European Parliament
2019-2024

TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2024)0373

Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2025 – Section I – European Parliament

European Parliament resolution of 25 April 2024 on Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2025 (2023/2221(BUI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Article 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

– 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 966/2012[1],

– having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 of 17 December 2020 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021-2027[2], and to the joint declarations agreed between Parliament, the Council and the Commission in this context[3] and the related unilateral declarations[4],

– having regard to the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources[5],

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1 OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.
2 OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 11.
3 OJ C 444 I, 22.12.2020, p. 4.
4 Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0357.
5 OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 28.

– having regard to its interim report of 3 October 2023 on the proposal for a mid-term revision of the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027[1],

– having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2022 on upscaling the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework: a resilient EU budget fit for new challenges[2],

– having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765 of 29 February 2024 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027[3] (MFF revision),

– having regard to the Commission proposal of 16 May 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union[4],

– having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1023/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 amending the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union[5],

– having regard to its resolution of 20 April 2023 on Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2024[6],

– having regard to its resolution of 18 October 2023 on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024[7],

– having regard to the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024[8] and the joint statements agreed between Parliament, the Council and the Commission annexed hereto,

– having regard to the Secretary-General's report to the Bureau on drawing up Parliament's preliminary draft estimates for the financial year 2025,

– having regard to the preliminary draft estimates drawn up by the Bureau on 11 March 2024 pursuant to Rules 25(7) and 102(1) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure,

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1 Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0335.
2 OJ C 177, 17.5.2023, p. 115.
3 OJ L, 2024/765, 29.2.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/765/oj.
4 COM(2022)0223.
5 OJ L 287, 29.10.2013, p. 15.
6 Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0119.
7 Texts adopted, P9_TA(2023)0367.
8 OJ L 207, 22.2.2024.

– having regard to the draft estimates drawn up by the Committee on Budgets pursuant to Rule 102(2) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to Rule 102 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (A9-0180/2024),

A. whereas the budget proposed on 26 February 2024 by the Secretary-General for Parliament's preliminary draft estimates for 2025 amounts to EUR 2 507 233 329 and represents an increase of 5,21 % or EUR 124 132 017 compared to 2024 budget;

B. whereas the Commission forecasts the EU inflation rate to be 3 % in 2024 and 2,5 % in 2025 in its Winter 2024 (Interim) Forecast; whereas the level of expenditure in Heading 7 of the MFF 2021-2027 is based on a 2 % yearly increase;

C. whereas the credibility of the Parliament depends on its ability to deliver on its core budgetary, legislative and scrutiny work to the highest standard, while setting an example vis-à-vis other Union institutions to plan and conduct its spending prudently and efficiently and to reflect the prevalent economic realities;

D. whereas 2025 will be the first full year after the elections and there will therefore be a return to the normal pace of core political and support activities;

E. whereas the Parliament finalised its deep reform process started last year to, on one hand review its internal working methods making parliamentary work more efficient, and on the other hand to strengthen its institutional role leading to a better functioning Parliament as co-legislator, as arm of the budgetary authority, as discharge authority and increasing its capacity to exercise democratic oversight;

General framework

1. Is concerned with the situation of Heading 7 in the current MFF; recalls that the constraints are the results of the cuts applied by the Council to the Commission's already very low initial proposal when agreeing on the current MFF 2021-2027; regrets the Council's opposition to the Commission's proposal to increase the ceiling of Heading 7 in the MFF revision as from 2024; points out the failure to address the issue of the ceiling of Heading 7 in the MFF revision; highlights that the forecasted negative margin for 2025 presupposes the use of special instruments in Heading 7 for that purpose;

2. Recalls that almost two-thirds of the budget is fixed by statutory obligations; recalls that the salary indexation, in line with the Staff Regulations and Statute for Members of the European Parliament, is

currently forecasted by the Commission for July 2024, April 2025 and July 2025 at 5,3 %, 0,6 % and 3,7 % respectively; notes that the 2024 budget includes a salary indexation of 3,4 % as from July 2024; notes that the Committee on Budgets will monitor the official forecasted evolution of the salary indexation;

3. Endorses the agreement reached in the Conciliation between the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets on 9 April 2024 to set the increase over the 2024 budget at 4,87 %, corresponding to an overall level of estimates of EUR 2 499 233 329 for 2025, and to reduce accordingly the appropriations proposed on the following budget lines for a total of EUR 11 000 000:

   2 0 0 0 — Rent, 2 0 0 7 — Construction of buildings and fitting-out of premises, 2 3 9 0 — EMAS and sustainability activities, including promotion, and the European Parliament’s carbon offsetting scheme, 3 2 4 2 — Expenditure on publication, information and participation in public events, 3 2 4 3 — European Parliament visitor centres, 1 0 1 — Contingency reserve;

   furthermore, decides to increase the level of expenditure of the preliminary draft estimates approved by the Bureau on 11 March 2024 by EUR 3 000 000 and to increase accordingly the appropriations proposed on the following budget lines:

