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DRAFT REPORT

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021
(11072/1/2020 – C9-0314/2020 – 2020/1998(BUD))

Part 1: Motion for a resolution

Committee on Budgets

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Part 2 – A9-0000/2020

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021 (11072/1/2020 – C9-0314/2020 – 2020/1998(BUD))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 106a of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,
- having regard to Council Decision 2014/335/EU, Euratom of 26 May 2014 on the system of own resources of the European Union¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014 and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012²,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020³ (the “MFF Regulation”),
- having regard to Commission Amended proposal of 28 May 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (COM(2020) 443 final);
- having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 2 December 2013 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management⁴,
- having regard to its interim report of 14 November 2018 on the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 – Parliament’s position with a view to an agreement⁵ and to its resolution of 23 July 2020 on the conclusions of the extraordinary European Council meeting of 17-21 July 2020;
- having regard to its resolution of 19 June 2020 on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2021 budget Section III - Commission⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 May 2020 on Parliament’s estimates of revenue and

¹ OJ L 168, 7.6.2014, p. 105.

² OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

³ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

⁴ OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.

⁵ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0065.

⁶ Texts adopted of that date, P9_TA(2020)0166.

- expenditure for the financial year 2021⁷,
- having regard to the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021, which the Commission adopted on 27 July 2020 (COM(2020)0300) (the “DB”),
 - having regard to the position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2021, which the Council adopted on 28 September 2020 and forwarded to Parliament on 1 October 2020 (11072/1/2020 – C9-0314/2020),
 - having regard to Rule 94 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinions of the committees concerned,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A9-0000/2020),
 - having regard to its legislative resolution of 16 September 2020 on the draft Council decision on the system of own resources of the European Union⁸,

Section III

General overview

1. Recalls that 2021 should be the first year of the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF); regrets that because of the delays in the MFF/Own Resources negotiations, for which Parliament stayed ready since November 2018 and which could not start before the European Council’s 21 July conclusions, as well as because of the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, the budgetary procedure for the year 2021 could not build so far on a solid and ambitious MFF agreement;
2. Notes that the Commission presented a draft budget (DB) for 2021 based on its own MFF proposals updated in May 2020, while the Council limited its reading, with the exception of Heading 7, to an arithmetic translation of the European Council’s conclusions, awaiting the Letter of amendment which the Commission will use after the political agreement on the MFF/OR to update its proposal for the budget of the Union for 2021;
3. Takes note of the Council’s position on the DB, including the importance it attaches to the Letter of amendment; concurs with the Council on the latter, while ambitioning to present a reading which follows its priorities on MFF/OR and budget 2021 in a coordinated manner; notes that this approach is also motivated by the limited time that will be left following the presentation of the Letter of amendment;
4. Recalls that in its resolution of 19 June 2020 on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2021 budget, Parliament stressed that the primary focus of the 2021 budget should be to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and support the recovery, built on the European Green Deal and digital transformation;
5. Welcomes the EU Recovery plan; insists, however, on the need to clearly enshrine the

⁷ Texts adopted of that date, P9_TA(2020)0123.

⁸ Texts adopted of that date, P9_TA(2020)0220.

role of the budgetary authority in authorising external assigned revenue, notably of the Next Generation EU (NGEU) recovery instrument, under the annual budgetary procedure;

