Opinion 92 (1979)[1]

Programme-budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1980

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the texts relating to the powers of the Assembly in budgetary matters (1953-76) ;

2. Having taken note of the reply by the Committee of Ministers to its Opinions Nos. 88 (1978) and 89 (1978) on its operational expenditure (Doc. 4320);

3. Expressing its satisfaction at the increase of 230 000 F granted by the Committee of Ministers to the political groups under the heading "Special secretariat expenses and other expenditure", which contributes to the gradual setting up of secretarial infrastructures of the political groups giving the Assembly a more and more truly European character ;

4. Appreciating the creation of a supplementary B4 post, by which a very difficult situation with regard to a shortage of staff in the framework of scientific co-operation could be overcome ;

5. Stressing the fact that the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly will need, in the coming year more than ever, an increase of funds to strengthen its image with regard to the directly elected European Parliament ;

6. Pointing out that since the readmission of Greece in 1974 the number of parliamentarians in the Assembly has increased by sixty and in committees up to 22.6%, necessarily creating more work for the Office of the Clerk,

7. Adopts, accordingly, the following opinion concerning its operational expenditure for 1980 (Vote III of the Council of Europe budget).

1. Assembly debate on 11 May 1979 (8th Sitting) (see Doc. 4303, report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme). Text adopted by the Assembly on 11 May 1979 (8th Sitting).

Appendix

A. Summary table of requested increases in real terms for 1980, compared with initial appropriations for 1979

VOTE III - Expenditure pertaining to the Assembly	Initial appropriations for 1979[2]	Increases in real terms proposed for 1980
HEAD XX - Staff	F	F
Sub-heads		
Clerk of the Assembly		
82 - Salary, allowances and social charges	386 500	
Staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly		
83 - Remuneration - permanent staff	7 273 500	
83 bis - Assembly staffing changes		98 000
84 - Expenses on arrival and departure, home leave	78 000	
85 - Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties	38 000	
86 - Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis	t.e.	
87 - Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff	4 330 000	290 000
88 - Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration	730 000	
TOTAL HEAD XX	12 836 000	388 000
HEAD XXI - Special secretariat expenses and other expenditure		
89 - Special secretariat expenses and other expenditure	450 000	150 000
TOTAL HEAD XXI	450 000	150 000
HEAD XXII - Supplies, services and other operational expenditure (Budgetary package)	F	F
Sub-heads		
90 - Publishing and printing	770 000	
91 - Hire of cars	17 000	
92 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly	134 000	20 000
93 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly	80 000	5 000
94 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of the members of the Assembly	167 000	15 000
95 - Official journeys	378 000	30 000
96 - Consultation of experts	432 000	
97 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences	235 000	

2. Appropriation adjustments will doubtless be necessary after the adjustment to be made to staff salary scales in 1979. The amount of these adjustments cannot yet be determined but it will be covered in principle by the provision entered under Sub-head 88.

VOTE III - Expenditure pertaining to the Assembly	Initial appropriations for 1979[2]	Increases in real terms proposed for 1980
98 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this Vote	41 000	
99 - Europe Prize	31 000	
99 bis - Council of Europe Museum Prize	15 000	
99 ter - Fixed contribution towards the use of a computer	t.e.	
TOTAL HEAD XXII	2 300 000	70 000
TOTAL VOTE III	15 586 000	608 000

B. Detailed explanations of the increases in real terms requested

Introduction

1. As already explained in earlier opinions, the changes requested for 1980 are to be regarded as increases in real terms over the appropriations made to the Assembly for 1979.

2. As in previous years, the Assembly leaves it to the Secretariat administration to assess in due course, in the same way as for other sectors of the draft budget submitted by the Secretary General, the adjustments to appropriations still required in 1979 as a result of pay scale changes and their consequences for 1980 and also the provision to be made for pay adjustments in 1980.

3. For these reasons, as in the past, the final estimates for the Head concerning staff expenditure are not shown here.

4. Similarly, it will be for the Secretariat to evaluate the effect of inflation on the other 1980 estimates and adjust them accordingly.

5. The estimates entered here under Head XXII (Supplies and services and other operational expenditure), which constitute the budgetary package, will therefore have to be adjusted before the budget is adopted.

6. The Assembly's estimates for 1980 will thus be determined by the total 1979 Assembly appropriations (including the supplementary appropriations voted 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 indicated in the foregoing paragraphs .

7. Lastly, it is pointed out that the appropriations under Vote III referred to in this opinion relate directly to the operation of the Assembly and do not cover installations, supplies or equipment.

