

Opinion 109 (1982)¹

Programme-budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1983

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. 105 (1981) and 107 (1981), on its operational expenditure and on the Council of Europe budget ;
3. Concerned at the fact that the growth rates of the Council of Europe budgets over the last years have been approaching zero (0,15% for 1982), and that in the case of the Assembly the nominal increase of 8,83% for 1982 is substantially below the host country's rate of inflation.
4. Regrets that governments felt it necessary to make an overall cut of 102 000 F in the Assembly's budgetary package, although the Assembly had deliberately refrained from asking for any increase in real terms ;
5. Notes that 12% inflation has been applied to the sub-head for appropriations to the political groups, thus maintaining the allowance at the same level in real terms, but that a minimal response was given to its modest requests for staffing changes, since the two (out of three) upgradings granted will become effective only on 1 September 1982 ;
6. Reiterates the importance it attaches to the staffing changes requested for 1983 as set out under sub-head 80 bis ;
7. Stresses the important political advantages it is hoping to secure for the Council of Europe as the result of the first "Strasbourg Conference of Democratic Countries" in 1983, and requests the Committee of Ministers to vote the necessary appropriations for this conference, bearing in mind that a two-day extension of its meeting time is fully covered by Article 32 of the Council of Europe Statute ;
8. Adopts, accordingly, the following opinion concerning its operational expenditure for 1983 (Vote III of the Council of Europe budget) :

A. Summary table of requested increases in real terms for 1983, compared with initial appropriations for 1982

Voir tableau

B. Detailed explanations of the increases in real terms requested

Introduction

1. As already explained in earlier opinions, the changes requested for 1983 are to be regarded as increases in real terms over the appropriations made to the Assembly for 1982.

1. See [Doc. 4912](#), report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 1 July 1982.



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 1982 as a result of pay scale changes and their consequences for 1983, as well as the provisions to be made for pay adjustments in 1983.

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 effects of inflation on the other 1983 estimates and adjust them accordingly.

5. The estimates entered here under Head XXV (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 1983 will thus be determined by the total 1982 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 XXIII - Staff

Sub-head 79 - Salary, allowances and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly

This covers salary, allowances and remuneration, periodical allowances and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly.

Sub-head 80 - Remuneration of permanent staff

This relates to the staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly (basic salaries, periodical and other allowances and social insurance).

The present numerical breakdown of staff, if subdivided according to Divisions, is as follows :

Voir tableau

Sub-head 80 bis - Staffing changes requested for the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly

Voir tableau

1. Once again the Assembly recalls the arguments, set out in Opinions Nos. 100 (1980) and 105 (1981), concerning the need to create a supplementary post of B3 of bilingual assistant to cover, amongst others, the Spanish and/or Portuguese languages in the Office of the Clerk. This supplementary assistant will be needed even more in 1983 as she will be required to help prepare the "Strasbourg Conference", which will be preceded by a bilateral debate with a parliamentary delegation from Latin America. As this request was first made five years ago in [Opinion No. 82 \(1977\)](#), the Assembly stresses the imperative need to create this post in the 1983 budget.

2. As the Assembly has already explained in [Opinion No. 105 \(1981\)](#), its organigramme shows thirteen operative committees, whereas only seven posts of A4 are available (not including the Head of the Private Office of the President of the Assembly). So long as the question of the twinning of certain grades is not solved at Secretariat or co-ordinated level, the Assembly draws attention to the fact that all those committee secretaries who do not have the grade of A4 are strongly disadvantaged in comparison with their colleagues in national parliaments, the European Parliament, the WEU, etc., where equivalent duties are carried out by officials often ranking the equivalent of A5. It must be stressed that a committee secretary carries considerable responsibilities of a personal nature assigned to him/her by the rapporteurs and the committee chairmen and that he/she very often has to face situations in which the policy of the Assembly is involved. In order to correct this imbalance, the Assembly urgently requests at least two upgradings from A2/3 to A4.

3. Given the requests under 1 and 2, the Assembly again suspends for the time being requests made since 1973 concerning the upgrading of two B2 posts to B3 and mentions them pro memoria only.

Sub-head 81 - Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis

This covers remuneration of staff recruited temporarily for the Office of the Clerk to fill permanent posts which are vacant or no longer remunerated and additional charges relating thereto.

