



Opinion 139 (1988)¹

Council of Europe general accounts and budgets for the years 1986, 1988 and 1989

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Drawing attention to the texts concerning the Assembly's role in budgetary matters²
2. Having examined the Council of Europe general accounts for 1986, the last financial year for which accounts were drawn up and discharge given ;
3. Having regard to the Council of Europe budget for 1988 as adopted by the Committee of Ministers ;
4. Having noted the Committee of Ministers' reply to its Opinions Nos. 135 (1987) and 136 (1987), and the final reply to its [Recommendation 1039 \(1986\)](#) ;
5. Considering that the ministers have agreed to give "highest priority to the events connected with the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Council of Europe",
6. Adopts the following opinion :
 - a. The Assembly welcomes the especially close dialogue it had with the Committee of Ministers in 1987 on budget matters ;
 - b. It is pleased to note that appropriations cancelled at the end of the 1986 financial year came to less than in the previous financial year, an indication of better use of the Organisation's financial resources ;
 - c. It again requests governments of member states to honour their financial obligations to the Council of Europe under Article 39 of the Statute and Article 12 of the Financial Regulations ;
 - d. It welcomes a 1,34% increase in real terms in 1988 budget appropriations which allows fifteen posts to be created and eleven upgraded, but notes that the bulk of the increase goes to the human rights sector ;
 - e. It regrets a 0,30% cut in real terms in the section of the budget concerning the intergovernmental work programme ;
 - f. It trusts that the Secretary General and the Committee of Ministers will take steps to make good in 1989 the 1988 shortfall in the implementation of the third medium-term plan ;
 - g. It is especially anxious that computerisation should continue, and more particularly points out the desirability of :
 1. extending the use of word processing to all Secretariat departments ;
 2. making available to outside users the data held by the computerised Documentation Centre on Human Rights ;

1. See [Doc. 5863](#), report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme, Rapporteur : Mr Oehler. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 30 June 1988.
2. See Rules of Procedure of the Assembly (1988), pp. 86 to 89, and Texts on Budgetary and Financial Matters (1985), pp. 95 to 129.



3. speeding up the installation of a digital automatic exchange, so that the telephone system can be used for sending computerised data ;
- h.* It insists on the improvement of equipment and furniture in the Paris Office, so that facilities there for meetings of Assembly committees and sub-committees, and other Council of Europe meetings, are fully satisfactory ;
 - i.* It endorses the Secretary General's proposals for a new, more flexible staff career structure at the Council of Europe, closer to the European Community's ;
 - j.* Bearing in mind the need to avoid any wider a gap between the Community states and the other democratic European states, it asks governments of member states to give the Council of Europe the resources essential to its work, though the necessary increases in appropriations to the organs of the European Convention on Human Rights must not be at the expense of developing other important Council of Europe activities and of warranted increases in appropriations to the Assembly ;
 - k.* It consequently reiterates its request to the Committee of Ministers to stop applying the zero-growth principle to the Council of Europe and replace it by the principle of reference to average annual growth in gross domestic product in the twenty-one member states ;
 - l.* It asks the Committee of Ministers to lay down a method of medium-term budget planning for the Council of Europe ;
 - m.* It asks the Committee of Ministers :
 1. to release as soon as possible the appropriations made to 1988 activities, which have been deferred or suspended, for transfer to the 40th anniversary celebration schemes requiring a decision as from the second quarter of 1988 ;
 2. to make a special allocation of appropriations unexpended at the close of 1988 to the budgetary sub-head concerning the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Council of Europe ;
 3. to also invite member governments to make payments to the special account for voluntary contributions, the total amount of which should be in the region of 1,5 to 2 million French francs.