Analysis of estimates according to budget classification

Head XX - Staff

Sub-head 82 - Remuneration, allowances and social charges in respect of the Clerk of the Assembly

This covers salary, allowances and other charges in respect of the Clerk of the Assembly as provided in Resolution (71) 8 of 26 March 1971, last amended by Resolution (79) 4 of 14 March 1979.

Sub-head 83 - Remuneration of permanent staff

This relates to the staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly (basic salaries, non-recurring and regular allowances, social insurance and pension fund contributions).

The present numerical breakdown of staff is as follows :

2. Appropriation adjustments will doubtless be necessary after the adjustment to be made to staff salary scales in 1979. The amount of these adjustments cannot yet be determined but it will be covered in principle by the provision entered under Sub-head 88.

Posts	Secretariat of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, Private Office of the President	Div. I	Div. II	Div. III	Table Office	Total
A7	1					1
A6		1				1
A5			1	1	1	3
A4		2	4	1		7
A2/A3	1	2	5	3	1	12
B5	1				1	2
B4	1		1		1	3
B3	2	4	5	3	1	15
B2				2		2
Total	6	9	16	10	5	46

Sub-head 83 bis - Staffing changes requested for the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly

Nature of change	Assignment	
New post,	1B3	Secretariat of committees
Upgrading	2 B2 to B3	Bilingual assistants

Comments

1. As already pointed out in Opinion No. 88 (1978), the Assembly requested in its opinion on the 1978 budget and in the light of the readmission of Greece and the accession of now three new member states, the creation of an A2/A3 post of committee secretary accompanied by a B3 post of bilingual assistant. However, only the A2/A3 post was created in 1978 and in spite of the insistence by the Assembly in its opinion for the 1979 budget, the Committee of Ministers could not agree to a supplementary B3 post. The Assembly therefore repeats its request for a bilingual assistant which is particularly needed in view of the fact that at least one of the languages of the newly acceded countries should be represented at assistant level in the Office of the Clerk.

2. Furthermore, the Assembly feels that the time has come to repeat its requests dating back to Opinion Nos. 62 (1973) and 70 (1975), by which it asked for the upgrading of two B2 posts to B3, which were mentioned in the last opinion only for the record. Nevertheless, it should be recalled that the Assembly strongly feels that in view of the qualifications and responsibilities required of such staff, especially with regard to linguistic knowledge, all assistants working for Assembly committees should be graded B3.

Sub-head 84 - Expenses on arrival and departure - home leave

This sub-head covers :

travelling and removal expenses of the 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 1980 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 85 - Overtime - allowances to permanent staff for exceptional duties

This estimate is to cover :

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

b. language allowance, until they have been upgraded to B3, 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 payable under Article 12 of the Staff Regulations to officials assuming special responsibilities ;

d. deputising allowances ;

e. expenses of candidates called for recruitment tests.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1980 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 86 - Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis

This 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).

Comments

Since the expenditure will be covered by the transfer of the appropriations available under Sub-head 83, this appropriation only appears as a token entry.

Sub-head 87 - Remuneration and accessory charges in respect of temporary staff

This covers remuneration and social charges for temporary staff (session staff, workshop staff, messengers, technicians, translators 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 1980 at the time of drafting this opinion.

Comments

The development of Assembly activities over the last years has made it apparent that the appropriation for this sub-head was totally insufficient. Whilst, in 1977, the appropriation was still adequate, it was, in 1978, short of 280 000 F. For 1979, a similar figure is to be expected due to unavoidable expenditure incurred with the organisation of meetings and only the very special circumstances which left for many months in 1978 and 1979 some posts vacant in the Office of the Clerk enabled the necessary transfers within Head XX. It must, indeed, be realised that the greater number of members sitting in the Assembly and in committees and in particular the now regular participation of Italian members in committee meetings led to an increase in the interpretation costs of 300 000 F from 1977 to 1978. The Assembly therefore requests that this sub-head be increased by 290 000 F.

As customary, the Assembly reserves itself the right to submit a supplementary estimate if it should decide to alter its time-table for 1980 within the statutory limit.

Sub-head 88 - Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration

The estimate under this sub-head is to cover adjustments to the remuneration of staff allocated to the Office of the Clerk made after the date of completion of the draft budget (see also Introduction above).

Sub-head 89 - Special secretariat expenses and other expenditure

Estimate for 1980 - 600 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 450 000 F

Increase - 150 000 F

This is to cover "miscellaneous expenses incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council of Europe, such as those for secretariat assistance, documentation and travel" (Resolution (58) 4 of the Committee of Ministers, of 27 March 1958).

