Implementing measures for the system of own resources of the European Union

2014/2020(INI) - 16/04/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 362 votes to 80, with 10 abstentions, a resolution on the implementing measures for the system of own resources of the European Union.

Parliament recalled that it has continuously called for the financing of the EU budget to return to a genuine system of own resources, as stipulated in the Treaty. From its point of view, national contributions to the EU budget, based on GNI, which amount nowadays to around 74% of total EU revenue, cannot be considered as genuine own resources as they simply constitute transfers from national treasuries to the EU budget. The VAT-based resource, which represents around 11% of total EU revenue, has developed in such way that it is also perceived as a national contribution to the EU budget.

Due to austerity measures, Member States are reluctant to increase their contributions to the EU budget, despite the undisputed benefits they derive from EU budget-funded programmes. Under these conditions, Members considered that a system of direct own resources for the EU is the only viable solution.

Parliament welcomed the Councils agreement to lay down implementing measures for the Unions own resources but considered it regrettable, however, that the Council has decided to transfer the provisions related to the calculation of the GNI resources back to the Own Resources Decision.

Parliament deplored the fact that the Council has not been able to make any progress on the reform of the own resources system on the basis of the legislative proposals put forward by the Commission in 2011. It has consistently manifested its support for the Commission proposals, which by reducing the share of national contributions to the EU budget to a maximum of 40%, abolishing the current purely statistical VAT-based contribution and replacing it by a genuine VAT-based EU resource, creating one new and genuine own resource and replacing all rebates and correction mechanisms by a system of lump sums for the period 2014-2020 took a step in the right direction.

Parliament maintained its call for reform of the own resources system of the European Union in order to make it simple, transparent, fair, visible and understandable to EU citizens. It placed high expectations on the work of the High-Level Group on Own Resources, which it believes offers a unique opportunity to overcome the current blockage of the reform of the system of own resources.

The High-Level Group on Own Resources aims to produce a first assessment of the current systems shortcomings by the end of 2014, with a final outcome in 2016 to be assessed at an interinstitutional conference with the participation of national parliaments. Parliament expected that the High-Level Group will still comply with the objectives and the calendar set out in the joint declaration establishing the High-Level Group on Own Resources.