6. Recalls its position that the 2021-2027 MFF climate and biodiversity mainstreaming targets must go beyond the levels of targeted spending shares as set out in its interim report; aims, therefore, to achieve a biodiversity spending level of 10 % and a climate mainstreaming spending level of 30 % for 2021;
7. Decides to increase to the levels set up in the MFF interim report of November 2018 the fifteen flagship programmes identified in its resolution of 23 July 2020 (Horizon Europe, InvestEU, Erasmus+, the Child Guarantee, the Just Transition Fund, Digital Europe, the Connecting Europe Facility, LIFE+, EU4health, the Integrated Border Management Fund, Creative Europe, the Right and Values programme, the European Defence Fund, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and humanitarian aid, as well as relevant EU agencies and the European Public Prosecutor's Office); decides further to base its reading on the MFF ceilings proposed by the Commission in the DB; considers that any increase for the flagship programmes should be accompanied by the corresponding rise of the ceiling of the given MFF heading; decides to reinforce funding for Parliament's priorities *inter alia* in the fields of security, migration, fundamental rights and external action;
8. Accepts the Council's increases in Heading 1, 2a, and 3, unless for the lines where it decides on a higher amount of appropriations; accepts further the moving of the Resilience cluster from Heading 5 to Heading 2b;
9. Reaffirms its previous commitments to make full use of the possibility to re-use de-commitments for research laid down in Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation;
10. Insists on the need of a more detailed budgetary nomenclature allowing the budgetary authority to fully exercise its decision-making role in the annual budgetary procedure and scrutiny over the implementation of the budget in Headings 2b, 4 and 6;
11. As a general rule, decides to restore DB levels on all lines cut by the Council and not reinforced in its reading, with the exception of Heading 7;
12. Points to the importance of ensuring that sufficient financial resources and adequate human resources capacities are allocated to Union agencies enabling them to fulfil their mandate, execute their tasks and respond optimally to the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak; underlines the fact that proper coordination and synergies between agencies are needed to increase the effectiveness of their work, especially where there is convergence towards specific policy objectives, in order to allow for a fair and efficient use of public money;
13. Notes that the updated pragmatic calendar of the budgetary procedure does not leave a possibility for a timely agreement on a possible second DB proposal; deems it crucial, therefore, to fully exploit the whole period of the budgetary conciliation in order to achieve an ambitious agreement;
14. Sets the overall level of appropriations for the 2021 budget (all Sections) at EUR 181 684 729 002 in commitment appropriations, representing an increase of EUR 14 938 547 026

compared to the DB; decides in addition to make available an amount of EUR 1 631 420 001 in commitment appropriations further to de-commitments under Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation;

15. In order to finance this budget, reminds that, as expressed in its legislative resolution of 16 September 2020, the new categories of own resources should be introduced as of 2021 and that any amounts generated by new own resources beyond the level necessary to cover the repayment obligations of the NGEU in a given year should remain in the Union budget as general revenue notably to top-up the 15 EU flagship programmes as of 2021 accompanied by the corresponding rise of the MFF ceilings;

Heading 1

16. Highlights the importance of Horizon Europe in making the European Green Deal a success, and contributing to the transition towards a climate-neutral economy and society by 2050, and in supporting the digital transformation, which is vital for the Union's future prosperity; stresses also that the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need to invest in health research; proposes therefore significantly to increase Horizon Europe, in line with its long-held position calling for an overall budget of EUR 120 billion; considers, furthermore, that the full amount of decommitments made over the whole of the current MFF should be made available, in accordance with Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation, to support the climate and digital transitions and health research;
17. Calls for the 2021 Union budget to ensure that the InvestEU Programme delivers on both its long term objective by providing more investment capacity aimed at supporting sustainable infrastructure, research, SMEs, and social investments and its new short term mission to support the economic recovery via strategic investments;
18. Stresses the crucial role of the Connecting Europe Facility in fostering the development of a high-performance trans-European network, supporting energy projects in the shift towards a climate-neutral economy with security of supply, and buttressing the digital transition, including the up-skilling and re-skilling of Union workers; proposes therefore major increases, in particular for the transport and energy strands;
19. Underlines that the COVID-19 pandemic has showed the increasing importance of digitalisation for the daily functioning of the economy; recognises the importance of the Digital Europe Programme in shaping and supporting the digital transition; proposes increases that go beyond its interim position on the MFF, to take account of needs revealed by the pandemic;
20. Considers that it is also necessary to strengthen further important priorities in the heading; calls, inter alia, for a substantial increase in the amount dedicated to SME objectives; recalls the important role that Union agencies play in helping to achieve Union policy objectives; calls therefore for sufficient funding and staffing for all agencies in line with their tasks and responsibilities;
21. Increases therefore the level of commitment appropriations for heading 1 by EUR 6 313 980 774 above DB (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions), of which EUR 5 996 664 225 for flagship programmes; in addition, makes available to the heading an amount of EUR 1 631 420 001 in commitment appropriations further to de-commitments

under Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation;

