Opinion 70 (1975)[1]

Budget-programme for the operation of the Assembly for 1976

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 of 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 Secretary General's letter of 15 March 1962 defining the procedure for consultation both on the part of the budget containing the estimates relating to the Assembly's operational expenditure and on the budget as a whole ;

3. Having regard to the procedure relating to the budgetary powers of the Assembly, as agreed between the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General and approved by the Bureau of the Assembly on 25 January 1973 ;

4. Having regard to the budget of the Council of Europe for 1975,

5. Adopts the following opinion : Budgetary data relating to the operational expenditure of the Assembly (Vote III of the Council of Europe budget).

1. Assembly debate on 22 April 1975 (3rd Sitting) (see Doc. 3604see Doc. 3604, report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme). Text adopted by the Assembly on 22 April 1975 (3rd Sitting).

Appendix

A. SUMMARY TABLE OF REQUESTED INCREASES IN REAL TERMS FOR 1976, COMPARED WITH INITIAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR 1975 (see introductory note, page 3)

Vote III - Expenditure pertaining to the Assembly	Initial appropriations for 1975[2]	Requested increases in real terms for 1976
Head XVIII - Staff	F	F
Sub-heads		
Clerk of the Assembly		
78 - Salary, allowances and social charges	319 000	
Staff in the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly		
79 - Remuneration ? permanent staff	4 518 500[3]	
79 bis - Assembly staffing changes		20 000[4]
80 - Expenses on arrival and departure, home leave	58 000	
81 - Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties	32 000	
82 - Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis	p.m.	
83 - Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff	3 030 000[5]	
84 - Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration	374 000	
TOTAL HEAD XVIII	8 331 500	20 000
HEAD XIX - Supplies and services Sub-heads		
85 - Publishing and printing	489 200	
86 - Hire of cars	13 000	
TOTAL HEAD XIX	502 200	
HEAD XX - Other operational expenditure		
87 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly	88 000	
88 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly	53 000	
89 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly	156 000	
90 - Official journeys	257 400	
91 - Consultation of experts	305 000	120 000
92 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences	115 000	
93 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote	30 000	

2. Additional appropriations will be needed for the adjustment to be made to staff salary scales in 1975. The amount of these appropriations cannot yet be determined.
3. This figure does not allow for the appropriations for three new posts that the Secretary General plans to fill in 1975 by transfers from other Secretariat departments.
4. This amount would have to be raised to 250 000 F if the three posts mentioned in footnote 2 above could not be transferred in 1975.
5. This figure takes account of a transfer of 60 000 F to cover an amount overspent with the authorisation of the Committee of Ministers.

Vote III - Expenditure pertaining to the Assembly	Initial appropriations for 1975[2]	Requested increases in real terms for 1976
94 - Exceptional expenditure	p.m.	
95 - Europe Prize	23 000	
TOTAL HEAD XX	1 027 400	208 000
TOTAL VOTE III	9 861 100[6], [7], [8]	228 000

B. DETAILED EXPLANATIONS FOR THE REQUESTED INCREASES IN REAL TERMS

Preliminary note

1. In previous years it has been found that, because of the date on which the Assembly drew up its opinion, the estimates therein had subsequently to be revised by the Secretariat to allow for changes in salary scales decided on meanwhile for the current year, and also for possible further adjustments to those scales, as well as for inflation, in the following year. To avoid any misunderstanding, the Assembly wishes to point out that the changes requested in the present opinion and explained below, are to be regarded as increases in real terms over the appropriations granted to the Assembly for 1975 plus any additional appropriations granted before the end of the year.

2. The Assembly leaves it to the administrative departments of the Secretariat to assess, in due course, in the conditions applied to the other sectors of the draft budget submitted by the Secretary General :

the appropriation adjustments still to be made in 1975 as a result of salary scale changes and their consequences for 1976 ;

the provisions for salary adjustments in 1976.

3. It is for these reasons that the final estimates for Head XVIII (Staff) are not entered in this opinion.

4. Similarly, it will be for the Secretariat to evaluate the effect of inflation on the other 1976 estimates (adjustments). Here, the Assembly asks that it be borne in mind that the adjustments made to a number of estimates in the past have proved inadequate (as in the case of Sub-head 88 ?expenditure relating to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly ; Subhead 91 ?consultation of experts ; and Sub-head 92? organisation of ad hoc conferences) and that there is consequently a certain leeway to be made up.

5. The estimates under Head XIX (supplies and services) and Head XX (other operational expenditure) in this opinion will therefore have to be adjusted before the budget is adopted.

6. Finally, the Assembly's estimates for 1976 will be determined by the 1975 Assembly appropriations (plus the additional appropriations granted in the course of the year), to which will be added :

the increases in real terms requested in this opinion ;

the technical adjustments to be made by the Secretariat as described in paragraph 2 above.

