



Opinion 140 (1988)¹

Programme-budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1989

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the texts concerning the Assembly's role in budgetary matters;
2. Having taken note of the reply of the Committee of Ministers to its [Opinion No. 135](#) (on the programme-budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1988);
3. Urging the Committee of Ministers to provide the Assembly with the resources it needs to play to the full its role of giving the Organisation political momentum;
4. Regretting, once again, that the Committee of Ministers has never taken account in the budget, in either the operational appropriations or the appropriations for staff, of the increased workload of the Assembly resulting from the rise in the number of Council of Europe members and hence of Assembly Representatives, whose number has increased from a hundred and thirty to a hundred and seventy since 1974;
5. Sincerely hoping that the forthcoming accession of San Marino and Finland may be taken by the Committee of Ministers as an opportunity for accepting the need for an appreciable increase in the staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly;
6. Thanking the Committee of Ministers for agreeing to increase the operational appropriation for the political groups by 200 000 FF, and reminding it that this should be considered as a first instalment, the aim being to bring the increase up to 500 000 FF in the next two years so that the political groups can acquire permanent, efficient secretarial services ;
7. Noting that, given the success of the 2nd Strasbourg Conference, staffing adjustments are needed in the Clerk's Office so that this activity can be continued and taken a stage further and, in particular, so that the 3rd Strasbourg Conference can be prepared without impeding the progress of the other activities of the Assembly and its committees;
8. Suggesting that, for the sake of accuracy, the title of Head XVI be changed from "Special secretariat expenses and other expenses" to "Allocation to the Assembly's political groups",
9. Adopts the following opinion concerning its operational expenditure for 1989 (Vote III of the Council of Europe ordinary budget).

As in previous years, the Assembly's opinion is in two parts:

- a table of requested changes in 1989 in comparison with the initial appropriations for 1988 ;
- detailed explanations of the changes requested.

In the second part, the Assembly also describes the procedure it used to draw up the opinion and states its budget priorities for 1989 (foreword).

1. See [Doc. 5899](#), report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme, Rapporteur: Mrs Palacio. Text adopted by the Standing Committee. acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 30 June 1988.



A. Table of requested increases in real terms for 1989 compared with initial appropriations for 1988

VOTE 111 of the ordinary budget -Expenditure of the Assembly	Appropriations for 1988	Changes in real terms proposed for 1989
	FF	FF
HEAD XV – Staff		
Sub-heads /Articles		
66 -Salary, allowances and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly	881 000	
67 -Remuneration of permanent staff	17 584 000	
67 bis -Assembly staffing changes		+ 945 000
68 -Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis	60000	
69 -Expenses on arrival and departure, home leave	149 000	
70 -Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties	81 000	
71 -Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff	10 536 000	
72 -Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration	893 000	
TOTAL HEAD XV	30 184 000	+ 945 000
HEAD XVI -Special secretariat expenses and other expenses		
73 -Special secretariat expenses and other expenses	1 261 000	+200 000
TOTAL HEAD XVI	1 261 000	+200 000
HEAD XVII -Supplies, services and other operational expenditure (budgetary package)		
Sub-heads		
74 -Publishing and printing	1 552 500	—
75 -Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly	280 500	—
76 -Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly	155 000	—
77 -Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of the members of the Assembly	407 500	—
78 -Official journeys	883 500	—
79 -Consultation of experts	362 000	—
80 -Organisation of ad hoc conferences	684 500	+15 000
81 -Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote	94 000	—
81 bis -Lump-sum contribution to the cost of modernising the Assembly's equipment (computerisation and office automation)	—	—
82 -Europe Prizes	104 000	—
TOTAL HEAD XVII	4 523 500	+270 000
TOTAL VOTE III	35 968 500	+1 415 000

B. Detailed explanations of the requested changes in real terms

Foreword

1. As it is required to do every year, the Assembly has expressed an opinion on Vote III of the Council of Europe ordinary budget, that is, the section of the draft budget which concerns appropriations pertaining to its operation. Appropriations concerning fixtures and fittings, supplies and equipment do not come under this vote.

2. The increases requested for 1989 are intended as increases in real terms in comparison with the Assembly's appropriations for 1988. As in previous years, the Assembly is leaving it to the Secretariat to assess, in due course, the adjustments to appropriations that are being or will be made for 1988 as a result of changes in salary scales, their implications for 1989 and the provision that needs to be made for salary adjustments in 1989. Similarly, it is for the Secretary General to adjust the other appropriations for inflation.

