Opinion 147 (1989)[1]

Programme-budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1990

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the texts concerning its role in budgetary matters;[2]

2. Having considered the Committee of Ministers' reply to its Opinion No. 140 (on the programme- budget for the operational expenditure of the Assembly in 1989);

3. Referring to its Recommendation 1103 (1989) on the future role of the Council of Europe in the process of European construction, in particular to paragraphs 15 to 24 concerning its own role;

4. Reiterating its determination to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of European construction through greater institutionalised co-operation with national and European parliamentary assemblies;

5. Recalling also its aspiration to contribute towards improved relations with Central and East European countries along the lines indicated in Recommendation 1103 (1989) and in the two texts adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 May 1989, and emphasising the new prospects for cooperation afforded by the recent granting of special guest status to the Parliaments of Hungary, Poland, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia;

6. Noting with satisfaction the recognition of the Assembly's role and importance within the Organisation, as embodied in the declaration and resolution adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 May 1989 ;

7. Considering that it would be in the interests of the contributors, that is to say the member states, to know in actual figures what part of their contributions is used to finance the judicial system of the European Convention on Human Rights, and that all the relevant expenditure should accordingly be shown separately in a subsidiary budget to the Council of Europe's general budget;

8. Hoping that the Ministers' Deputies will have regard in their budgetary decisions to the political will expressed in the two texts of 5 May 1989, and will adopt a budget policy of positive growth for the Organisation, based on the increase in member states' gross national products and on actual inflation rates;

9. Considering the need for it to be able to cope with its increased workload resulting from the expansion in its membership and the development of its relations with Central and East European countries, as well as to make proper preparations for the 3rd Strasbourg Conference and the 7th Parliamentary and Scientific Conference;

10. Noting with satisfaction the recent decision by the Ministers' Deputies to approve the creation of an A2/A3 post and a B3 post as from 1 June 1989, as a consequence of Finland's accession;

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1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of (he Assembly, on 6 July 1989.
See Doc. 6076. report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme, Rapporteur: Mr Pini.
2. See Rules of Procedure of the Assembly (1988), pp. 86 to 88, and Texts on Budgetary and Financial Matters (1985). pp. 95 to 129.

11. Also including in its budgetary priorities for 1990:

11.1. the modernisation of the facilities of its Clerk's Office (computerisation and office automation) ;

11.2. an increase in the financial allocation to the political groups;

11.3. such staffing adjustments as arc considered necessary for the proper functioning of its Clerk's Office,

12. Adopts the following opinion concerning its operational expenditure for 1990 (Vote III of the Council of Europe's ordinary budget).

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

– a table of requested increases for 1990 compared with initial appropriations for 1989;

– detailed explanations of the changes requested.

In the second part, the Assembly also describes the procedure for drawing up the opinion and states its priorities for 1990 (foreword).

Appendix

A. Table of requested increases in real terms for 1990 compared with initial appropriations for 1989

VOTE III of the ordinary budget - Expenditure of the Assembly **TITRE III du budget ordinaire - Dépenses relatives à l'Assemblée**	**Appropriations for 1989** **Crédits ouverts au budget de 1989** **FF**	***Changes in real terms proposed for 1990*** **Modifications en termes réels proposées** **FF**
HEAD XV - Staff		
CHAPITRE XV - Dépenses de personnel		
Sub-heads / Articles		
66 - Salary, Allonnes and social charges of the Clerk of the Assembly Rémunération, indemnités et charges sociales du Greffier de l'Assemblée	917 000	
67 - Remuneration of permanent staff Rémunération du personnel du cadre permanent	18 645 500	
67 bis - Assembly staffing changes Modification du cadre permanent de l'Assemblée		+ 471 000
68 - Recruitment, arrival and departure expenses, home leave Frais de recrutement, à l'arrivée et au départ - Congés dans le pays d'origine	151 000	
69 - Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties Heures supplémentaires - Indemnités de fonction et prestations exceptionnelles	84 000	
70 - Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff Rémunération et charges accessoires du personnel temporaire de conférence	11 042 000	
71 - Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration Provision pour vie chère et autres ajustements de la rémunération	605 500	
TOTAL HEAD XV TOTAL DU CHAPITRE XV	31 445 000	*+ 471 000*

