proposed last year and, within the preparatory action in the field of sport, the funding proposal for

the Special Olympics' Unified Sports Programme consistently supported by that Committee; supports the continuation, under Heading 4, of the preparatory action of MEDIA INTERNATIONAL that enlarges the scope of the EU's media policy internationally in a positive way;

4. Advocates the drafting and implementation of a pilot programme for the mobility of teachers corresponding to the programme for the mobility of artists, the basic objective being to encourage vocational training at European level and improve the multilingual skills of teaching staff, while at the same time preparing the ground for a multiannual teacher mobility programme within the EU corresponding to the Erasmus programme;
5. Stresses the importance of providing the necessary budgetary resources for all measures facilitating the promotion and introduction of programmes of education in the media and new technologies;
6. Considers that, in view of the intense interest shown by individuals and organisations in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and its particular success to date, it is necessary to make use of the results achieved and maintain intercultural dialogue on an institutional basis beyond 2008; accordingly supports the inclusion of further intercultural dialogue initiatives in the 2007-2013 Cultural Programme and the incorporation of such measures across the board in Community social and environmental development programmes;
7. Notes the success and the outstanding results achieved by the current Euromed Audiovisual II regional programme and its predecessor, Euromed Audiovisual I; in that light, considers that it is necessary to ensure sufficient funding to enable Euromed Audiovisual to continue within the framework of either the existing measures for the period 2007-2013 or new measures;
8. Awaits the 2009 draft budget for careful analysis and suggestions and insists on the possibility of proposing additional pilot projects in the course of the budgetary procedure, particularly projects promoting and supporting multilingualism, and preparatory actions that are deemed necessary.
9. Points to the need to find resources to promote multilingualism as an essential measure aimed at enhancing the European Union's cultural wealth, with particular emphasis on improving the standing of the different languages which are used by a considerable number of European Union inhabitants;
10. Reminds the Commission of the repeated occasions on which Parliament has urged it to introduce mechanisms to guarantee the transparency and supervision of measures implemented as part of the EU's information and communication policy; stresses the need for participation by all the institutions in devising information campaigns conducted on behalf of the European Union.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.6.2008
Result of final vote	+: 27 -: 1 0: -
Members present for the final vote	Maria Badia i Cutchet, Katerina Batzeli, Ivo Belet, Nicodim Bulzesc, Guy Bono, Marielle De Sarnez, Milan Gaľa, Claire Gibault, Lissy Gröner, Věra Flasarová, Luis Herrero-Tejedor, Ruth Hieronymi, Mikel Irujo Amezaga, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Manolis Mavrommatis, Marianne Mikko, Ljudmila Novak, Doris Pack, Christa Prets, Pál Schmitt, Hannu Takkula, Helga Trüpel, Thomas Wise
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Victor Boștinăru, Jean-Marie Cavada, Ignasi Guardans Cambó, Den Dover, Elisabeth Morin
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	

PROCEDURE

Title	First reflections on the 2009 Preliminary Draft Budget and mandate for the conciliation		
Procedure number	2008/2025(BUD)		
Committee responsible	BUDG		
Committee(s) asked for opinion(s) Date announced in plenary	AFET 0.0.0000	DEVE 0.0.0000	ITRE 0.0.0000
	TRAN 0.0.0000	AGRI 0.0.0000	CULT 0.0.0000
Rapporteur(s) Date appointed	Jutta Haug 24.1.2008		
Previous rapporteur(s)	[]		
Date of decision to draw up report	0.0.0000		
Discussed in committee	6.5.2008 28.5.2008		
Date adopted	16.5.2008		
Result of final vote	+ : 34 - : 0 0 : 0		
Members present for the final vote	Richard James Ashworth, Reimer Böge, Valdis Dombrovskis, James Elles, Salvador Garriga Polledo, Ingeborg Gräßle, Ville Itälä, Janusz Lewandowski, Francesco Musotto, Margaritis Schinas, László Surján, Herbert Bösch, Costas Botopoulos, Brigitte Douay, Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón, Catherine Guy-Quint, Jutta Haug, Vladimír Maňka, Cătălin-Ioan Nechifor, Gary Titley, Ralf Walter, Nathalie Griesbeck, Anne E. Jensen, Jan Mulder, Kyösti Virrankoski, Esko Seppänen, Nils Lundgren		
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar, Rihards Pīks, José Albino Silva Peneda, Thijs Berman, Bárbara Dührkop Dührkop, István Szent-Iványi		
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Bill Newton Dunn		
Date tabled	20.6.2008		
Comments (available in one language only)	...		