Comments

The Assembly appreciates the substantial increase granted by the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly for the operation of political groups in 1979 to which it attaches the greatest importance. However, the allocation has now to be shared amongst a yet again increased number of members who have also by now formed a sixth group, reducing consequently the share of the other five. The Assembly therefore recalls its request made in 1978 of bringing the overall allocation to 600 000 F.

Budgetary package

HEAD XXII - Supplies and services and other operational expenditure

Sub-head 90 - Publishing and printing

Estimate for 1980 - 770 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 770 000 F

This covers publishing and printing costs relating to :

official Assembly documents, i.e. :

1 200 bilingual copies of the Working Papers for sittings (2 800 - 3 000 pages) ;

900 copies in each official language of the Official Report of Debates (1 200 - 1 400 pages) ;

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

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 91 - Hire of cars

Estimate for 1980 - 17 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 17 000 F

Hire of cars for the Assembly.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 92 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

Estimate for 1980 - 154 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 134 000 F

Increase - 20 000 F

These are representational, travelling and subsistence expenses incurred by the President of the Assembly in the performance of his duties :

a. fixed representation allowance ;

b. travel and subsistence.

Comments

The geographical extension of the Council of Europe and the disproportionate increase of travelling and subsistence expenses make it necessary to ask for a further increase of this sub-head. Moreover, the President has the obligation to strengthen the image of the Council of Europe in particular with regard to the direct elections of the European Parliament and to make a greater number of journeys also to non-member countries. The Assembly therefore requests an increase of 20 000 F.

Sub-head 93 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly

Estimate for 1980 - 85 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 80 000 F

Increase - 5 000 F

Estimate to cover :

1. official travel by Private Office staff ;
2. remuneration of a shorthand-typist for the President and other secretarial expenses ;
3. special duties allowance ;
4. sundry secretarial expenses.

Comments

As has been pointed out in the comments to Sub-head 92, an increased effort of travelling has to be undertaken by the President who has necessarily to be accompanied by a member of his Private Office. The Assembly accordingly requests a modest increase of 5 000 F.

Sub-head 94 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly

Estimate for 1980 - 182 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 167 000 F

Increase - 15 000 F

This sub-head covers :

entertainment and similar expenses incurred by the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, committee chairmen and rapporteurs ;

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 ;

accident insurance premium for members of the Assembly travelling officially at the Council's expense.

Comments

As pointed out in Opinion No. 88, it is the accession of the new member states which implies that more members are travelling more often to more distant places. The representation of the Council of Europe by members of the Assembly is indeed essential to strengthen the Council of Europe's image and should be promoted to a great extent in the coming years. The Assembly asks for an increase of 15 000 F for this sub-head.

Sub-head 95 - Official journeys

Estimate for 1980 - 408 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 378 000 F

Increase - 30 000 F

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

Comments

In spite of all efforts to reduce travelling expenses as much as possible, the appropriation of this sub-head proved insufficient. The explanation for this development lies for one part in the necessity of more travels to outlying countries and for the other to the increased number of members in committees which makes it necessary to send a greater number of officials to meetings. The Assembly feels that an increase of 30 000 F would be appropriate to cover these additional expenses.

Sub-head 96 - Consultation of experts

Estimate for 1980 - 432 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 432 000 F

This is to cover fees, travelling expenses, subsistence allowances and administrative assistance for experts, including those from non-member states, 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 scientific co-operation programme launched by the Assembly at the instigation of the Committee on Science and Technology.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriations for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 97 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences

Estimate for 1980 - 235 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 235 000 F

This is to cover the organisation of conferences, colloquies, symposia or seminars, including the travelling and subsistence expenses of those taking part, as well as publishing, translation and printing costs (in non-official languages also) and the entertainment and other expenses incidental to those meetings.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 98 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote

Estimate for 1980 - 41 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 41 000 F

Reception service, medals, gratuities for special work, refreshments for night-shifts, etc.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 99 - Europe Prize

Estimate for 1980 - 31 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 31 000 F

- Europe Prize - 20 000 F

- Expenses connected with presentation of the prize including flags and poles - 11 000 F

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 99 bis - Council of Europe Museum Prize

Estimate for 1980 - 15 000 F

Appropriation in 1979 - 15 000 F

Comments

The Assembly requests that the appropriation for 1980 be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1979.

Sub-head 99 ter - Fixed contribution towards the cost of using a computer

Token entry

As mentioned in earlier opinions, the Assembly is prepared to be associated, in the form of a fixed contribution, to the use of a computer, for which it has expressed its interest.