Heading 2a

22. Decides to take over the Council's reading of the Heading 2a;

Heading 2b

23. Emphasises the need to allocate additional resources to the EU4Health Programme, contributing in particular to address the significant structural needs identified during the COVID-19 crisis, setting out key action areas such as the improvement of national health systems, the availability and affordability of medicines and other crisis-relevant products and to ensure continued and timely provision of accessible and safe sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services;
24. Emphasises the importance of Erasmus+ as a symbolic and one of the most successful Union programmes with strategic investment in the Union's future; recalls that insufficient funding for the Erasmus+ programme would endanger its capacity to reach its new objectives and to uphold the challenges of becoming more inclusive and ecological; decides therefore to substantially increase Erasmus+ in line with its position to triple its budget;
25. Recalls that the cultural and creative sector is one of the most hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and calls for adequate answers and financing to reduce the substantive losses of the sector due to the unforeseeable closure of venues during the pandemic; proposes therefore to substantially increase the respective budget lines of Creative Europe;
26. Insists on the need for more transparency in the allocation of funds under the various programme components and sub-programmes of Erasmus+, by restoring its previous nomenclature, and of Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme by creating a new budget line for the Union values strand; reiterates its request to the Commission to increase transparency in its use of the budget assigned to multimedia activities, in particular by creating a series of new budget lines in connection with the measures;
27. Echoes the Commission prediction that, in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak, tackling child poverty will become even more important in the coming years; consequently, insists that a separate budget line under ESF+ needs to be created for the European Child Guarantee with an allocation of EUR 1 billion for the year 2021;
28. Recalls that the COVID-19 crisis affects women disproportionately and calls for reinforcement of the Employment and Social Innovation strand to support programmes and trainings targeted at advancing women's participation and tackling their precarity on the labour market;
29. Stresses the crucial role of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme to protect and promote the rights and values enshrined in the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and insists that additional appropriations are required for each stand and notably for the Daphne strand to fight violence against women;

30. Deeply regrets that the Commission still has not responded to Parliament's call for a comprehensive review of the budget line for multimedia measures, particularly with regard to the framework contract with Euronews; decides to put its budgetary allocation in reserve until the Commission has answered the concerns raised by the Court of Auditors;
31. Decides to apply targeted reinforcements to EPPO; believes that its nature requires a stronger guarantee of independence, and its budget should therefore be presented under Heading 7, an independent organism rather than assimilated to an agency;
32. Rejects the Commission proposal to merge different budget lines linked to social policy objectives; believes that separate budget lines as was the case in the past would guarantee the necessary transparency and resources for each of these key areas;
33. Decides to transfer the line 06 04 01 (EU Recovery Instrument - Payment of periodic coupon and redemption at maturity) to chapter 17, as all financing costs of NGEU-related spending should be counted over and over the MFF ceilings;
34. Reinforces Heading 2b overall by EUR +5 894 270 074 above DB in commitment appropriations (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions), of which EUR 6 041 509 293 for flagship programmes;

Heading 3

35. Reminds that the European Council, in its position on the European Recovery Instrument, did not retain the level of support for the Just Transition Fund as foreseen by the Commission proposal; expresses its concerns that these cuts will seriously undermine the recovery efforts; re-iterates that the Just Transition Fund is a vital and indispensable building block in the architecture of the European Green Deal; proposes therefore an increase of EUR 500 million in commitment appropriations for this flagship programme in 2021;
36. In line with the overall priority to tackle climate change, focuses substantial increases worth EUR 237 million in commitment appropriations on budget lines pertaining to LIFE+ programme; notes that this increase is intended to contribute to the main objectives such as preservation of nature and biodiversity, the circular economy and quality of life, climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as the clean energy transition; expects the Commission to warrant the necessary absorption capacity for an effective use of these additional means;
37. Reminds that a number of agricultural sectors have been hard hit by the COVID-19 outbreak and therefore supports targeted reinforcements on budget lines for market support measures under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) which aim at mitigating the effects of the crisis caused by that outbreak; expects the Letter of amendment to adjust further the level of appropriations of EAGF by taking into account the assigned revenue expected to be available in 2021 and other parameters such as the impact of the COVID pandemic on agricultural sectors;
38. Highlights the particularly difficult socio-economic circumstances in the Union's outermost regions, compounded by the impact of the Corona crisis; against this

background, proposes a top-up for the budget line covering the POSEI programme for the maintenance of the agricultural activity and for the supply of food and agricultural products in the outermost regions, which must be provided with adequate resources;