VOTE III - Expenditure of the Assembly **TITRE III - Dépenses relatives à l'Assemblée**	***Initial indicative appropriations* for 1989** **Crédits indicatifs ouverts au budget initial de 1989** **FF**	**Changes in real terms proposed for 1990** **Modifications en termes réels proposées pour 1990** **FF**
HEAD XVI - Allocation to the Assembly's political groups CHAPITRE XVI - Allocation forfaitaire aux groupes politiques		
72 - *Allocation to the Assembly's political groups* Allocation forfaitaire aux groupes politiques	1 461 000	+ 100 000
TOTAL HEAD XVI TOTAL DU CHAPITRE XVI	1 461 000	+ 100 000
HEAD XVII - Supplies, senùces and other operational expenditure (budgetary package) CHAPITRE XVII - Dépenses de matériel et autres dépenses de fonctionnement (enveloppe budgétaire)		
Sub-heads / Articles		
73 - *Publishing and printing* Publications et impressions	1 599 000	–

VOTE III - Expenditure of the Assembly **TITRE III - Dépenses relatives à l'Assemblée**	***Initial indicative appropriations* for 1989** **Crédits indicatifs ouverts au budget initial de 1989** **FF**	**Changes in real terms proposed for 1990** **Modifications en termes réels proposées pour 1990** **FF**
74 - *Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly* Dépenses de représentation, frais de déplacement et de séjour du Président de l'Assemblée	281 800	120 000
75 - *Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly* Dépenses du Cabinet du Président de l'Assemblée	155 000	
76 - *Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of the members of the Assembly* Dépenses de représentation, frais de fonction et de déplacement des membres de l'Assemblée	411 000	
77 - *Official journeys* Frais de mission	900 300	50 000
77 *bis* - *Expenditure for inviting parliamentary delegations of non-member states* Dépenses d'accueil de délégations parlementaires d'Etats non membres	90 000	+ 100 000
78 - *Consultation of experts* Consultation d'experts	370 500	–
79 - *Organisation of* ad hoc *conferences* Organisation de conférences *ad hoc*	684 500	+ 450 000
80 - *Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vole* Autres dépenses non spécialement prévues au présent titre	94 000	–
81 - *Europe Prizes* Prix européens	104 000	–
TOTAL HEAD XVII TOTAL DU CHAPITRE XVII	4 690 100	+ 720 000
TOTAL VOTE III TOTAL DU TITRE III	37 596 100	+ 1 291 000

B. Detailed explanations of the real-term changes proposed

Foreword

1. Under the Committee of Ministers' Resolution (53) 38 on the budgetary system of the Consultative Assembly, the Assembly is required to express an opinion on appropriations pertaining to its operation, that is, on Vote III of the Council of Europe ordinary budget. Assembly expenditure based on resources common to all departments is covered by the appropriations in Vote I – Common expenditure – and is not therefore dealt with in this opinion.

2. The Assembly's proposals as set out in this opinion are incorporated in the Secretary General's draft budget. If the Secretary General is unable to endorse this or that proposal, he informs the Committee of Ministers of the fact and of his reasons, after consulting the President of the Assembly.

It should be noted that the Assembly budget is made up of three distinct sets of appropriations:

– staff appropriations;

– allocations to the political groups:

– all other operational appropriations of the Assembly.

Since 1975. the third of these sets has been voted in the form of a lump sum (budgetary package). Under Article 31 of the Financial Regulations, the Secretary General may subsequently, at the Assembly's request, modify the various amounts in this package.

The increases requested for 1990 should be regarded as real-term increases over the Assembly's appropriations for 1989. As in previous years, the Assembly is leaving it to the Secretariat's Directorate of Administration to assess, in due course, the adjustments that arc being or will be made to 1989 appropriations as a result of changes in salary scales, as well as the implications of such changes for 1990 and the provision that needs to be made for salary adjustments in 1990. Similarly, it will lie with the Secretariat to adjust the other appropriations for inflation.

