



Opinion 46 (1966)¹

Budget of the Council of Europe for 1967

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to paragraph 1 of Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers, which stipulates :

"When drawing up the draft Budget for the Council of Europe, the Secretary General shall consult the Assembly on that part of the draft Budget which comprises the relevant operational appropriations. Such consultation shall take place in accordance with a procedure to be laid down by agreement between the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General" ;

2. Having regard to the letter from the Secretary General dated 15th March 1962, laying down the procedure for such consultation on that part of the Budget which contains the appropriations for the functioning of the Assembly and on the Budget as a whole;

3. Having regard to the Budget of the Council of Europe for the Financial Year 1966 adopted by the Committee of Ministers and the General Accounts for the Financial Year 1964, being the last completed and approved period;

4. Having regard to the wish frequently expressed by the Committee of Ministers concerning the appropriations for the functioning of the Assembly that the Budget should not be appreciably higher than that for the preceding year,

5. Adopts the following opinion :

Part 1

Draft Vote III of the Budget for 1967 (Expenditure of the Consultative Assembly)

1. Vote III of the Budget for 1967 should be formulated in the following terms :

VOTE III

EXPENDITURE OF THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

HEAD I - TEMPORARY STAFF

Sub-head 59 - Remuneration of temporary staff

Estimate - F. 560,000

Remuneration for days worked by temporary staff recruited for Sessions of the Assembly and meetings of its organs between Sessions.

Article 32 of the Statute entitles the Assembly to meet for 30 days each year. Experience has shown, however, that the estimate can be based on 18 days' meetings, on the under-standing that this figure does not prejudice the Assembly's rights under the Statute.

1. Assembly Debate on 28th September 1966 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 2126](#), report of the Committee on the Budget) Text adopted by the Assembly on 28th September 1966 (13th Sitting).



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Article 32 of the Statute entitles the Assembly to meet for 30 days each year. Experience has shown, however, that the estimate can be based on 18 days' meetings, on the understanding that this figure does not prejudice the Assembly's rights under the Statute.

Estimate - F. 130,000

Travel expenses and allowances for travelling time for temporary staff recruited outside Strasbourg.

Sub-head 61 - Sickness and accident insurance

Estimate - F. 5,000

Council contribution (60%) to premiums for sickness and accident insurance in respect of temporary staff remunerated under Sub-head 59.

Sub-head 62 - Technical staff seconded by national administrations

Estimate - F. 40,000

Refund to various national administrations of the salaries of staff seconded to the Council for special services during Assembly Sessions : travel expenses, subsistence allowances and insurance for such staff.

Gratuities for special work performed by lower-grade staff of national administrations in connection with meetings of Assembly bodies outside Strasbourg.

HEAD II - SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Sub-head 63 - Publishing and printing

Estimate - F. 245,000

F.

1. Assembly Official Documents - 235,000
 2. Booklets on special subjects - token entry
 3. Distribution to national Parliaments of certain texts adopted and related documents - 10,000
- 245,000

Comments :

- Distribution to national Parliaments of certain texts adopted and related documents.

The Assembly has repeatedly noted that the distribution of documents to national Parliaments is of value only if those documents are sent in the respective national languages. The Permanent Working Party on Parliamentary and Public Relations has chosen three ways of doing this :

- a. selection of certain texts adopted by the Assembly, for translation into the national languages and distribution to the Parliaments of member countries ;
- b. drafting in the national languages of documents consolidating major reports discussed in the Assembly, together with motions, speeches and questions, to enable members of the Assembly to institute in their respective Parliaments debates on the work of the Council of Europe ;
- c. publication and regular distribution of a "Circular" mentioning the activities of national Parliaments relating to Council of Europe affairs.

The estimate of 10,000 Frs. for this item should make it possible to continue and extend the methods mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above.

Should it no longer be possible for translating and printing in connection with the "Circular" (sub-paragraph (c)) to be carried out by the Secretariat with sufficient speed, provision would need to be made in respect of this item for appropriations to meet the cost of the printing outside.

Sub-head 64 - Hire of cars

Estimate - F. 8,000

Hire of cars for the requirements of the Assembly and its organs.

Comments :

Expenditure may be expected to be higher in 1966 and 1967 owing to a greater number of Ministerial personalities taking part in Sessions, as well as a delegation from the United States Congress. Furthermore, car-hire rates have increased.

HEAD III - OTHER OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE

Sub-head 65 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

Estimate - F. 41,000

Representational, travel and subsistence expenses incurred by the President of the Consultative Assembly in the course of his duties :

F.