39. Reinforces the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund by EUR 19,6 million; recognises that 2021 will be a key year for the fisheries sector, which will have to face simultaneously the challenges of the adaptation to European Green Deal objectives, the risks associated with the COVID 19-crisis and Brexit;
40. Overall, reinforces Heading 3 by EUR 867 937 490 above DB in commitment appropriations (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions), of which EUR 739 100 000 for flagship programmes;

Heading 4

41. Increases funding for Parliament's priorities in the fields of migration and border management, most prominently the Integrated Border Management Fund and the Asylum and Migration Fund; at the same time, aims to enhance budgetary transparency by reflecting both Funds' specific objectives into the budget structure, so that the budgetary authority can track expenditure more closely;
42. Underlines that it is of paramount importance to invest in adequate funding and staffing levels for all agencies operating in the fields of migration, asylum and border management;
43. In sum, reinforces Heading 4 by EUR 710 251 000 in commitment appropriations above DB levels, of which EUR 500 251 000 for flagship programmes;

Heading 5

44. Stresses the importance of a progressive framing of the EU's common security and defence policy; underlines the importance of enhancing European cooperation in defence matters since it not only makes Europe and its citizens safer, but also leads to a cost reduction; calls for increased funding for the European Defence Fund in order to fully foster an innovative and competitive defence industrial base that will contribute to the much-needed strategic autonomy of the EU;
45. Calls for increased funding for military mobility with the aim of helping Member States act faster and more effectively; notes that sufficient funding is needed to support missions and operations under the common security and defence policy, including by measures such as funding dual-use transport infrastructure and simplifying diplomatic clearances and customs rules;
46. Recalls that the important role played by decentralised agencies operating in the field of security and proposes targeted increases to allow them to properly perform their tasks;
47. Reinforces Heading 5 overall by EUR 372 320 760 above DB (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions), of which EUR 312 829 132 for flagship programmes;

Heading 6

48. Emphasises that at a time when external challenges and matters of international relations are gaining importance and are dominating international politics, the external dimension of the Union budget must be appropriately funded and prepared to respond without delay to current, emerging, as well as future challenges; notes that the bulk of external action spending is concentrated in the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), on which inter-institutional legislative negotiations are still ongoing;
49. Regrets that the new nomenclature for the external action as proposed by the Commission is much less detailed than the previous one, reducing transparency, predictability, accountability, scrutiny, and limiting the budgetary authority's capacity to make choices reflecting political priorities; insists, therefore, that a more differentiated budget structure, with dedicated lines for the most important beneficiaries, policy areas and sub-regions, is needed, in order to enhance the clarity and readability of the budget; proposes therefore a revised nomenclature for NDICI, adapted to the new instruments, while introducing a higher level of detail;
50. Proposes the creation of a dedicated budget line for "the support to the political process in Libya" with the objective of contributing to a peaceful resolution to the Libyan conflict;
51. Points to the persistent challenges in the Union's Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, as well as the importance of endowing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East with adequate financial resources; recalls the importance of developing stable relations and strong cooperation between the EU and Africa and deems appropriate to dedicate sufficient financial resources to the development of this continent, which would contribute inter alia to mitigating the root causes of forced migration;
52. Highlights the relevance of the accession process of the Western Balkan countries; deems it essential that the new nomenclature for the IPA III instrument comprises separate budget lines for the Western Balkans and Turkey, in view of the highly sensitive nature of EU funding for Turkey;
53. Insists, even more so in the current COVID 19 related prospects and following the unfortunate European Council's decision to discard the external pillar of NGEU, on the need to increase the humanitarian aid chapter and the need for safeguards against the crowding out of internal or external use of the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve; underlines the need to ensure the continuing financing of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, in the event of a possible impasse in the ongoing negotiations on the European Solidarity Corps programme;
54. Following the recent worrying developments in Belarus, calls for the creation of a new Special Representative for Belarus, to support the process for a peaceful transition of power in accordance with the will of the Belarusian people;
55. In the light of threats related to cybersecurity as well as the spreading of fake news, highlights the need for the Union budget to better address and respond to them on a horizontal level, both at the headquarters and at EU delegations around the world;

