

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

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1142nd meeting of the Council

- Budget -

Brussels, 12 and 13 February 1987

President: Mr Guy VERHOFSTADT
Minister for the Budget
of the Kingdom of Belgium

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Guy VERHOFSTADT Minister for the Budget

Denmark:

Mr Torben Mailand CHRISTENSEN Deputy Permanent Representative

Germany:

Mr Hans TIETMEYER State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Finance

Greece:

Mr Yannos PAPANTONIOU State Secretary for Economic Affairs

Spain:

Mr José BORRELL State Secretary for Finance

France:

Mr Jean CADET Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr John H.F. CAMPBELL Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

Italy:

Mr Carlo FRANCANZANI State Secretary,
Ministry of the Treasury

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER Minister for the Budget

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Netherlands:

Mr R. van der LINDEN

State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr Rui ALVAREZ CARP

State Secretary for the Budget

United Kingdom:

Mr Peter BROOKE

Minister of State, Treasury

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Commission:

Mr Henning CHRISTOPHERSEN

Vice-President

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COUNCIL DECISION TAKEN ON THE BASIS OF THE
COMMISSION'S LETTER OF AMENDMENT OF 9 JANUARY 1987

I. Preliminary statement

The Council and the Commission consider that adoption of the 1987 budget will facilitate discussions on the future financing of the Community.

The Council is of the opinion that a pragmatic solution to the problems of the 1987 budget must be found as a matter of great urgency.

This attitude has allowed agreement to be reached in the Council, thus enabling continuation of the budget procedure in conjunction with the European Parliament, with a view to avoiding in particular the drawbacks inherent in the provisional twelfths system and with a view to having a properly adopted budget by the end of February.

II. On the basis of the letter of amendment which it received from the Commission on 9 January 1987, the Council has taken the following decisions in connection with the budget procedure for the financial year 1987:

1. (a) The Council intends to act as soon as possible on the Commission proposals to implement, at legislative and budgetary level, the decisions taken by the Council (Agriculture) from 8 to 16 December 1986 (see details in Annex I to the letter of amendment).

(b) It also notes that the Commission will be making proposals concerning agricultural expenditure for 1987 in order to enable the estimated shortfall in this sector to be covered; these proposals will be based on the ideas the Commission intends to develop in its memorandum on new own resources.

The Council, for its part, intends to act on these proposals as quickly as possible.

2. The Council, acting on the basis of a letter of amendment, is amending as follows the draft budget (second reading) decided on 26 and 27 November 1986:

(a) as regards compulsory expenditure

the provisions in Article 293 of the draft budget are replaced by the following:

Article 293: "Measures to be taken following a review, with a view to reducing production surpluses and accumulated stocks, and related measures for compensation"

to be given a "token entry" accompanied by the following remarks:

Remarks

"This new Article is to accommodate, in the course of 1987, any additional appropriations which might be needed for accelerated stock disposal measures and for compensation to producers under plans to improve the situation of some agricultural markets."

(b) as regards non-compulsory expenditure:

- addition of the amounts resulting from the amendments voted by the Parliament on 11 December 1986;
- entry in Chapter 100 of a negative reserve in commitment appropriations and payment appropriations of:
 - 181 121 303 ECU in c/a and
 - 88 897 871 ECU in p/a;

This produces a maximum rate, taken to one decimal place, of 8,1%.

The Council expects the Commission to take steps in its preliminary draft budgets to ensure a proper relationship between c/a and p/a. It takes note of the Commission's statements on this question.

The Council decision on "negative reserves" for commitment appropriations and payment appropriations presupposes that the Parliament will agree to authorize in good time and before the end of the financial year, on a Commission proposal, the transfer of all negative commitment and payment appropriations to other budget headings containing non-compulsory commitment and payment appropriations. In this way, the negative appropriations in question will be eliminated and the appropriations for the other budget headings in question will be reduced.

The Council notes that the Commission will regularly produce reports on the execution of the budget to enable the budgetary authority to exercise adequate control over the liquidation of the negative reserves.

The Commission will make its proposals for transfers in October at the latest. They will afford the budgetary authority a choice as to the transfers to be made.

The Council naturally assumes that the European Parliament shares its concern that the reductions in appropriations which will have to be made should not affect appropriations which are genuinely needed for Community policies.

The Council is only agreeing to the use of "negative reserves" as an exception in view of the urgent need to have the 1987 budget adopted on the basis of the initiative taken by the Commission in its letter of amendment. The Council is formally opposed to further use of this mechanism in future budgets.

(c) in total:

appropriations for the 1987 financial year amount to:

	c/a	p/a
	37 414 887 257 ECU	36 313 424 475 ECU

comprising:

- compulsory expenditure	27 140 218 163 ECU	27 085 908 163 ECU
- non-compulsory expenditure	10 274 669 094 ECU	9 227 516 312 ECU

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3. The Council has decided that the Technical Working Party (Trialogue) should be instructed to resume work quickly in order to produce proposals for classification to be submitted to a trialogue meeting in March 1987. The classification discussions should be completed if possible before the submission of the 1988 preliminary draft budget, and in any event before the Council's first reading of the budget.