The amounts of the appropriations requested by the Assembly for 1990 will thus be determined by the total appropriations allocated to the Assembly for 1989 (including any additional appropriations allocated in the course of the year) plus :

– the real-term increases requested in this opinion :
– the technical adjustments to be made by the Secretariat General, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

The Assembly's budgetary priorities for 1990 are:

– the modernisation of the facilities of the Clerk's Office (computerisation and office automation) :
– an increase in (he financial allocation to the political groups;
– such staffing adjustments as arc considered necessary for the proper functioning of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly.

Analysis of the various estimates by budgetary item

HEAD XV - Stuff

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 the basic salaries, allowances – both non-recurring and periodic – and social insurance of the staff of the Clerk's Office, which comprises the following forty-eight posts:

– 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);
– nine[3] A2/A3 posts:
– three B5 posts;
– four B4 posts (including the private secretaries of the President and the Clerk of the Assembly);
– fourteen B3 posts:
– two B2 posts.

Sub-head 67 bis - Staffing changes requested in the Clerk's Office

Estimate for 1990: Creation of an A4 post : 433 000 FF

Upgradings:

– one A3 post to A4 : 19 000 FF

3. The Ministers' Deputies decided, at their 426th meeting (May 1989). on the creation of an A2/A3 post and a B.I post as from June 1989. as a consequence of Finland's accession.

– two B2 posts to B3 : 19 000 FF

Comments

a. Creation of an A4 post

The Assembly has repeatedly requested the creation of an A4 post for the Strasbourg Conference. Its grounds for doing so were set out in detail in Opinion No. 129 (1986). page 6. and Opinion No. 140 (1988). page 6. Here, it should once more be stressed that the Assembly's activities relating to parliamentary democracy have proved to be of an ongoing nature. At present, the tasks linked to the Strasbourg Conference are performed by two officials

whose duties are also those of head of division and committee co-secretary. They involve the servicing of at least two meetings of the steering committee and at least five meetings of the contact group during the year, as well as the provision of administrative and drafting assistance in connection with regional conferences on democracy and colloquies of relevance to the Strasbourg Conference's topics. The assignment of these tasks to two officials who also shoulder substantial responsibilities in the servicing of a number of Assembly committees cannot be anything but a stopgap measure. It is a matter of urgency that an A4 official should be able to deal on a full-time basis with the duties pertaining to the Strasbourg Conference, on account of the high-level contacts maintained with the European Parliament and the parliaments or embassies of non-member countries as well as with other international parliamentary assemblies and NGOs.

b. Upgrading of an AH A3 post to A4

Ever since 1981 our Assembly has been arguing that its committee secretaries should be placed on an equal footing. As the Assembly has thirteen permanent committees, every committee secretary ought to be graded A4. This is not the case at present as far as three committees are concerned, namely the Committee on Migration. Refugees and Demography, the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Relations with European Non-Member Countries. The arguments repeatedly put forward on the subject in the past are summarised in Opinion No. 140 (1988). It should be noted here that the reference to contacts with national parliaments and international parliamentary assemblies, especially the European Parliament and Western European Union, cannot but lend greater weight to the Assembly's point of view, for in those assemblies the duties of committee secretary are normally entrusted to officials whose grade is equivalent to A5 or even higher.

The Assembly wishes, in this respect, to thank the Committee of Ministers for understanding the nature of this problem and for taking measures to alleviate it in recent years. It hopes that the discrimination that still exists will be eliminated altogether by the upgrading of the three aforementioned posts, if possible over a period of three years, starting in 1990.

c. Upgrading of two B2 posts to B3

The Assembly is asking for the upgrading to B3 of two B2 posts, held by members of staff whose present duties have entailed a change in the nature of the posts, which are as follows :

– assistant to the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme ;

– secretary to the Deputy Clerk of the Assembly, a post held by a staff member working at the same time as assistant to the Strasbourg Conference, its steering committee and its contact group. These duties are substantially comparable to those of a committee assistant.

For these two posts, the Assembly wishes to reiterate its attachment to the principle of non-discrimination between members of staff performing comparable duties, a principle which fully justifies the two upgradings requested.

