Resolution 1734 (2010)[1]
Final version

Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the financial year 2011

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In pursuance of Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers and Article 24 of the Financial Regulations, the Parliamentary Assembly issues an opinion each year concerning the expenditure relating to its operation. The amounts allocated to the Assembly in the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe cover its expenditure on staff and the costs associated with its own functioning and the functioning of its political groups.

2. When it elected Mr Jagland as Secretary General of the Council of Europe by a significant majority, the Assembly gave him a clear mandate to help reform, revitalise and reinforce the Council of Europe. It also undertook to contribute to the institutional improvements envisaged by the Secretary General.

3. With this aim in mind, the Assembly has already begun to consider the place and role it should have on the European and international scene. This debate is consistent with the Assembly's desire to set itself clear priorities revolving around the Organisation's essential values while retaining a broad remit so as to better respond to the expectations and the new needs of European citizens.

4. The economic and social crisis which Europe is experiencing today shows that the Assembly must remain the pan-European forum for discussion and debate that it has been for over sixty years and thereby help to identify the best remedies to allay the ills afflicting Europe's citizens and to ensure that "a government's human right pledges are not forgotten", as the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, said in 2008.

5. As the Swiss Chair of the Committee of Ministers pointed out: "The Parliamentary Assembly, as the central pillar of the Council of Europe, confers unquestionable democratic legitimacy on our Organisation." However, the Assembly's action can be effective only if there is genuine, substantive and ongoing dialogue between the two statutory bodies, as the Assembly suggested in its Recommendation 1886 (2009) on the future of the Council of Europe in the light of its sixty years of experience.

6. It is for this reason that the Assembly has made tangible proposals to strengthen dialogue and co-operation with the Committee of Ministers so as to achieve improved understanding of the viewpoints of all concerned and to thereby consolidate the Council of Europe's effectiveness. The Assembly is convinced that this dialogue must involve a search for synergies and probably a reform of the existing methods of consultation between the two bodies.

7. Nonetheless, to be in a position to deal with the many political problems that arise in the sphere of pan-European co-operation and to identify solutions to societal challenges, the Assembly must have sufficient financial resources at its disposal.

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee,* acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 21 May 2010 (see Doc. 12247, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Cebeci).

8. In recent years the Assembly has taken significant steps to rationalise its work and reduce its expenditure. The measures implemented, notably stringent management of committee meetings and other administrative rationalisation measures (in particular concerning publication of the Assembly's proceedings), have made it possible to absorb the various budget cuts without affecting core activities.

9. 2011 must be regarded as a year of transition and the Assembly, aware of the current difficulties, wishes to assist the Secretary General in implementing the institutional improvements he envisages. For this reason, it can endorse the Secretary General's request that it restrict its expenditure to an amount of €15 089 000 (excluding inflation) – corresponding to a 2% reduction in relation to appropriations for 2010 – so as to cope with the current budget deficits in the context of the zero real growth imposed by the member states. Nonetheless, it will remain vigilant regarding the choices and priorities proposed by the Secretary General and approved by the Committee of Ministers.

10. However, with a 2011 budget reduced to the 2005 level, it is difficult to know whether the Assembly will be in a position to fulfil its many tasks. Yet, despite this constraint, the Assembly intends to maintain its parliamentary co-operation and assistance mechanisms with the aid of external contributions.

11. The experience gleaned from the co-operation programmes for the parliaments of Serbia and Montenegro and, very recently, Moldova, financed thanks to the European Commission's support, bears out the Assembly's decision to maintain parliamentary co-operation and assistance programmes so as to better meet the specific needs of the member states' parliaments, in co-operation with the European Parliament, in accordance with the terms of the agreement signed by the two European parliamentary institutions in 2007.

12. Lastly, to give the 636 parliamentarians from the Council of Europe's 47 member states the means to do their work under appropriate conditions, it is necessary to update the Assembly's equipment, which dates from the construction of the Palais de l'Europe, by introducing modern communication tools. For this reason the Assembly would like the Secretary General and the Committee of Ministers to take into account the following investment requests, as already set out in its previous opinions, with a view to modernising the Assembly Chamber, a tribune of democracy:

12.1. replacement of the vote display panels on either side of the President's rostrum with large "video wall"-type screens. This project is included in the Organisation's 2010-2015 investment plan and is scheduled for implementation in 2011. The Assembly insists that the planned work must not be postponed;

12.2. modernisation of the vote management system. The Assembly is currently using outmoded equipment, dating from the 1980s, which it inherited from the European Parliament;

12.3. replacement of the mobile cameras used for filming debates with a television-style system adapted for use in the Assembly Chamber allowing filming of the speakers and broadcasting of debates on screens and via live webcasting;

12.4. lastly, the refurbishing and modernisation of the Assembly Chamber (including the lighting to make energy savings, the President's rostrum and the seating).