III. Carry-over of appropriations from 1986 to 1987

1. The Council stated that it was prepared to agree, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Financial Regulation, to requests for the carry-over of non-dissociated appropriations (NCE) ("non-automatic" carry-overs) from 1986 to 1987 to be submitted by the Commission to an amount of 22 MECU.

The Commission is requested to submit the requests in question to the Council by 17 February at the latest.

2. These requests will concern the following budget headings, in particular, on the understanding that this list is merely indicative at this juncture:

COMMISSION:

PART A - Title 2:	1 600 000
Title 3:	2 100 000
PART B - Title 4:	450 000
Title 5:	486 000
Title 6:	2 100 000
Title 7:	1 738 003
Title 9:	13 500 000
TOTAL:	21 974 003
(rounded up to: 22 MECU)	

3. The carry-over of these appropriations would enable the Commission to obtain this year an additional proportion of available funds under budget headings which are of particular interest in 1987, if necessary after the transfer of certain appropriations entered in the 1987 budget.

Bruxelles, le 13 février 1987

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CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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CONSEIL BUDGET - (OTTO von SCHWERIN)

Le Conseil s'est réuni hier l'après-midi une nouvelle fois pour trouver une solution à la question-clé si, oui ou non, il est disposé à dépasser le taux maximum formel (8,1 %) des dépenses non-obligatoires (DNO) dans le budget 1987 afin de trouver un compromis avec le P.E.

Je vous rappelle qu'en décembre dernier les deux institutions s'étaient séparées sans avoir pu se mettre d'accord sur un dépassement du taux maximum qui est considéré des deux côtés comme une question de principe.

Une première tentative du Conseil les 16/17 Janvier avait échoué en raison de la division au sein du Conseil lui-même sur cette question, les pays méditerranéens (notamment l'Italie, l'Espagne et la Grèce) s'opposant au principe, défendu par les pays du nord (notamment le Royaume-Uni, la France, l'Allemagne et le Danemark), d'appliquer rigoureusement le taux maximum comme instrument infaillible de la "discipline budgétaire".

Comme on s'y était attendu les travaux du Conseil furent arrêtés, pendant de longues heures, par l'opposition des deux camps "Nord/Sud" qui, chacun d'eux formaient une minorité de blocage empêchant de prendre une décision à la majorité qualifiée.

En fait, il est de nouveau apparu que ce n'étaient ni les sommes absolues (62 MECU en CE) qui divisent les deux camps, et qui paraissent tout à fait négligeables comparées à l'ensemble général du budget, ni la position à prendre vis-à-vis du P.E. en matière de sa masse de manœuvre qui étaient les raisons essentielles du blocage; mais, comme l'avait déjà constaté la présidence en janvier, une certaine réticence parmi des délégations à fixer leur position en matière du budget en cours, face aux discussions imminentées sur les ressources propres et l'avenir du financement de la Communauté.

D'autre part, du côté de la Commission, Monsieur Christophersen a insisté vigoureusement sur la nécessité de disposer d'un budget valable dans les meilleurs délais afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement et le développement de la Communauté notamment dans des nouveaux domaines (mesures structurelles de pêche, programme cadre de recherche, emploi du personnel espagnol et portugais).

De plus, aux yeux de la Commission, comme de la plupart des délégations la persistance de la controverse sur le budget en cours ne pourrait que compliquer davantage des discussions sur le financement futur.

Après l'échec d'une nouvelle proposition de compromis de la présidence, consistant à prévoir 31 MECU (la moitié des 62 proposés par la Commission) comme dépassement du taux maximum en CE, le Conseil est finalement tombé d'accord sur une solution qui pourrait permettre de sauver la face à tout le monde: une somme de 22 MECU de crédits non-dissociés qui normalement aurait été annulée au début de cette année est reportée de 1986 au budget 1987.

La Commission doit présenter des propositions détaillées à ce sujet jusqu'au 17 février prochain.

Cet accord a été établi à la majorité qualifiée (contre le Royaume-Uni) vers 6h30 ce matin.

Le taux maximum des DNO en CE est ainsi toujours de 8,1 % (plus précisément de 8,1499 susceptible d'être arrondi à 8,1 %) avec la conséquence que ceux qui favorisent un dépassement du taux maximum peuvent l'interpréter comme s'ils avaient gain de cause, exactement comme les avocats de la thèse opposée.

Il est évident qu'il s'agit plutôt d'un exercice de présentation; reste à savoir comment le P.E. réagira. Sa Commission des Budgets en discutera lundi soir de sorte que l'adoption finale du budget pourrait intervenir mardi ou jeudi prochain à Strasbourg.

Une déclaration dans laquelle M. Christophersen fait appel aux deux instances de se mettre d'accord sur le budget 1987 dans les meilleurs délais, vous parviendra séparément.

Amitiés,

H. PAEMEN

H.O.P.