Sub-head 68 - Recruitment, arrival and departure expenses, home leave

Sub-head 69 - Overtime and allowances for exceptional duties

Sub-head 70 - Remuneration and accessory charges for temporary conference staff

Sub-head 71 - Provision for cost-of-living allowance and other adjustments to remuneration

The Assembly proposes that the 1990 appropriations for Sub-heads 68, 69, 70 and 71 be kept at the same level in real terms as the 1989 appropriations. It emphasises that the rate of inflation taken into consideration should reflect the actual situation in member countries, especially the host country.

HEAD XVI – Allocation to the Assembly's political groups

Increase in 1990: 100 000 FF (third instalment of an increase of 500 000 FF to be implemented by 1990).

Appropriation in 1989: I 461 000 FF.

Comments

The Assembly welcomes the Committee of Ministers' acceptance of its suggestion to change the title of Head XVI (which was previously "Special secretariat expenses and other expenses").

The Assembly also welcomes the Committee of Ministers' decision to increase the political groups' appropriation by 200 000 FF in 1989. In its Opinion No. 135(1987). it set out detailed arguments in favour of a 500 (XX) FF increase, to be spread over three years. However, it regrets that the 200 000 FF increase for 1989 was calculated in nominal terms. It is now asking for a third installment of 100 000 FF in real terms to be entered in the 1990 budget.

Budgetary package

The budgetary package, as defined in paragraph 2 of the above foreword, covers the following items:

Sub-head 73 - Publishing and printing

Sub-head 74 - Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly

The increase in the Council of Europe membership, the continuing expansion of the Assembly's external relations and the recent creation of special guest status.

already granted to the parliaments of four countries of Central and Eastern Europe, will inevitably require the President of the Assembly to increase his official contacts and travels. The budgetary package accordingly needs to be increased in real terms on this account by 120 000 FF.

Sub-head 75 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly

Sub-head 76 - 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 - Official journeys

The need to increase the estimate under this sub-head is based on the same arguments put forward in relation to Sub-head 74. An increase in real terms of 50 000 FF is required.

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

In Opinion No. 140. the Assembly put forward its reasons for requesting the inclusion of this sub-head. The Committee of Ministers showed a sympathetic attitude to the request when voting the budget for 1989. As the Assembly's expenditure on this item will probably increase owing to the steady expansion in its external relations, especially with the countries of Eastern Europe, a real-term increase of 100 000 FF in the budgetary package should now be requested.

Sub-head 78 - Consultation of experts

Sub-head 79 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences

The holding of the 7th Parliamentary and Scientific Conference in Ottawa in June 1990 will entail additional expenditure. especially under this sub-head. In the light of past experience, an increase of 300 (XX) FF in the budgetary package should be requested for 1990.

Moreover, the Assembly's participation in the organisation of a Colloquy on "Democracy and development", to be held in Dakar during the first half of 1990 on the initiative of the Steering Committee for the Strasbourg Conference, will require extra financial resources, principally to cover the travel and subsistence expenses of a large number of experts and the cost of an on-the-spot preparatory meeting. For this purpose, a real-term increase of 150 000 FF in the budget package needs to be requested.

Sub-head 80 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote

Sub-head 80 bis - Lump-sum contribution to the cost of modernising the Assembly's equipment (computerisation and office automation)

Token entry.

In accordance with the priorities outlined in the above foreword, the Assembly once again emphasises the importance it attaches to :

– the modernisation of its computer facilities ;

– the refurbishment of its office equipment, including the progressive replacement by instalments of the furniture which is no longer suited to present needs.

Sub-head 81 - Europe Prizes

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Comments

In addition to the requests made under Heads XV (staff) and XVI (allocation to the Assembly's political groups), the Assembly asks for the following real-term increases :

– Sub-head 74 (representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly): 120 000 FF

– Sub-head 77 (official journeys) : 50 000 FF

– Sub-head 77 ***bis*** (expenses for inviting parliamentary delegations of non-member states): 100 000 FF

– Sub-head 79 (organisation of ***ad hoc*** conferences) : 450 000 FF

Concerning the other sub-heads of the budgetary package, the Assembly merely requests that the appropriations in its budgetary package be adjusted for inflation in 1990, while stressing (hat the rales of inflation taken into consideration should reflect the actual situation in member countries, especially the host country.