3. The size of the appropriations requested by the Assembly for 1989 will thus be determined by the total appropriations for the Assembly for 1988 (including any additional appropriations allocated in the course of the year), plus:

- the increases in real terms requested in this opinion;
- the technical adjustments made by the Secretariat

4. The Assembly's priorities are:

- the modernisation of its data-processing and office automation equipment;
- an increase in the sum allocated to the political groups;
- staffing adjustments considered necessary to the proper functioning of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly.

Analysis of estimates according to budget classification

HEAD XV — Staff

Sub-head 66 -Salary, allowances and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly

Sub-head 67 -Remuneration of the permanent staff of the Clerk's Office

This appropriation covers basic salaries, nonrecurring and regular allowances, and social insurance for the staff of the Clerk's Office. There are forty-six posts involved, the breakdown being as follows:

- one A7 post;
- one A6 post (a second A6 post has been provisionally frozen to allow an A5 appointment and an A4 appointment on an A2/A3 post) ;
- three A5 posts (including one on an A6 post)
- eleven A4 posts (including one on an A2/A3 post);
- eight A2/A3 posts;
- four B5 posts (including one temporarily available to the Office of the Clerk, to be returned to Protocol on 1 September 1988);
- four B4 posts (including the personal secretaries of the President and the Clerk of the Assembly)
- thirteen B3 posts;
- two B2 posts.

Sub-head 67 bis -Assembly staffing changes

Estimate for 1989:

- Creation of an A4 post 422 500 FF
- Creation of an A2/A3 post 307 500 FF
- Creation of a B3 post 188 000 FF

Upgrading:

- one A3 post to A4 18 000 FF
- one B2 post to B3 9 000 FF

Comments

a. Creation of an A4 post

The Assembly has, on two occasions -in its Opinions Nos. 129 (1986) and 135 (1987) -requested the creation of an A4 post for the Strasbourg Conference. Its grounds for doing so were set out in the former of the opinions mentioned above. In the light of the experience of the 2nd Strasbourg Conference and in view of forthcoming preparations for the 3rd Strasbourg Conference. these grounds are as valid as ever. Since the Strasbourg Conference has become a permanent feature of the Assembly's activities, it seems essential that the duties pertaining to it should be entrusted to a capable official on a full-time basis. This is an ongoing

activity (involving at least two meetings of the steering committee and at least five meetings of the contact group during the year) and politically sensitive, since preparations for the meetings entail consultation and negotiation not only with the European Parliament and the parliaments or embassies of non-member countries but also with other international parliamentary assemblies and nongovernmental organisations. The activity also involves providing administrative and drafting help for regional conferences on democracy and colloquies connected with the topics covered by the Strasbourg Conference.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the duties pertaining to the Strasbourg Conference are currently being carried out by staff who are committee secretaries or joint secretaries. This additional workload has come at a time when some committees have had their functions extended. The chairmen of these committees are complaining that, whereas they should have more staff at their disposal, the staff available also have to service the Strasbourg Conference.

b. Creation of one A2/A3 post and one B3 post to take account of the accession of San Marino and Finland

The accession of Portugal in 1976, Spain in 1977 and Liechtenstein in 1978 to membership of the Council of Europe had automatic repercussions on the composition of the Assembly which rose from 149 to 170 Representatives and an equal number of Substitutes (that is, + 14%). There was no corresponding increase in the operational resources of the Assembly nor the staff of the Office of the Clerk. The forthcoming accession of San Marino and Finland should provide the Committee of Ministers with the opportunity to remedy, at least partially, the difficulties which have resulted for the operation of the Assembly.

It should be borne in mind that the accession of a new state brings with it new tasks for the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly at all levels. This extra work derives above all from:

- the increase in the number of Representatives and Substitutes ,
- fresh activities initiated by parliamentarians and political groups, resulting in a greater number of reports ;
- the need for the Secretariat to extend the scope of its research in a wide variety of fields (political, economic, cultural, social, scientific, legal, etc.).

In addition, it is useful for at least one official of the Office of the Clerk to possess a good knowledge of the language of the new member state.

In view of the foregoing considerations, the Assembly requests the creation of one additional grade A2/A3 post of committee secretary and one grade B3 bilingual secretarial post.

c. Upgrading of an A2/A3 post to A4

Since 1981, the Assembly has argued that the titular secretaries of its thirteen committees should be placed on an equal footing in the same grade: A4. At present, the organisation chart shows ten A4 posts, including an A2/A3 post that has been upgraded as a result of the freezing of an A6 post. The eleventh A4 post is that of the Head of the Assembly President's Private Office. To comply with the Assembly's legitimate wishes, it is therefore necessary to upgrade four A2/A3 posts to A4.

