Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Opinion 203 (1997)[1]

Budgets of the Council of Europe for the financial years 1997 and 1998

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly notes that, as was the case with preparation of the 1997 budget, it has not received the information needed for it to be able to issue a reasoned opinion on the 1998 budget.

2. The Assembly also wishes to draw further attention to the disparity between its political role within the Council of Europe and the role which it plays in respect of its own budget and the budget of the Organisation as a whole.

3. The Assembly, therefore, again takes this opportunity to reiterate its request to be associated with the preparation of the Organisation's budget, and particularly its own budget (Vote III), for the forthcoming financial years.

4. With regard to the 1997 budget, the Assembly

4.1. notes with satisfaction that the Organisation has been allocated substantial budget increases and additional posts for the 1997 financial year, taking account of the accession of new member states;

4.2. encourages the Committee of Ministers to give further consideration to a "multi-annual" approach, which should allow the Organisation to be managed more flexibly and more rationally;

5. With regard to the budget prospects for 1998, the Assembly calls on the Committee of Ministers:

5.1. to strengthen assistance and training programmes and to develop concrete activities in the field;

5.2. to reassess all of the Organisation's activities so they constitute as concrete a response as possible to member states' most pressing needs;

5.3. to continue its review of personnel policy (flexible job management, leaving allowances, early retirement, creation of temporary posts or short-term established posts);

5.4. to set up a guarantee fund to ensure payment of pensions;

5.5. to make provision for the Single Court to be financed separately and to have a separate budget, thereby allowing for its specific nature and its independence;

5.6. to set up financial machinery allowing a rapid response to states of emergency;

5.7. to endow the Organisation with additional resources for the implementation of the decisions and proposals resulting from the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe.

1. See Doc. 7947, report of the Committee on the Budget and the Intergovernmental Work Programme, rapporteur: Mr Theis. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 7 November 1997.