Comments

The expenditure under this sub-head will be covered by the transfer of the appropriations available under Sub-head 80.

Sub-head 82 - 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 ;

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

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1983 appropriation be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1982.

Sub-head 83 - 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 services ;
- b. allowances, payable under Article 41 of the Staff Regulations, to officials assuming special responsibilities ;
- c. deputising allowances ;
- d. d. cost of interviewing candidates for posts.

Comments

The Assembly requests that the 1983 appropriations be maintained at the same level in real terms as for 1982.

Sub-head 84 - Remuneration and accessory charges of temporary conference staff

This covers remuneration, social charges, travelling expenses for temporary staff (session staff, workshop staff, messengers, technicians, translators, and above all interpreters) engaged for the Assembly part-sessions, meetings of Assembly bodies between part-sessions, and ad hoc conferences and colloquies.

Comments

1. The organisation in the autumn of 1983 of what has so far been called the "Strasbourg Conference of Democratic Countries" will require a substantial increase in the appropriation to this sub-head. It is estimated that the Strasbourg Conference will last two days, immediately before or after the autumn part-session of the Assembly, with a supplementary expenditure of 400 000 F. It should be pointed out that the increase in the total number of days of plenary session in 1983 is fully covered by Article 32 of the Council of Europe Statute.

2. The affiliation of temporary staff recruited for part-sessions of the Assembly (with the exclusion of interpreters, translators and seconded staff) to Social Security implies an affiliation of that staff to a complementary pension (Ircantec) as from 1 July 1982. Furthermore, as from 1 January 1983, temporary translators working at headquarters will also be affiliated. These measures require an increase of 170 000 F for this sub-head.

Sub-head 85 - Provisions 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 of the Office of the Clerk made after the date of completion of the draft budget.

The amount remains quantity frozen pending a decision by the Committee of Ministers on a pay increase.

HEAD XXIV - Special Secretariat expenses and other expenses

Sub-head 86 - Special Secretariat expenses and other expenses

Appropriation in 1982 : 597 000

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). The appropriation is allocated to the political groups of the Assembly according to an apportionment decided upon by the Bureau of the Assembly.

Comments

In view of the fact that the requests from the Assembly to increase the appropriation to this sub-head in such a way as to enable the political groups to achieve some of their aims have been repeatedly rejected by the Committee of Ministers, the Assembly resigns itself to asking the Committee of Ministers to maintain the 1983 appropriation at the same level as for 1982 in real terms. However, the Assembly is of the opinion that it is up to the members of the political groups themselves to take steps with their respective national administrations in order to increase the appropriation.

Budgetary package

HEAD XXV - Supplies, services and other operational expenditure

Sub-head 87 - Publishing and printing

Appropriation in 1982 : 1 160 000 F

This covers publishing and printing costs relating to :

*official Assembly documents, that is Working Papers as well as the Official Report of Debates ;
reports and documents adopted by the Assembly and its committees and certain texts adopted by
national parliaments (including the translation from and into non-official languages).*

Comments

The Assembly requests that this appropriation be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 88 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

Estimates for 1983 - 240 000 F

Appropriation in 1982 - 190 000 F

Increase - 50 000 F

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

- a. fixed representational allowance ;
- b. travel and subsistence.

Comments

In view of the considerable amount of preparatory travelling and the unavoidable representational expenses linked to the "Strasbourg Conference" which the President will be asked to undertake, the Assembly requests that this sub-head be increased by 50 000 F in real terms.

Sub-head 89 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly

Estimates for 1983 - 140 000 F

Appropriation in 1982 - 110 000 F

Increase - 30 000 F

Estimate to cover :

1. official travel by Private Office staff or staff travelling on the President's request or for his needs ;
2. remuneration of a shorthand-typist for the President and other secretarial expenses ;
3. special duties allowance of Private Office staff ;
4. sundry secretarial expenses.

Comments

The Secretary General is taking steps to place a member of the DPI at the personal disposal of the President of the Assembly as his press attaché. This will accordingly require a slight increase in this subhead to make up, in particular, for additional travelling.