The Assembly is satisfied to note that the Committee of Ministers understands the reasons for its request. Not only did it comply with the requests made in its Opinions Nos. 114 (1983) and 129 (1986) to the effect that two committee secretary posts be upgraded, but it decided, at the 410th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (September 1987), —to authorise an appointment at A4 level on an A2/A3 post in the Office of the Clerk —. Being well aware of the budgetary difficulties faced by the Committee of Ministers, the Assembly has, in this opinion, therefore asked for only one post to be upgraded. The cost of this is virtually negligible -about 0,00005% of the ordinary budget.

The Assembly would nevertheless point out that the committee secretaries who are not on grade A4 are at a disadvantage in relation to their colleagues in national parliaments, the European Parliament, Western European Union and other international parliamentary assemblies, where equivalent duties are normally entrusted to staff on a grade equivalent to A5 or, in some cases, a higher grade.

d. Upgrading of a B2 post to B3

The Assembly is asking for a B2 post, held by a member of staff who is responsible for analysing texts on the basis of keywords for input into a computer and for loading the data bases of the Clerk's Office, to be upgraded to B3. These duties have changed the nature of the post, with the result that its upgrading is amply justified. Here again, the cost is minimal.

Sub-head 68 -Staff recruited to fill vacant permanent posts on a temporary basis

Sub-head 69 -Expenses on arrival and departure, home leave

Sub-head 70 -Overtime and allowances to permanent staff for exceptional duties

Sub-head 71 -Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff

Sub-head 72 -Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration

The Assembly suggests that the 1989 appropriations for Sub-heads 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72 be kept at the same level in real terms as in 1988.

HEAD XVI — Special secretariat expenses and other expenses

Increase in 1989: -200 000 FF

(Second instalment of an increase of 500 000 FF to be implemented by 1990)

(Appropriation in 1988: 1 261 000 FF)

Comments

This is the allocation to the Assembly's political groups, which is apportioned in accordance with criteria established by the Assembly Bureau.

The Assembly welcomes the decision of the Committee of Ministers to increase the appropriation for the political groups by 200 000 FF in 1988. In its [Opinion No. 135 \(1987\)](#), the Assembly gave detailed arguments in favour of a 500 000 FF increase, to be spread over the budgets for three years. It is now asking for a second instalment of 200 000 FF to be included in the 1989 budget.

Moreover, the time has perhaps come to change the title of Head XVI to: "Allocation to the Assembly's political groups", for the sake of accuracy.

Budgetary package

It will be remembered that, since 1975, the appropriations under the following sub-heads have been voted on as a lump sum. Subsequent changes in the apportionment of the appropriation to the various items in this package may be made by the Secretary General at the Assembly's request under Article 31 of the Financial Regulations.

The budgetary package covers the following provisions :

Sub-head 74 -Publishing and printing

Sub-head 75 -Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

Sub-head 76 -Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly

Sub-head 77 -Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly and of former members and honorary members presenting flags of honour

Sub-head 77 bis -Expenditure for inviting parliamentary delegations of non-member states

The extension of the Assembly's external relations, particularly with countries of Eastern Europe, and the invitation to Strasbourg of a number of delegations from these countries will result in increased expenditure for the Assembly. Meeting these extra costs calls for an increase in real terms of the budgetary package by 120 000 FF.

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Sub-head 78 -Official journeys

Sub-head 79 -Consultation of experts

Sub-head 80 -Organisation of ad hoc conferences

The organisation of the 7th Parliamentary and Scientific Conference in Ottawa in September 1989 will entail additional expenditure. in particular under Sub-head 80 (organisation of ad hoc conferences). It therefore seems appropriate to request an increase of 150 000 FF in the budgetary package for 1989.

Sub-head 81 -Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote

Sub-head 81 bis -Lump-sum contribution to the cost of modernising the Assembly's equipment (computerisation and office automation)

Token entry.

As indicated in the foreword to this opinion, the Assembly continues to give priority to the modernisation of its equipment. It is therefore prepared to make a lump-sum contribution for this purpose from its budgetary package.

Sub-head 82 -Europe Prizes

Comments

Apart from the requests made under Heads XV (staff) and XVI (special secretariat expenses and other expenses), the Assembly is merely asking for the appropriations in the budgetary package to be adjusted for inflation in 1989, with the exception of a new Sub-head 77 bis (expenditure for inviting parliamentary delegations of non-member states) and Sub-head 80 (organisation of ad hoc conferences), for which increases of 120 000 FF and 150 000 FF are requested.