56. Reinforces Heading 5 overall by EUR 698 781 256 above DB (excluding pilot projects and preparatory actions), of which EUR 583 041 792 for flagship programmes;

Heading 7

57. Decides not to restore, at this stage, the Council's cuts in Heading 7;

Pilot projects and preparatory actions (PP-PAs)

58. Recalls the importance of pilot projects and preparatory actions (PP-PAs) as tools for the formulation of political priorities and the introduction of new initiatives that have the potential to turn into standing Union activities and programmes; having carried out a careful analysis of all the proposals submitted adopts a balanced package of PP-PAs that reflects Parliament's political priorities; calls on the Commission to swiftly implement PP-PAs, in close cooperation with the members of the European Parliament, and provide feedback on their performance and results delivered on the ground;

Payments

59. Underlines the necessity to provide a sufficient level of payment appropriations in the budget for the year 2021 that will take into account the volume of outstanding commitments at the end of 2020 in order to avoid the accumulation of unpaid claims from MFF 2014-2020 and to finance the frontloading of expenditure related to COVID-19 pandemic; notes that due to the delays in implementation of the programming period 2014-2020 most of the relevant payments will be settled in years 2021-2022; underlines the increased accuracy of the Member States forecasts which need to be fully taken into account in the budget for the year 2021; stresses therefore that a credible payments plan for the whole MFF 2021-2027 is needed, providing for a sufficient payments in its first years with possibility to carry unused payments forward to the next years with the help of special instruments placed over and above the MFF payments ceilings;
60. Recalls that several legislative measures have been adopted in the course of 2020 aimed at facilitating absorption, cutting red tape and accelerating the actual disbursement of funds under several programmes in order to provide cash-flow and liquidity in a context of severe economic depression; judges that this approach would be severely and unjustifiably compromised if not underpinned by a sufficient level of payment appropriations in 2021; calls therefore for adequate means to be made available as of the adoption of the 2021 budget; commits to take any steps necessary to adjusting of payment appropriations in the course of execution throughout 2021;

Other Sections

Section I – European Parliament

61. Expresses its surprise and deep concern at the Commission's cuts in Parliament's budget, which break once more the tradition of good cooperation between the two institutions; restores the appropriations established in the estimates on the basis of a careful and

responsible analysis of the needs of Parliament for 2021 and adopted by plenary in its abovementioned resolution on 14 May 2020 with a large majority; takes into account the impact of the Covid-19 crisis and the setting-up of five new parliamentary committees when restoring the appropriations;

62. Notes the ongoing negotiations on the new multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 and the uncertainty regarding the funding level of the new Heading 7 - European Public Administration; stresses that Parliament has fulfilled the 5 % staff reduction objective and actually saw an overall cut of 6 %; highlights the fact that, since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, Parliament has had to cope with an increased amount of tasks; notes that synergies and re-prioritisation were achieved in the last legislative term; stresses that the functioning of Parliament depends on the fulfilment of its administrative tasks, which require adequate staffing levels; is deeply concerned by the serious and structural understaffing in many committees' secretariats in contradiction with the important increase of their workload and invites the Secretary-General to urgently provide solutions to adequately staff the committees' secretariats via internal redeployment and increase of contractual agents;
63. Reiterates Parliament's priorities for the forthcoming financial year, namely, focusing the Parliament's budget on its core functions of legislating, acting as one arm of the budgetary authority, representing citizens and scrutinising the work of other institutions, as well as providing the resources for priority projects on engaging with citizens, green Parliament promoting the saving of resources, accessible Parliament, fully respecting gender issues, building security, cyber-security and IT development, and multiannual building projects;
64. In line with the estimates adopted by the Parliament:
 - a) welcomes the measures taken by Parliament regarding the Covid-19 outbreak, including new temporary working methods and providing a Covid-19 screening test centre for Members and staff; reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to evaluate the financial consequences of those measures for Parliament's budgets for 2020 and 2021 and present it to Parliament's Committee on Budgets; calls on the Secretary-General to elaborate detailed guidelines to better prepare for any future force majeure events in order to ensure a continued fulfilment of Parliament's legislative functions if orderly functioning cannot be upheld;
 - b) reiterates its call on the Bureau for a detailed roadmap on achieving the ambitious environmental targets and reducing its carbon footprint as set in the recent Bureau decision of 16 September 2019 and for an annual review of results to be presented to the Parliament's Committee on Budgets;
 - c) recalls its request to align the accredited parliamentary assistants (APAs) mission allowances for the missions they carry out between the three places of work of Parliament at the level of allowance systems for civil servants and other agents; reiterates its call to the Bureau to assess the possibility and financial impact of an extension of the status of APAs to local assistants; calls again on the revision of the Implementing provisions governing the work of delegations and missions outside the European Union to consider the possibility for APAs, subject to certain conditions, to accompany Members on official Parliament delegations and missions;