7. It is furthermore recalled that the estimates under Vote III, with the exception of those for buildings, equipment and supplies, dealt with in the opinion have a direct bearing on the operation of the Assembly.

BREAKDOWN OF ESTIMATES ACCORDING TO BUDGET CLASSIFICATION

HEAD XVIII ? Staff

Sub-head 78 ? Clerk of the Assembly

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2. Additional appropriations will be needed for the adjustment to be made to staff salary scales in 1975. The amount of these appropriations cannot yet be determined.

6. Additional appropriations will be needed for the adjustment to be made to staff salary scales in 1975. The amount of these appropriations cannot yet be determined.

7. This figure does not allow for the appropriations for three new posts that the Secretary General plans to fill in 1975 by transfers from other Secretariat departments.

8. This figure takes account of a transfer of 60 000 F to cover an amount overspent with the authorisation of the Committee of Ministers.

This estimate covers remuneration, periodical allowances and social charges in respect of the Clerk of the Assembly, as provided for in Resolution (71) 8 of 26 March 1971, amended by Resolution (72) 48 of 24 November 1972.

Sub-head 79 ? Remuneration of permanent staff

The estimate is for the remuneration of permanent staff in the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly (basic salaries, periodical allowances, social insurance and pension fund contributions).

The present numerical breakdown of staff is as follows :

Posts	Secretariat of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk	Table Office	Div. I	Div. II	Div. III	Total
A7[9]	1					1
A5		1	1	1	1	4
A4			3	2	2	7
A2/A3			4	3	3	10
B5	1	1				2
B4	1					1
B3	1	1	5	4	4	15
B2			1	1		2
Number	4	3	14	11	10	12

Comments

In its Opinion No. 65 (1974) on the programme-budget for 1975, the Assembly asked to be given back the Deputy Clerk's grade A7 post, which had been used provisionally by the Secretary General since 1971 in another sector. The Assembly urged that the situation be rectified by 1975 at the latest ; it now insists that this be done, as it is contrary to good management to prolong a temporary situation indefinitely.

Sub-head 79 bis ? Staffing changes requested for the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly

Nature of change	Central support unit	Div. I	Programme of scientific co-operation	Div. II
Upgrading of posts	1 B3 to B4	1 B2 to B3 1 A5 to A6		1 B2 to B3
New posts	(1 B4)[10]		(1 A2/3 1 B3)[11]	

Comments

8. In its Opinion No. 65 (1974) on the programme-budget for 1975, the Assembly expressed the view that its staffing table should include, in addition to the A7 post of Deputy Clerk, an A6 post of head of department, as had provisionally been the case between 1971 and 1973. The Clerk's Office, whose staff has increased over the years and whose responsibilities in the running of the organisation's activities are considerable, has only one senior post at its disposal at the moment, whereas the Secretariat's directorates usually have two.

9. Neither of these proposals was accepted by the Committee of Ministers when it voted the 1975 budget (see the Committee of Ministers' reply to Opinion No. 65 in its January 1975 Communication to the Assembly, Doc. 3528 addendum). As the grounds for these requests are more valid and more imperative than ever, the Assembly now reiterates them forcefully.

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9. Since 1971, this grade A7 post has been used provisionally by the Secretary General in another sector of the Secretariat. The official performing the duties of Deputy Clerk was appointed A6 on a personal basis in 1973.
10. The Secretary General undertook to meet these requests in 1975 by transferring posts from other Secretariat departments (see paragraphs 6 and 7 of the comments on this sub-head).
11. The Secretary General undertook to meet these requests in 1975 by transferring posts from other Secretariat departments (see paragraphs 6 and 7 of the comments on this sub-head).

10. In Opinion No. 65, the Assembly also asked for a restructuring of the Clerk's Office by the addition of a central support unit under the Deputy Clerk, as recommended by the Management Survey Committee. The establishment of such a unit requires the upgrading of a B4 post to B5 and of a B3 post to B4, and also the creation of a B4 post. Of these three proposals only the first, the upgrading of a B4 post to B5, was accepted, with effect from 1 January 1975. Accordingly, the Assembly again requests the upgrading of one B3 post to B4. (Where the B4 post is concerned, see paragraph 7 below.)

11. In its Opinion No. 62 (1973) on the programme-budget for the operation of the Assembly in 1974, the Assembly had already requested that the four B2 posts be upgraded to B3. In view of the qualifications and responsibilities required of such staff (especially as regards linguistic knowledge) it thought that all assistants working for Assembly committees should be graded B3. It conceded, however, that it would be difficult to upgrade four B2 posts to B3 simultaneously, and asked for the process to be carried out in two stages : upgrading of two posts in 1974 and upgrading of the other two in the 1975 budget. For reasons of economy, the Assembly decided to dispense with the two 1975 up-gradings, but now thinks that provision for upgrading the two remaining posts should be made in the 1976 budget.