- fixed amount for representational expenses - 24,000

- travelling and subsistence expenses - 17,000

41,000

Sub-head 66 - Expenditure for the private office of the President of the Assembly

Estimate - F. 29,600

F.

- special duties allowance - 4,800

- remuneration of one short-hand-typist - 10,800

- official journeys of staff - 14,000

- sundry secretarial expenses - token entry

29,600

Comments : Official journeys of private officer staff.

Account has to be taken of the effect of the new scales of allowances for official journeys and increases in railway fares ; it must, in this connection, be borne in mind that there has been no increase in this estimate since 1960.

Sub-head 67 - Representational and other official expenditure incurred by members of the Consultative Assembly

Estimate - F. 73,000

F.

Entertainment and similar expenses incurred by the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and by Committee Chairmen and Rapporteurs - 13,000

- Travelling expenses and subsistence allowances of members of the Assembly attending on behalf of the Council of Europe meetings of certain Council bodies held between Sessions of the Assembly and Assembly Committee meetings (Bureau of the Assembly, Joint Committee etc.), or undertaking official missions for the Assembly - 33,000

- Sundry expenses incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council of Europe, such as secretarial assistance, documentation and travel expenses (Res. (58) 4 of 27th March 1958) - 25,000

- Accident insurance premiums for members of the Assembly travelling officially at the Council's expense. (Decision of the Ministers' Deputies at their 108th meeting in March 1962 - Concl. (62) 108, Point V) - 2,000

73,000

Comments :

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- Entertainment expenses. The 1966 estimate of 10,000 Frs. has not been increased since 1961. To allow, on the one hand, for the substantial rise in prices since then, and, on the other, for the creation of new Working Parties, an amount of 13,000 Frs. for this item must be budgeted.

- Travel expenses and subsistence allowances of members of the Assembly attending, on behalf of the Council of Europe, meetings of certain Council bodies, held between Assembly Sessions, or undertaking official missions for the Assembly.

The Assembly is not asking for an increase in the appropriation for this item, but requests the Committee of Ministers to reconsider the question of subsistence allowances for members of the Assembly, since the effect of the present rates is to divide the members of the European Assemblies into three unequal categories ; members of the European Parliament, members of the WEU Assembly, members of the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

- Sundry expenses incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council.

The Bureau of the Assembly distributes the appropriation for this item among the political groups in proportion to the size of their membership. The appropriation covers the refund, on presentation of justification, of expenses such as the secretarial, documentation and travelling expenses incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council. This appropriation having proved insufficient, it is requested that it be increased to 25,000 Frs.

Sub-head 68 - Official journeys

Estimate - F. 140,000

- Official journeys by Staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly ; Secretariat staff whose presence is required at meetings of Assembly bodies away from Strasbourg, or at meetings of consulting experts.

Comments :

The supplementary appropriation granted in 1966 to apply the new scale offsets the rise in fares and corresponds to a sum of 13,500 Frs. in a full year. Having regard to the creation of new Working Parties in 1966, it is necessary to raise the estimate for 1967 to 140,000 Frs.

In addition, the Assembly asks the Secretary General to re-examine the use of this appropriation, part of which is absorbed by official journeys of interpreters travelling to attend meetings of committees, sub-committees and working parties, due to the fact that interpretation for the meetings is, as the case may be, done either by permanent interpreters whose official journeys are charged to this item or by free-lance interpreters whose expenses are charged to Sub-head 59 of Vote III (Remuneration of temporary staff).

Sub-head 69 - Consultation of experts

Estimate - F. 35,000

Sub-head 70 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences

Estimate - token entry

Comments :

In 1967 the Assembly intends holding a second symposium of leading European pressmen and members of the Assembly, a round table on the implementation of [Resolution 302](#), and an information symposium on research into the legal systems of Central and Eastern European countries.

Requests for appropriations for holding these conferences would be embodied in separate recommendations of the Assembly.

Sub-head 71 - Expenditure not otherwise provided for under this vote

Estimate - F. 8,500

Sub-head 72 - Europe Prize

Estimate - F. 6,000

F.

(a) Europe Prize - 2,500

(b) Provision for the cost of awarding the Prize (travel expenses of, and reception for the Mayor of the prize-winning municipality; diploma and medal) - 3,500

6,000

Comments :

Provision should be made to allow for the reception given in honour of the Mayor of the prize-winning municipality and the rise in costs of certain forms of transport.

2. The Assembly wishes to point out again that the Committee of Ministers has still taken no decision on the appropriations needed to implement its [Resolution 188](#), adopted on 29th September 1960, on the official languages of the Council of Europe.