- d) reiterates its request to the Bureau to establish full flexibility of presence for Members during green Weeks;
- e) underlines the need of the Parliament's Committee on Budgets to receive all relevant information relating to the Parliament's budget in a timely and intelligible manner to be able to take informed decisions; strongly reiterates its requests for:
- a detailed analysis and justification of the costs and savings relating to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union;
 - a detailed breakdown of expenditure for the establishment of the new Europa Experience centres for 2021 and cost of the creation of a series of mobile versions of the Parliamentarium;
 - a detailed and thorough analysis of the representation costs of diplomatic presence beyond the borders of the Union in Indonesia (Jakarta), Ethiopia (Addis Ababa) and the United States (New York);
 - further details regarding the expenditure for the project management of the construction of the west wing of the Konrad Adenauer building, including the security surveillance of the construction site;
 - an overview of all other currently rented Parliament buildings that will remain occupied in 2021 as well as a detailed projection of the growing energy costs;
 - an analysis of the total costs and impact on human resources of the Directorate-General for Translation project to develop a tool that is able to automatically transcribe and translate parliamentary multilingual debates in real time;
 - reiterates its calls for a transparent decision-making process in the field of buildings policy;
- f) asks the Bureau to make known its decision on the future of the Spaak building in Brussels and a detailed breakdown of the costs at the end of the architectural competition launched by the EP in May 2020 for its renovation and / or replacement; reminds that the 2021 budget includes items for the preparation of the works in the Spaak building;
- g) recalls the recommendations of Parliament's resolutions of 26 October 2017, 11 September 2018 and 15 January 2019 on combating sexual harassment and abuse in the Union as well as measures to prevent and combat mobbing and sexual harassment; demands that the Secretary-General provide all information on the work that has been done in that regard and the programme for the near future; asks the Secretary-General to provide an assessment of the new harassment procedures before presenting the 2022 estimates to the Bureau; is of the opinion that staff as well as Members should be encouraged to participate in training courses to minimise the occurrence of such events inside Parliament;
- h) recalls the request from the Bureau to the Secretary-General to investigate ways to ensure a sustainable financing of the Voluntary Pension Fund;

- i) recalls its request to the Secretary-General to verify that the highest standards of labour law for the workers of the new contracts for cleaning in Parliament as well as for the workers in the self-service restaurants are being upheld by external contractors, in particular as regards psychological pressure and working conditions due to Covid-19.

Other sections (Sections IV-X)

65. Notes that, in the main, the DB reflects the estimates of the various institutions falling within the other sections of the budget and therefore matches, with some exceptions, their financial requirements; considers that the horizontal and systematic cuts proposed by the Council would therefore have a deleterious effect on the working of the institutions concerned and consequently on the vital contribution they make to the functioning of the European Union; on that account, proposes to restore the levels of the DB in almost all cases, including with regard to the establishment plans of the Court of Justice, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the Ombudsman and the European External Action Service; in line with the gentlemen's agreement, does not modify the Council's reading concerning the Council and the European Council;
66. Considers that, in a limited number of cases and taking into account the institutions' estimates, it is necessary to increase lines above the DB; proposes therefore:
 - a) in relation to the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, to increase the appropriations above the DB for a few lines, so as to maintain a level of appropriations in line with their estimates;
 - b) in relation to the European External Action Service to increase the appropriations above the DB for the line 2214 "Strategic Communication Capacity" and the line 3001 "External staff and outside services".

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67. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, together with the amendments to the draft general budget, to the Council, the Commission, the other institutions and bodies concerned and the national parliaments.