12. As explained in the report giving an opinion on the programme-budget for its operation in 1975 (Doc. 3413), the Assembly has taken a number of initiatives, through its Committee on Science and Technology, to promote scientific co-operation in Europe.[12]To provide appropriate secretariat services for this purpose, the Assembly, in its Opinion No. 65 (1974), requested the creation of two new permanent posts, one A2/A3 and one B3.

13. For the sake of economy and in order to reduce the expansion rate of the Council of Europe budget for 1975, the Secretary General agreed to provide the Office of the Clerk with these two posts (one A2/A3 post and one B3 post) by means of transfers from other Secretariat departments, instead of creating new posts (see reply of the Committee of Ministers to Opinion No. 65 (1974) in the January 1975 Communication to the Assembly, Doc. 3528 addendum). So far, however, it has not been possible to release the posts in question. If this cannot be done within the year the Assembly will have no option but to reiterate its request for two new posts for 1976.

14. For the same reasons, the Secretary General also agreed to transfer one B4 post to the Office of the Clerk in order to facilitate restructuring and meet the request for a new B4 post (see paragraph 3 above and Doc. 3528). In the event of this transfer not materialising either, provision would also have to be made in the 1976 budget for the creation of a new B4 post.

15. In conclusion, the Assembly wishes to emphasise that it is simply confirming the requests made in its Opinions No. 62 (1973) and No. 65 (1974). If its request for new posts can be met, as planned, by means of transfers, this would have no appreciable financial effects on the Council of Europe budget as a whole, except for a sum of approximately 20 000 F, representing the cost of the requested upgradings. On the other hand, if the two posts cannot be released within the Secretariat, the 1976 estimate would have to be increased by approximately 250 000 F in real terms.

16. If the requested changes were accepted, the table of permanent staff in the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly would be as follows :

Posts	**Central support unit for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk**		**Table Office**		**Division I**		**Division II**		**Division III**		**Total**	
	1975	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976
A7	1	1									1	1
A6						1						1
A5			1	1	1		1	1	1	1	4	3
A4					3	3	2	2	2	2	7	7
A2/3					4	5[13]	3	3	3	3	10	11
B5	1	1	1	1							2	2

12. See also Sub-head 91.
13. One of these posts is intended for the programme of scientific co-operation.

Posts	Central support unit for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk	Table Office	Division I	Division II	Division III	Total						
B4	1	3									2	2
B3	1	1	1	1	5	7[14]	4	4	4	4	15	17
B2					1		1				2	
Total	4	6	3	3	14	16	11	10	10	10	42	45

Sub-head 80 ? Expenses on arrival and departure home leave

This sub-head covers :

travelling and removal expenses of staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly and their families on taking up their duties, or on their departure ;

settling-in allowance ;

refund of travelling expenses of non-French staff and their families taking home leave.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1976 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 81 ? Overtime - allowances for exceptional duties

This estimate is to cover :

a. overtime worked during sessions of the Assembly by permanent staff in the general services ;

b. language allowance for B2 staff in the Office of the Clerk giving proof of an adequate knowledge of the two official languages (Resolution (72) 32) ;

c. allowances under Article 12 of the Staff Regulations (award of a special allowance to members of the staff performing duties of special responsibility) ;

d. deputising allowance.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1976 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 82 ? Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis

This sub-head covers remuneration of staff recruited temporarily to the Office of the Clerk to fill permanent posts which are vacant or not remunerated (long-term illness) and additional charges relating thereto.

Sub-head 83 ? Remuneration and accessory charges in respect of temporary conference staff

This sub-head covers remuneration and social charges for temporary staff (session staff, workshop staff, translators, messengers, technicians, and, above all, interpreters) assigned to the Office of the Clerk during the sessions and meetings of the Assembly and its committees scheduled in the programme for 1976 at the time of drafting of the present opinion. The requirements are the same as for 1975.

Comments

14. One of these posts is intended for the programme of scientific co-operation.

17. The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975, bearing in mind the authorisation given by the Committee of Ministers, when adopting the 1975 budget, for an over-expenditure, to be covered by transfers from other votes.

18. However, should the Assembly have to alter its timetable for 1976, for example by holding four part-sessions instead of three, while remaining within the statutory one-month limit, it reserves the right to submit an additional estimate if this should prove necessary.

Sub-head 84 ? Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration

The estimate under this sub-head will be to cover adjustments made after the date of completion of the draft budget to the remuneration of staff allocated to the Office of the Clerk (see the preliminary note to this head).