13. These investments will be of benefit not to the Assembly and the Congress alone but also to all other potential users and will allow better use to be made of this unique meeting space.

Appended to this resolution are:

i. a table of the requests for 2011, compared with the appropriations allocated in 2010;

ii. a brief explanation of the main items of expenditure;

iii. a table setting out the Assembly's work programme according to the results-based budgeting method.

Appendix 1

Vote III of the ordinary budget – Expenditure of the Assembly	Expenditure foreseen for 2010 €	Appropriations for 2011 €
Head 0310 – Functioning of the Assembly		
Staff expenditure		
Sub-heads		
0000001 – Remuneration of staff recruited on established posts	8 615 700	8 615 700
0000003 – Remuneration and accessory charges of temporary staff	853 100	584 950
0000046 – Remuneration of staff on position	466 700	425 350
0000005 – Salary, allowances and social charges of the Secretary General of the Assembly	262 100	267 100
0000016 – Recruitment, arrival and departure expenses – home leave	32 200	27 000
Total Staff expenditure	**10 229 800**	**9 920 100**
Supplies, services and other operational expenditure		
Sub-heads		
0000054 – Equipment	13 300	11 000
0000080 – Official journeys	261 200	261 200
0000085 – Journeys of the Table Office reinforcement staff	p.m.	200 000
0000095 – Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly	160 000	160 000
0000115 – Interpretation	1 863 500	1 883 400
0000116 – Translation	497 800	483 300
0000124 – Publishing and printing	336 800	280 900
0000125 – Outsourced production of documents	33 000	25 000
0000129 – Consultation of experts	148 600	148 600
0000162 – Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly	61 700	60 000
0000163 – Official expenses of the President of the Assembly	92 500	90 000
0000171 – Organisation of ad hoc conferences	97 700	90 000
0000204 – Modernisation of the Assembly's equipment	p.m.	p.m.
0000205 – European prizes	85 300	80 000
0000206 – Operating and maintenance costs of the electronic voting system	43 000	39 000
0000250 – Co-operation and monitoring programme	637 300	549 700
0000370 – Allocation to Assembly's political groups	726 800	726 800
0000392 – Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote	102 800	80 000
Total supplies, services and other operational expenditure	**5 161 300**	**5 168 900**
Total Vote III	**15 391 100**	**15 089 000**

Appendix 2

Vote III – Expenditure of the Assembly

Staff expenditure

1. This appropriation corresponds to the basic salaries, allowances (non-recurring and periodic) and social cover of the permanent staff of the secretariat of the Assembly (87 posts, including 1 specially appointed official) and of temporary staff (including 6 positions).

2. In 2009 and 2010 the Secretary General of the Assembly implemented a reorganisation of the secretariat. This resulted in the downgrading to the next lowest grade of a number of posts in categories A and B, the elimination of one position and a reduction in appropriations for the recruitment of temporary back-up staff. These measures, however, have no impact on the functioning of the 10 committees: 9 of these committees have 84 members (and 84 alternates, apart from in the Monitoring Committee), and the remaining one has 27 (with no alternates). As at 1 November 2010 the secretariat will comprise 87 permanent posts, 6 positions and 1 specially appointed official, breaking down as follows:

Permanent posts:
1 specially appointed official
1 A7, 1 B6, 1 C4
2 A6, 5 B5
10 A5, 13 B4
8 A4, 15 B3
24 A2/A3, 7 B2
Positions:
4 A1/A2 , 1 B3
1 B2

3. At present, the secretariat of the Assembly is organised so that the 10 Assembly committees have 52 staff members working for them, including 30 A-grade permanent staff, 20 B-grade permanent staff and 2 staff on fixed-term positions.

4. The remaining 41 staff members (37 permanent posts and 4 fixed-term positions) work for the Bureau of the Assembly, the Private Office of the President of the Assembly, the Table Office, the Interparliamentary Co-operation and Election Observation Unit, the Parliamentary Assistance Unit, the Administration, Human Resources and Finance Unit, the Communication Unit, the Information Technology Unit and the Research and Documentation Unit.

Supplies, services and other operational expenditure

1. Since 1975, following a decision by the Committee of Ministers, these allocations have been voted in the form of a single appropriation, which continues to be divided into sub-heads. If the Assembly wished to change the relative amounts in the package at a later date, either because of an overall reduction or for any other reason dictated by the implementation of the budget, such a change would be carried out by the Secretary General at the Assembly’s request and in accordance with Article 31 of the Financial Regulations.

