Wednesday 17 December 2014

P8_TA(2014)0089

Draft amending budget No 3/2014: Revenue from fines, interest payments, reimbursements and repayments — Payment appropriations — Establishment plans of the Commission, the Committee of the Regions and the European Data Protection Supervisor

European Parliament resolution of 17 December 2014 on the Council position on Draft amending budget No 3/2014 of the European Union for the financial year 2014, Section III — Commission (16740/2014 — C8-0289/2014 — 2014/2036(BUD))

(2016/C 294/26)

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 Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 ([1]), and in particular Article 41 thereof,

— having regard to the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2014, as definitively adopted on 20 November 2013 ([2]),

— having regard to the joint statement on payment appropriations by the Parliament, the Council and the Commission (joint statement of 12 November 2013), as agreed in the joint conclusions of 12 November 2013 ([3]), as well as the European Parliament and Commission statement on payment appropriations, as agreed in the same joint conclusions,

— having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020 ([4]) ('MFF Regulation'),

— 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 management ([5]) ('IIA'),

— having regard to Council Decision 2007/436/EC, Euratom of 7 June 2007 on the system of the European Communities' own resources ([6]),

— having regard to Draft amending budget No 3/2014, which the Commission adopted on 28 May 2014 (COM(2014) 0329),

— having regard to the Commission proposal to mobilise the Contingency Margin in 2014, adopted on 28 May 2014 (COM(2014)0328),

— having regard to the joint conclusions approved by the Parliament and the Council on 8 December 2014,

— having regard to the position on Draft amending budget No 3/2014, which the Council adopted on 12 December 2014 and forwarded to Parliament on the same day (16740/2014 — C8-0289/2014),

— having regard to Rules 88 and 91 of its Rules of Procedure,

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([1]) OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 51, 20.2.2014, p. 1.
([3]) Texts adopted of 20 November 2013, P7_TA(2013)0472.
([4]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.
([5]) OJ C 373, 20.12.2013, p. 1.
([6]) OJ L 163, 23.6.2007, p. 17.

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— having regard to the letter of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,

— having regard to the letter of the Committee on Development,

— having regard to the letter of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,

— having regard to the letter of the Committee on Culture and Education,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets and the opinion of the Committee on Regional Development (A8-0069/2014),

A. whereas Draft amending budget (DAB) No 3/2014 to the 2014 general budget as originally presented by the Commission proposed to increase both the forecast of revenue stemming from fines and penalties, and other revenue by EUR 1 568 million and the payments appropriations by EUR 4 738 million across headings 1a, 1b, 2, and 4 of the multi-annual financial framework (MFF), with the aim of meeting payment needs until the end of the year by covering obligations stemming from past and current commitments;

B. whereas the implementation of the 2014-2020 MFF started with a huge backlog in payments, with unpaid bills amounting to some EUR 23 400 million at the end of 2013 for Cohesion policy only, and a level of outstanding commitments (RAL) reaching EUR 221 700 million at the end of 2013, i.e. EUR 41 000 million above what was originally foreseen when the MFF 2007-2013 was agreed;

C. whereas out of the total of DAB No 3/2014, only EUR 99 million is meant to cover 2014-2020 programmes under the cohesion policy, the rest relating to the closure of the 2007-2013 programmes (EUR 3 296 million) and payment needs stemming from other headings (EUR 1 340 million);

D. whereas the Parliament, the Council and the Commission committed themselves through the joint statement of 12 November 2013 to ensure that the Union has the financial means available to cover its legal obligations in 2014 by safeguarding an orderly progression of payments and by having recourse to the various flexibility mechanisms included in the MFF Regulation, including Article 13 (the contingency margin);

E. whereas some delegations in the Council expressed reservations as to the use of the contingency margin in DAB No 3/2014, which is considered by the Parliament to be an unsubstantiated concern and in contradiction with the spirit of the MFF Regulation and the IIA;

1. Takes note of DAB No 3/2014 as proposed by the Commission;

2. Endorses the joint conclusions agreed by the Parliament and the Council on 8 December 2014 with the view to provide for reinforcements in payments, in the 2014 budget, on a number of budget lines up to a level of EUR 4 246 million, of which EUR 3 168 million will be mobilised through the Contingency Margin for 2014;

3. Welcomes in particular the increases in the payment appropriation for Heading 1a and Heading 4, which have been largely preserved in the final compromise depicted in the Joint conclusions of 8 December 2014;

4. Welcomes the increase in payment appropriations for Heading 1b which is the main area affected by the shortage of payments in the Union budget in general; considers nevertheless that this is the bare minimum to cover the actual needs until the end of 2014 and will not be sufficient to solve the recurrent snowball effect of unpaid bills that has been expanding since the 2010 budget; recalls, in particular, that the bulk of invoices under heading 1b are traditionally submitted by Member States towards the end of each financial year in order to prevent possible de-commitments due to the application of N+2 and N+3 rules;

5. Supports the proposal for the mobilisation of the Contingency margin and underlines its interpretation of Article 3(2) of the MFF Regulation that payments related to special instruments must be counted over and above the ceilings; believes that any other interpretation undermines the basis for the political agreement on the 2014-2020 MFF, namely the understanding that specific and maximum flexibility should be implemented to allow the Union to fulfil its obligations;

6. Recalls that the adoption of DAB No 3/2014, DAB No 4/2014, DAB No 6/2014 and DAB No 8/2014 will reduce the share of the GNI contribution from Member States to the Union budget by a total of EUR 8 688 million and will therefore fully compensate the additional payment needs requested in DAB No 3/2014 as agreed in the Joint conclusions of 8 December 2014;

7. Approves the Council position on Draft amending budget No 3/2014;

8. Instructs its President to declare that amending budget No 2/2014 has been definitively adopted and arrange for its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.