

Opinion 28 (1958)¹

Council of Europe Budget for 1959

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

Having regard to the preliminary draft of Vote II of the Budget for 1959 (Expenditure relating to the Consultative Assembly), transmitted to the Assembly by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe ;

Having regard to the Budget of the Council of Europe for the Financial Year 1958, as adopted by the Committee of Ministers, together with the General Accounts for the Financial Year 1956, this being the latest period for which final accounts are available;

Having regard to Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers ;

Having regard to the decision of the Committee of Ministers concerning the discussion of the Budget of the Council of Europe by the Consultative Assembly, which was transmitted by letter of the Secretary-General to the President of the Consultative Assembly on 19th March 1955,

• Adopts the following Opinion :

Preliminary draft of Vote II of the Budget for 1959 (Expenditure relating to the Consultative Assembly)

The Assembly approves the Secretary-General's proposals for the following Subheads (a to g, and n) :

- a. Sub-head (a) - Remuneration of temporary staff - 41,000,000 frs
- b. Sub-head (b) - Travelling expenses and allowances for travel-time - 10,000,000 frs
- c. Sub-head (c) - Sickness and accident insurance - 500,000 frs
- d. Sub-head (d) - Technical staff lent by national Governments - 7,000,000 frs
- e. Sub-head (e) - Maintenance of radio-electrical equipment - 1,500,000 frs
- f. Sub-head (f) - Stationery and miscellaneous supplies - 13,700,000 frs
- g. Sub-head (g) - Printing and publishing - 16,900,000 frs
- h. Sub-head (n) - Other expenditure not provided for in this Vote - 1,500,000 frs

For other items the Assembly suggests the following estimates :

- a. Sub-head (h) - Hire of cars - 600,000 frs
- b. Sub-head (i) - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses incurred by the President - 4,000,000 frs
- c. Sub-head (j) - Expenses relating to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly - 2,200,000 frs

1. (a) In pursuance of Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers, the Assembly expresses an opinion on the Budget of the Council of Europe for each Financial Year. (b) Consequently this question is permanently referred to the Committee on the Budget. (c) 28th April 1958, tabling of the Report of the Committee on the Budget, [Doc. 819](#). (d) 3rd May 1958, debate in the Assembly (see 9th Sitting of the 10th Session). Opinion as amended adopted unanimously.



- d. Sub-head (k) - Representational and other official expenses incurred by members of the Assembly - 4,800,000 frs
- e. Sub-head (l) - Travelling expenses of members of the Secretariat on official journeys - 8,500,000 frs
- f. Sub-head (m) - Experts' travelling expenses, subsistence allowances and fees - 3,500,000 frs

The Head "Expenses relating to Local Authorities" should be divided into three Sub-heads with the following appropriations :

- a. Sub-head (o) - European Prize 1,250,000 frs
- b. Sub-head (p) - Conference of Local Authorities - 8,800,000 frs
- c. Sub-head (q) - European plan for inter-municipal exchanges and printing - 1,500,000 frs

Council of Europe Budget (Votes other than Vote II)

VOTE I

Head I - Expenditure for staff

1. The Assembly's attention has been drawn to the problem of protecting the purchasing power of the salaries of staff, whose well-being should not be dependent on the fluctuations of a particular currency. For this purpose, one might consider either reckoning salaries in "units of account" (E.P.U.), or pegging them to a sliding-scale based on indices to be determined in the light of the needs of civil servants, or applying a combination of both systems.

2. The Assembly recalls that, as provided in Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers, a list of members of the Secretariat-General staff placed wholly at the disposal of the Clerk of the Assembly shall be appended to the Budget each year.

3. In this connection, the Assembly reaffirms its desire expressed in Opinion No.22 that the establishment of the office of the Clerk be : The Clerk, 1 Deputy Clerk with the rank of Head of Department, 1 Counsellor, 12 Secretaries (at least 3 of whom should be First Secretaries), 14 Assistants (at least 4 of whom should be Qualified Assistants) In addition, a research assistant should be recruited to assist the Secretary of the Committee on Non-represented Nations.

4. The staff provided for under Vote 1, Head 1, should be increased by the addition of the following personnel for the purpose of improving the reception service of Europe House, which would entail appropriations as follows :

1 permanent guide with the rank of Supervisor - 1,450,000 frs

1 assistant guide - 600,000 frs

5. The Assembly notes that an appropriation of 58,000,000 francs appears in Subhead 3 (e) of Vote I, Head 1, for the payment of the Council's contribution towards the Provident Fund. The Assembly, Considering that, ever since 1949, it has been laid down in staff regulations that a pension scheme will be introduced, an undertaking given by the Council of Europe which is still unfulfilled almost ten years later ; Considering that, generally speaking, as a matter of social policy Member States of the Council do not allow the employment of workers without arrangements for pension rights ; Recalling that Member States set themselves the aim, under Article 1 of the Statute of the Council, of facilitating social progress; Considering that since 1st July 1956 a pension scheme has been in operation at the European Coal and Steel Community, although the latter was set up more recently than the Council of Europe ; Considering that the Provident Fund was created purely as a temporary measure and solely in order to enable a pension scheme to be set on foot ; Considering that the fall in the purchasing power of the franc - which has necessitated, since the creation of the Council of Europe, successive rises in the scale of salaries - has also had the effect of devaluing the sums standing to the credit of the staff in the Provident Fund ; Considering that it is essential for working conditions to be such as to allow the recruitment of the best qualified personnel ; Believing that it is to the advantage of the Council that the staff should do its work with their minds free from care and with a feeling of security ; Considering that, for all these reasons, an end should be put as soon as possible to a system set up as a temporary expedient which is clearly detrimental to the interests and morale of the staff, and, moreover, is a situation incompatible with the social policies of Member States and the obligations they entered into in joining the Council ; Considering this is a matter affecting the prestige of the Council of Europe, Recommends to the Committee of Ministers that urgent steps should be taken, within a year at most, so that, as provided in the

terms and conditions of their employment, members of the staff who have reached the retiring age may benefit from a pensions scheme in keeping with the social aims of Member States and with the principles on which their social legislation is founded

6. Sub-head 6 (b) - Exchange guarantee to non-French staff The Assembly stresses the importance of giving non-French staff a guarantee that there will be no restriction in the percentage of their pay and allowances which they are authorised to transfer, and of maintaining the exchange guarantee at least at the rate fixed by Resolution (57) 22 of the Committee of Ministers.

VOTE III

7. Under Sub-head 45 - information programme - an appropriation of 1,150,000 francs, should be made for the publication of handbooks and folders for distribution to visitors to the House of Europe.

8. Under Sub-Head 46 - production of short films - there should be an appropriation of 3,000,000 frs. for the production of a short film in three languages to be shown to visitors to the House of Europe.

VOTE V

9. Under Vote V (Capital Expenditure) should be included :

- a. Sub-head 55 - alterations to the premises - an appropriation of 1,700,000 francs for the installation of :
 - 1. fans in the Committee Rooms (650,000 frs);
 - 2. the historical exhibition (500,000 frs);
 - 3. a projection theatre (550,000 frs).
- b. - Sub-head 56 - furniture and equipment -an appropriation of 1,600,000 francs for the purchase of two mobile sets of simultaneous interpretation apparatus.

The number of radio-technicians for operating and maintaining this equipment should, moreover, be increased, the corresponding appropriations in Vote I being augmented.