   3 2 4 4 — Organisation and reception of groups of visitors, Euroscola programme and invitations to opinion multipliers from third countries; 4 0 3 — Funding of European political foundations;

4. Notes that out of the increase of EUR 116 million compared to the 2024 budget an increase of EUR 98 million is due to statutory obligations, mainly for salary updates for staff (EUR 54,7 million) and parliamentary assistance related expenditure (EUR 33,2 million); notes that the increase for non-statutory expenses between 2024 and 2025 does not exceed 2 %;

5. Notes that the Parliament does not request any additional posts for 2025;

6. Notes that the 98 permanent posts created in the 2023 budget to facilitate the application of Article 29(4) of the Staff Regulation have been removed from the 2025 establishment plan;

Visitors groups and Europa Experiences

7. Recalls that visitors groups in all the places of work of the Parliament represent an important tool for Members to connect with constituents and to demonstrate their parliamentary work to constituents; highlights that visitors groups contribute to promoting the role of the Parliament to voters throughout the Union;

8. Notes with concern the increasing difficulties of arranging such visits due to the financial limitations of the existing budget, particularly for Members from Member States that are geographically far from Brussels and Strasbourg; calls for sufficient funding to cover expenses related to travel and accommodation, taking into account the inflation rates and prices, both in the countries of origin of the visitor groups and Brussels and Strasbourg; believes that a 10 % increase in the per-person allocation is necessary to address the prevailing conditions; calls the Secretary-General to propose to the Quaestors as soon as possible an increase of the ceilings for the costs covered to continue and enhance Members’ support in enabling visitors groups to visit the Parliament;

9. Notes with concern the internal rules governing MEP visitor groups, which result in 30 % of the up-front costs having to be incurred by Accredited Parliamentary Assistants (APAs) in some circumstances; stresses the impracticability of these rules and the financial burden this places on APAs; calls on the Bureau to review and update its existing rules governing visits to overcome difficulties in the planning and organization of visits;

10. Recalls the Bureau decision of 25 November 2019 to establish Europa Experience centres in all Members States by the end of 2024; regrets the delays in establishing Europa Experiences in all Member States before the 2024 Parliament elections and notes that currently only 12 are in operation; recognises that a number of external factors, including the volatility of real estate markets, have contributed to these delays;

11. Takes note that five centres are planned to be opened in 2025 (in Athens, Zagreb, The Hague, Sofia and Budapest); calls for the establishment of Europa Experiences in all Member States as soon as possible; recalls that Europa Experiences should allow all citizens to have a better understanding of the functioning of the Union institutions;

Infrastructure

12. Takes note that the Committee on Budgets approved the Bureau’s decision to carry out a profound renovation of the SPAAK building, in line with its resolution of 19 October 2022 on the Council position on the draft general budget of the European Union for financial year 2023[1]; stresses that the current building has a very low energy efficiency rating and lacks much needed flexibility to be fit for purpose; highlights that the Parliament should manage its own building portfolio in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability to align with the objectives of the Green Deal; notes that the renovation will lead to significant annual savings and reduction of CO2

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[1] Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0366.

emissions and will help to comply with the requirements of the revised Energy Efficiency Directive and Energy Performance of Buildings Directive; reminds the Bureau that transparency, proper information and consultation with the Committee on Budgets, including access to comprehensive details, before adopting any major decision on building related issues and its financing is needed due to their important budgetary implications;

13. Recognises the need to start renovation works in 2025 to the TREVES II building in order to facilitate the temporary accommodation of staff that will be displaced as part of the renovations of the SPAAK building;

14. Welcomes Parliament’s policy aiming to ensure the fully independent use of Parliament buildings by persons with disabilities and supports further measures and adaptions that will be necessary in this regard; recognizes the need to improve access for persons with disabilities to the Plenary Chamber in Strasbourg;

15. Recalls that Parliament's administration is currently working on a comprehensive approach to define Parliament's long-term building policy considering in particular environmental obligations, costs and budgetary constraints, energy efficiency, and waste management in line with the "Fit for 55" package and expects the results to be made public; calls for taking stock of flexible ways of working that have arisen as a consequence of the pandemic, while acknowledging that physical presence for political negotiations, debates or exchange of views remains more efficient for public policy making;

16. Takes note of the practice of the year-end ‘mopping-up transfer’ to contribute to building projects; takes note that such ‘mopping-up transfer’ takes place systematically on the same chapters, titles and often on exactly the same budgetary lines; notes that the ‘mopping-up’ yearly exercise can also serve other purposes than to finance building related projects;

17. Welcomes the continuous efforts and measures put in place by the Parliament in order to reduce its environmental footprint; reiterates its full support for Parliament’s environmental management system (EMAS) targets for 2024; expects Parliament to achieve all the EMAS key performance indicator targets by the end of 2024 and proceed to adoption of new ambitious targets for the coming years; notes in particular a number of achievements in this regard, including a 44 % reduction in carbon emissions since 2006, a 66 % reduction in paper use compared to 2014, the high rates of staff walking or cycling to work, significant decreases in the use of plastic, and the successful roll-out of renewable energy infrastructure, which saw 458 MWh of solar energy generated by the Parliament in 2023;