2. In recent years the Assembly has made substantial savings by rationalising its work to reduce its operational expenditure. The measures taken, in particular stringent management of committee meetings and the adoption of a new policy concerning publication of the Assembly’s proceedings (which led to a drastic reduction in printed publications), have enabled the Assembly to absorb the various austerity measures imposed on it.

3. Despite this budgetary pressure, the Assembly wishes to continue its interparliamentary co-operation programme and its training programme for staff of the parliaments of Council of Europe member states. To this end, it will have to make greater use than ever before of external financing, in particular support from the European Commission, as was the case with the specific co-operation programme for the parliaments of Serbia and Montenegro (2006-2009) and more recently the Parliament of Moldova (2010-2011).

4. The Assembly has a prominent political role and place in Europe. This is because it is the only purely European parliamentary institution in which national delegations representing all the countries of Europe (apart from Belarus) regularly come together. The frequency of its meetings (twenty days per year during the part-sessions in Strasbourg, plus seventy to eighty days' work between sessions on the occasion of the meetings of the committees and sub-committees, not to mention other meetings, such as Bureau meetings or those of the Standing Committee) enable it to react to political developments in Europe and to offer its member states responses to the challenges faced by society.

5. For this reason, despite the difficulties, the Assembly's committees will not cease to hold thematic hearings and conferences, which are essential to fuel their work. The Assembly will also continue to co-operate closely with other European parliamentary assemblies (the European Parliament, those of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), etc.), or international parliamentary assemblies (the Pan-African Parliament, etc.).

6. In addition, pursuant to Resolution 1420 (2005) on prospects for peace in the Middle East and to the decision of the Assembly Bureau on 18 March 2005, the Sub-Committee on the Middle East will continue its co-operation with the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council.

7. The Assembly will also continue to support its political groups through their allocation, which is based on a lump sum for secretarial assistance paid to each of the existing groups along with an additional per capita amount which varies according to their membership.

8. To sum up, the draft budget for 2011 amounts to €15 089 000 in real terms (not including inflation and salary adjustments for 2011).

The appropriations can be analysed as follows:	
Permanent and temporary staff	€9 920 100
Interpretation	€1 883 400
Translation	€483 300
Printing of documents	€305 900
Allocation to the political groups	€726 800
Sub-total	**€13 319 500**
Activities:	€1 769 500
Total	**€15 089 000**

9. The reduction in the Assembly's appropriations is considerable and its budget is returned to the 2005 level. This is no longer zero real growth but genuine degrowth. This significant decrease in the Assembly's appropriations will doubtless lead it to make further changes to its working methods, procedures and structure so as to enhance its activities' relevance and effectiveness.

10. Nonetheless, although the financial situation is tense, the Assembly very much wishes that the work to modernise the Assembly Chamber be carried out. This highly symbolic venue, in which regular maintenance work is undertaken, has indeed not undergone any major renovation since it was built in the mid-1970s. In particular, the vote display panels should be replaced with video walls, as planned, while the outdated (DOS-based) vote management system, the system for filming debates and, lastly, the Chamber's fixtures and fittings (lighting, rostrum and seating) should be renewed.

Appendix 3

Functioning of the Assembly			
Intervention logic	**Performance indicators**	**Sources of verification**	**Assumptions**
Activity area objective Ensure the smooth functioning of the session and of the Assembly's various bodies.			
Expected result 1 The part-sessions are efficiently organised and run, and satisfy Assembly members' expectations.	At least 50% of registered speakers are given the floor. Adopted texts are transmitted to the bodies concerned.	List of speakers. Compilation of adopted texts. Minutes of the Bureau of the Assembly. Statement made by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to the Ministers' Deputies.	Support from secretaries of national delegations.
Expected result 2 Committee meetings, seminars and conferences take place in accordance with members' decisions.	Committee meetings are planned. Meeting agendas, documents and reports are ready in good time.	Agendas, synopses and minutes of committee meetings. Proceedings of seminars and conferences.	Availability of members.
Expected result 3 Interparliamentary co-operation, observation of elections and assistance for national parliaments is managed taking due account of political developments.	Co-operation activities are brought into line with wishes and needs expressed. Election observation missions are organised in accordance with the decisions of the Bureau of the Assembly.	List of activities. Reports on election observation missions.	Support from parliaments and political groups.
Expected result 4 Raising of the Assembly's external profile.	Media coverage of Assembly activities. Stock is taken of press releases and the number of visitors to the Assembly's website.	Press and news media (media analysis database, Factiva). Collection of statistics on media coverage.	