This Resolution was adopted pursuant to Article 12 of the Statute of the Council of Europe, under which the Assembly is entitled to "determine in what circumstances and under what conditions other languages than the official ones may be used."

Since the necessary appropriation to implement [Resolution 188](#) is not yet included in the Council of Europe budget, the Assembly would be grateful if the Committee of Ministers would announce its intentions in the matter.

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Votes other than Vote III

1. General observations

The Council of Europe Budget for 1966 amounts to 31,043,486 F. - an increase of 1,855,376 F. (6.4%) over the Budget for the previous year (29,188,110 F.).

Appropriations under Vote III - Expenditure of the Consultative Assembly - show an increase of 22,500 F. (2%) over the previous year's figure.

In the General Accounts for the Financial Year 1964 appropriations totalling 778,062,66 F. (3.1%) were cancelled. This percentage is even lower than in preceding years and the Assembly wishes to congratulate the Secretary General once again on the accuracy with which expenditure was estimated.

The Auditors state that they are satisfied that the Budget is correctly administered and that expenditure has been carried out on a rational and economical basis

The Assembly is in entire agreement with the observations of the Auditors.

2. Staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly

(a) The Assembly notes that the volume of work in the Office of the Clerk of the Consultative Assembly has increased considerably, particularly over the last two years : the number of committee meetings has risen, working parties have been appointed by the Assembly and the number of questions dealt with is also growing steadily. In addition, debates have been held and conferences have been or are being organised at the request of the Assembly and with the agreement of the Committee of Ministers ; it is the Office of the Clerk which services these conferences too.

For all these reasons - and there are others - it was found necessary recently to increase the number of Heads of Division in the Clerk's Office from three to four. Another consequence is that the duties and responsibilities of the Deputy Clerk have become comparable to those of the Secretariat Directors.

In view of this situation, the Assembly recommends that the post of Deputy Clerk be up-graded from A6 to A7.

The Assembly recalls, in this regard, that the Office of the Clerk of the European Parliament, like that of the Assembly, services 13 committees. Yet it is directed by a Clerk (specially appointed), 2 directors (A7) and 5 heads of department (A6), whereas the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly is at present directed only by a Clerk (specially appointed) and a Deputy Clerk (A6).

(b) It has become clear that the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly would be unable to cope with all the work developing on him in 1967 unless the Committee secretaries receive assistance. The Assembly recommends that a principal administrative assistant be appointed to the Office of the Clerk to do documentation research and analysis and the routine correspondence, draft internal memoranda, make practical arrangements for meetings and help with the secretarial work of the meetings.

(c) It will be recalled that, at its May Session, the Assembly passed [Resolution 317](#) instructing the Bureau and the Committee on Rules of Procedure to examine ways and means of setting up a new general Committee on Scientific and Technological Questions.

The Assembly will examine the proposals submitted to it on this subject by the Bureau and the Committee on Rules of Procedure, at its September Session. Should it decide to set up the said committee, it will recommend the creation of a secretary's post of Grade A4.

The Assembly points out that such a request would be the consequence of a new situation which could not be foreseen when the Committee of Ministers examined the Assembly's proposals for 1966 and when it considered that the new posts created in 1965 and 1966 would "enable the Office of the Clerk . . . satisfactorily to meet the foreseeable work-load for 1966 and 1967" (Report of the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly, Document 2064, page 122).

The Clerk's Office urgently requires a number of new grade B administrative assistant and shorthand-typist posts in addition to the post of principal administrative assistant mentioned under (b) above. The Secretariat will supply the necessary details when the time comes, with a view to filling the posts recognised as indispensable in the draft 1967 Budget.

3. Staff Regulations

The Assembly has noted that the Governmental Conference, convened with the approval of the Committee of Ministers to draft a set of model European Civil Service Staff Regulations, will complete its work in 1967.

Whenever the said Regulations are communicated to it, the Assembly will examine the report submitted to it on the subject by its Joint Sub-Committee on a European Civil Service.

4. Council of Europe buildings

The Assembly is gratified to learn of the appointment by the Committee of Ministers of a Committee of Experts to examine problems relating to the Council of Europe buildings and to put forward proposals in the matter.

The Assembly is concerned about the exiguity of Council of Europe premises and deplors the fact that the Council of Europe and its various bodies should be obliged to work in increasingly incommodious conditions and in more confined quarters than those of any other international organisation.

The Assembly asks the Committee of Ministers that the Experts should consult it on its needs and those of its political groups and delegations.

In view of the fact that the European Parliament and the City of Strasbourg are also concerned in the matter, the Assembly considers that a solution should be worked out in consultation with all the interested parties.