Press release | 26.10.2011

EU budget 2012

EP budget proposals a mixed bag but ITER remains elephant in the room

The European Parliament today adopted its position on the EU's 2012 budget, under which an increase of 5.3% is foreseen (1). Given the increased competences of the EU, the Greens are not opposed to an overall budget increase per se, but the group has problems with a number of the budget lines and hence abstained in the final vote. After the vote, Green budgetary affairs spokesperson **Helga Trüpel** said:

"Given the ever increasing competences of the EU, it is only natural that its budget should reflect this. If the EU is serious about achieving the goals it has set itself under the Europe 2020 strategy, notably for sustainable development, as well as meeting the new demands that will be posed by the accession of Croatia, it requires a budget to ensure this is possible. The Council's position of limiting the increase to the inflation rate would clearly fail to ensure this.

"The budget proposals adopted by the EP today strike a good balance to this end to the most part, including greater support for green technologies and for greening the CAP, but the Greens abstained in today's vote because the proposals set out the wrong direction in a number of key areas. The disproportionate amount of funding that continues to be allocated to nuclear power, in spite of the clear need to finally shift away from nuclear in the aftermath of Fukushima, is wrongheaded. The Greens are also opposed to funding cuts in development aid.

"The elephant in the room is clearly the funding for the ITER nuclear fusion project. The ballooning ITER budget means it will require an additional €1.3 billion in public funds for 2012-13. Member states want to finance this through accounting chicanery with the EU budget, reducing spending in certain areas, but this increase is not yet factored into the proposals adopted today. ITER is a ticking budgetary time bomb."

Commenting on the European Parliament's own budget, **Helga Trüpel** added:

"We welcome the foreseen savings in the European Parliament budget. The proposed savings for interpretation and translation services alone will save €20 million. The EP also adopted an amendment aimed at ensuring MEPs would no longer automatically fly business class for short distances, which would save up to €15 million a year."

(1) The European Commission had proposed an increase of 4.9%, while the European Council wants to limit the increase to 2%. More information:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/en/pressroom/content/20111021BKG29990/html/Ten-facts-about-the-EU-budget

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Responsible MEPs



Helga Trüpel

Member

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