18. Takes note of the increases of the carbon credit prices; recalls that energy efficiency investments are a good method of achieving value for money; welcomes and encourages the investments in renewable energy and for the phasing-out of fossil fuels in particular given the energy crisis and geopolitical context and for it to be reflected in the next multi-annual building strategy; notes that Parliament has installed and is continuing to install photovoltaic solar panels to further increase the share of renewable energy produced on-site to reach the target of 25 %; recalls that nearly two-thirds of Parliament's carbon footprint originates from the transportation of people; welcomes Parliament's efforts to reduce CO2 emissions through chartered trains and calls for upscaling the availabilities to shift travel between the three places of work to train;

Other issues

19. Recalls the ongoing struggle in which the Union is involved to safeguard European values and uphold the integrity of our democratic processes; welcomes the actions undertaken by the Parliament in the pursuit of these objectives, fighting against disinformation and information manipulation; calls on DG COMM and European Parliament Liaison Offices (EPLOs) to keep developing and implementing effective strategies to counter disinformation and information manipulation; highlights that one of the most powerful weapons against disinformation is positive, fact-based communication regarding the Parliament’s activities;

20. Recalls that the Parliament strongly supports multilingualism and promotes the rights of the national, regional and linguistic minorities; considers that the Parliament can actively contribute to the fight against disinformation by deepening its communication also in linguistic minorities and communities languages where appropriate; requires the Bureau to widen the extent of Parliament’s production and dissemination of communication materials that are in line with the needs of national, regional and linguistic minorities in Member States for example in the EPLOs and Europa Experience Centres as a way to counter any attempt to rely on linguistic differences to hinder cohesion; recalls in that sense the efforts undertaken by EPLOs in Baltic countries to provide information to citizens in Ukrainian and Russian since the start of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, with a particular focus on countering Russian disinformation and propaganda and encourages to continue supporting and promoting such activities in Ukrainian and Russian; underlines the importance of EPLO's active participation in the implementation of the Parliament's work on citizenship education through multiple programmes involving local communities, schools and universities;

21. Underlines the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for supporting Members to exercise their mandate and for various activities of the

Parliament’s administration; welcomes that projects in AI are already in the pipeline for 2025;

22. Supports the announcement made by the Secretary-General in the Committee on Budgets to reduce administrative burden and bureaucracy for Members and their offices while accelerating the digitalisation of processes within the administration; stresses that investments in digitalisation are generating a return on investment in the midterm and should not be delayed for short-term cost savings;

23. Calls on the Parliament to continue conducting regular assessments of the organisation of its personnel needs, to optimise the repartition of staff in Parliament’s Secretariat, notably by reallocating vacant posts between services in order to maintain as much as possible constant staffing levels; invites the Secretary-General to assess the risks related to employing growing numbers of contract agents, including the danger of creating a two tier staffing structure within Parliament; insists that core permanent positions and tasks should be performed by permanent staff;

24. Highlights that ensuring a fair geographical balance is an important part of creating a truly European public service; remarks that, over the years, Parliament has taken a number of measures in that respect; notes that there is still room for improvement; notes that the Bureau has created the legal framework for the organisation of nationality specific competitions and decided to organise the first of such competitions; highlights that competitions should always be based on merit;

25. Takes note of the procedure already in place for requests from a parliamentary body user for International Sign Language interpretation at a meeting; asks the Secretary-General to continue exploring other possibilities, such as Speech-to-Text and Machine Translation tools in respect of the principle of equal access to all citizens;

26. Reiterates its request, adopted at Plenary level at several occasions, to the Bureau to start the work on revision of the Rules of Procedure enabling Members to exercise their right to vote remotely, during benefiting from maternity or paternity leave, during a long-term illness or in cases of force majeure, taking advantage of the lessons learnt during the pandemic on the technical aspects of this voting method;

27. Reiterates its call to the Bureau to guarantee that all restaurants within Parliament uphold their standards of quality, efficiency and affordability, and to re-introduce access control at the entrances to the self-service restaurant during peak time; welcomes the

implementation of access controls at the entrance of the WEISS self-service in Strasbourg during part-sessions;

28. Calls for a genuine commitment to achieving the principle of multilingualism;

29. Reiterates its call on the Conference of Presidents and the Bureau to revise the implementing provisions governing the work of delegations and missions outside the Union; underlines that such a revision should consider the possibility for APAs, subject to certain conditions, to accompany Members on official Parliament delegations and missions; highlights that this change would not result in any change to the envelope and would be budget neutral;

30. Expects that requests voted by the Plenary should be implemented as a matter of high priority;

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31. Adopts the estimates for the financial year 2025;

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