Sub-head 90 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly

Appropriation in 1982 220 000 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, on behalf of the Council of Europe, meetings of certain Council bodies apart from sessions of the Assembly and meetings of Assembly committees (Bureau, Joint Committee, etc.) or travelling at the request of the Assembly ;

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

Comments

The Assembly requests that this appropriation be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 91 - Official journeys

Appropriation in 1982 - 550 000 F

Official travel by the staff of the Office of the Clerk and other Secretariat staff required to attend meetings of Assembly bodies and other organisations away from Strasbourg, to accompany members of the Assembly or to carry out other official travel on the Clerk's request.

Comments

The Assembly requests that this appropriation be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 92 - Consultation of experts

Appropriation in 1982 - 540 000 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 cooperation programme set up by the Committee on Science and Technology.

Comments

The Assembly requests that this appropriation be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 93 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences

Appropriation in 1982 - 300 000 F

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

Comments

In spite of the organisation of the "Strasbourg Conference" which will be a considerable burden to the Assembly package, requiring a reduction in the normal programme for the organisation of ad hoc conferences, the Assembly requests that this appropriation merely be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 94 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote

Appropriation in 1982 - 70 000 F

Light refreshments for staff on night duty, hire of cars, gratuities for special work done by lower grade staff, purchase of medals, flags and poles, etc., miscellaneous and unforeseen expenditure.

Comments

The Assembly requests that this appropriation be maintained for 1983 at the same level in real terms.

Sub-head 95 - European Prizes

Estimates for 1983 - 80 000 F

Appropriation in 1982 - 60 000 F

Increase - 20 000 F

- a. Europe Prize (20 000 F)
- b. Council of Europe Museum Prize (15 000 F)
- c. Expenses connected with the presentation of the prizes, including travelling, dinners, receptions, flowers, diplomas, insurances, etc.

Comments

The Assembly entirely shares the views expressed by the Committee on Culture and Education as well as the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities in favour of increasing the two Europe Prizes, which have remained at the same level for many years. It is felt that this modest increase, which still keeps the prizes at a symbolic value, would enhance their credibility and standing vis-à-vis the European public.

Appendix

VOTE III - Expenditure pertaining to the Assembly	Initial appropriations for 1982	Increases in real terms proposed for 1983
HEAD XXIII – Staff	F	F
Sub-heads		
79 - Salary, allowances and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly	533 000	
80 - Remuneration of permanent staff	10 571 200	
80 bis - Assembly Staffing changes		(1 B3, 2 A2/3 to/en A4)
80 bis - Assembly Staffing changes		169 0000
81 (former 83)		
Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis	300 000	
82 (former 81)		
Expenses on arrival and departure, home leave	121 000	
83 (former 82)		
Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties	49 000	
84 - Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff	6 996 000	570 000
85 - Provision for cost of living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration	1 900 000	
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TOTAL HEAD XXIII	20 470 200	739 000
HEAD XXIV - Special Secretariat expenses and other expenses		
86 - Special Secretariat expenses and other expenses	597 500	
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TOTAL HEAD XXIV	597 500	
HEAD XXV - Supplies, services and other operational expenditure (budgetary package)		
Sub-heads		
87 - Publishing and printing	1 160 000	
88 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly	190 000	50 000
89 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly	110 000	30 000
90 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of the members of the Assembly	220 000	
91 - Official journeys	550 000	
92 - Consultation of experts	540 000	
93 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences	300 000	
94 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote	70 000	
95 - European prizes	60 000	20 000
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TOTAL HEAD XXV	3 200 000	100 000

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TOTAL VOTE III	24 267 700	839 000

Posts	Secretariat of the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Private Office of the President and secretariats	Div. I	Div. II	Div. III	Table Office	Total
A7	1					1
A6		1			1	2
A5			1	1		2
A4	1	2	3	2		8
A2/3		3	3	4	1	11
B5	1				1	2
B4	1	1			1	3
B3	2	5	4	3	1	15
B2				2		2
Total	6	12	11	12	5	46

	Nature of exchange	Assignment	Cost
New post	1 B3	Secretariat of committees	F 140 000
Upgradings	Requested : 2 A2/3 to A4 Pro memoria : 2 B2 to B3	Committee secretaries Bilingual assistants	14 500 X 2 = 29 000