HEAD XIX ? Supplies and services

Sub-head 85 ? Publishing and printing

Estimate for 1976	489 200 F
Appropriation in 1975	489 200 F

This sub-head covers publishing and printing costs relating to :

official Assembly documents, i.e. :

1 000 bilingual copies of the Working Papers (2 800 to 3 000 pages),

700 copies, in each official language, of the Official Reports of Debates (1 200 to 1 400 pages) ;

the circulation and translation of certain texts adopted by national parliaments, and the distribution of copies of reports and documents adopted by the Assembly and its committees.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1976 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 86 ? Hire of cars

Estimate for 1976	13 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	13 000 F

Hire of cars for the Assembly and its organs.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

HEAD XX ? Operational expenditure

Sub-head 87 ? Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

Estimate for 1976	88 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	88 000 F

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975. However, it reserves the possibility of submitting supplementary estimates under this subhead if the expenses charged to it after the election of the new President in April 1975 are greater than expected.

Sub-head 88 ? Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly

Estimate for 1976	53 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	53 000 F

Estimate to cover :

special duties allowance ;

remuneration of a shorthand-typist and other secretarial expenses ;

official travel by Private Office staff ;

sundry secretarial expenses.

Comments

19. The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975. However, it is possible that after the new President is elected in April 1975, the expenses incurred under this sub-head may make it necessary to revise the estimate.

20. Moreover, as the estimate has not been adjusted for some years, it will be necessary to make due allowance for this in the 1976 adjustment.

Sub-head 89 ? Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly

Estimate for 1976	244 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	156 000 F
Increase	88 000 F

Estimate to cover :

fixed allowances to the political groups to cover expenditure of various kinds, e.g. on secretarial assistance, documentation and travel, incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council of Europe 132 000 F

entertainment and similar expenses incurred by the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and committee Chairmen and Rapporteurs 33 000 F

travelling expenses and subsistence allowances of members of the Assembly attending meetings of certain Council of Europe bodies (other than sessions of the Assembly and meetings of Assembly committees) on the Council's behalf or travelling on Assembly business 75 000 F

premium of the accident insurance policy taken out for members of the Assembly travelling officially at the Council's expense 4 000 F

Comments

In 1974, after consulting the President of the Assembly following the Assembly's adoption of its opinion on the 1975 budget, the Secretary General proposed that the fixed allocation for the political groups should be increased by 150 000 F. For 1976, the Assembly merely requests that the present allocation be tripled, i.e. that it be increased from 44 000 F to 132 000 F. The increase in real terms would then be 88 000 F.

Sub-head 90 ? Official journeys

Estimate for 1976	257 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	257 400 F

Official travel by staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly and Secretariat staff required to attend meetings of Assembly bodies or accompanying the President or members of the Assembly on special official journeys.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 91 ? Consultation of experts

Estimate for 1976	425 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	325 000 F
Increase	120 000 F

This estimate is to cover fees, travelling expenses, subsistence allowances and administrative assistance for experts asked to carry out technical work or called in for consultation by Assembly bodies, either individually or in working parties. It is also intended to finance the programme of scientific co-operation set on foot by the Assembly on the initiative of the Committee on Science and Technology.

Comments

21. For 1975, the Assembly's estimate for the consultation of experts was 395 000 F, which included a sum of 90 000 F for the programme of scientific co-operation. The Committee of Ministers did not see fit to accede to this request even though the Assembly had repeatedly emphasised the major importance of this activity.

22. It must be borne in mind that the Council of Europe makes no contribution to the financing of the actual research projects, or to their execution. Funds are provided by the scientists themselves, that is to say, by the institutions or national bodies to which they are responsible. The role of the Council of Europe, or in this case the Assembly, is merely to co-ordinate and stimulate, and to promote contacts between researchers by offering them a meeting place, paying part (20%) of their travelling and subsistence expenses and refunding their administrative assistance costs. The Assembly therefore requests that this appropriation be increased by 100 000 F.

23. Furthermore, the increasing specialisation means that the Assembly has more and more frequently to consult top-level experts for whom the fees offered at present are far too low. This situation would be remedied by increasing this appropriation by 20 000 F in real terms.

Sub-head 92 ? Organisation of ad hoc conferences

Estimate for 1976	115 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	115 000 F

This estimate is to cover the travelling and subsistence expenses of those taking part in the conferences, colloquies, symposia and seminars organised by the Assembly in 1976, as well as the entertainment and other expenses incidental to those meetings.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 93 ? Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote

Estimate for 1976	30 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	30 000 F

Night watchmen, reception service, medals, gratuities for special work etc.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.

Sub-head 94 ? Exceptional expenditure

Estimate for 1976	nil
Appropriation in 1975	nil

Sub-head 95 ? Europe Prize

Estimate for 1976	23 000 F
Appropriation in 1975	23 000 F
- Europe prize	20 000 F
- Expenses connected with the presentation of the Prize	3 000 F

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1976 be maintained at the same level in real terms as that for 1975.