



Resolution 2165 (2017)¹

Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the biennium 2018-2019

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In pursuance of Committee of Ministers Resolution (53) 38 on the budgetary system of the Consultative Assembly and Article 24 of the Financial Regulations, the Parliamentary Assembly issues an opinion concerning the expenditure relating to its operation. Since 2010, the Assembly has presented the opinion concerning its own expenditure in the form of a resolution, which in this case refers to the biennium 2018-2019. 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, including the functioning of its political groups.
2. Growing economic and social inequalities in Europe and beyond and increased poverty and social exclusion are providing fertile ground for populism, extremism, racism, xenophobia and terrorism to develop, thus undermining Council of Europe core values and principles. The Assembly believes that the Council of Europe is the European organisation best suited to counter these threats and take up these challenges while promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
3. The Assembly fully endorses the three priority themes of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for the next biennium, namely tackling the rise in populism, dealing with the refugee and migrant crisis and combating terrorism. It believes that the upsurge in populism in Europe and beyond and the general rise in all forms of extremism that breed hatred are playing a part in destabilising our democracies. That is why the Assembly has made combating this phenomenon the core task of its No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and more generally of its work for the 2018-2019 biennium.
4. In the area of election observation, the Assembly will pay close attention to the dangers of the increase in populist and extremist tendencies in election campaigns, in particular through media coverage of elections and social media.
5. With regard to the issue of migrants and refugees, the Assembly will focus its work on migrants' access to rights, problems in terms of reception, transit and integration and humanitarian operations relating to the migration crisis, as well as the issue of migrant children and young people.
6. The Assembly will also continue its visits to reception and detention centres for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as its campaign to end immigration detention of children. Lastly, regional political contexts will remain on its agenda in relation not only to the consequences of conflicts outside Europe but also to those remaining within Europe.
7. With regard to the fight against terrorism, the Assembly will focus more particularly on the growing number of women and girls willing to join Daesh and on the question of "terrorists acting alone". In this connection, the Assembly calls for strengthening mutual assistance between member States in terrorist cases.

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 30 May 2017 (see [Doc. 14319](#), report of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr George Loucaides).*



8. Among the other aspects of the fight against terrorism, the Assembly will propose activities aimed at prosecuting and punishing the crimes against humanity committed by Daesh and intends to look into states of emergency and problems of proportionality concerning the derogations granted under Article 15 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5, “the Convention”), as well as the compatibility of Sharia law with the Convention.

9. The Assembly also wishes to strengthen its action in the area of social rights with the aim of combating the ever-widening social and economic inequalities in Europe. In addition, it intends to support all initiatives aimed at making the system of the European Social Charter (ETS No. 35 and ETS No. 163 (revised)) the basis for the social pillar of the European Union so as to help build a more harmonised social and inclusive Europe.

10. In terms of combating corruption, the Assembly intends to strengthen the mechanisms for implementing the code of conduct for members of the Assembly and related sanctions, as well as the rules governing lobbying. To that end, the Assembly has stepped up its co-operation with the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) with a view to assessing the Assembly’s integrity framework and its mechanisms for implementing rules of conduct. Moreover, with regard to the allegations of corruption in the Assembly, on 25 April 2017 the Assembly ratified the terms of reference of the independent external investigation body.

11. The Assembly will also continue to support certain awareness-raising campaigns on key themes, including in particular:

- 11.1. the parliamentary network “Women Free from Violence”;
- 11.2. the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) anti-corruption platform;
- 11.3. the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance;
- 11.4. the Parliamentary Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children.

12. In addition, following United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1, adopted on 25 September 2015, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the Parliamentary Assembly intends to take into account in its future work the various sustainable development goals defined by the United Nations, some of which are central to its remit and those of its committees.

13. Lastly, the Assembly will continue to carry out the activities provided for in its Rules of Procedure by holding various elections in accordance with statutory requirements and the Convention (Commissioner for Human Rights, Secretary General, judges of the European Court of Human Rights), promoting the various European prizes it awards (the Europe Prize, the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize, the Museum Prize) and observing elections.

14. With reference to interparliamentary co-operation, the Assembly will continue to implement various assistance and co-operation programmes suited to the needs of parliamentary institutions, in close co-operation with the committee secretariats and the Directorate General of Programmes. These co-operation activities are mainly financed through voluntary contributions from the member States and joint programmes with the European Union, in particular the South Programme (SPII) and the Eastern Partnership Programmatic Cooperation Framework (PCF), which has been extended for a three-year period ending in 2020. In addition, a number of action plans launched in 2017 will be continued in 2018-2019, in particular those concerning Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine.

15. The Assembly will also continue its policy of seeking financial resources from governments and parliaments with a view to implementing in 2018 and 2019 several multilateral projects aimed at promoting European and international standards through parliamentary action, focusing more particularly on diaspora policies, social rights, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the protection of public and child health.

16. In addition, through these various co-operation programmes, the Assembly intends to develop awareness-raising activities for parliamentarians and parliamentary officials on the question of national implementation of the judgments and case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

17. The Assembly wishes to express its sincere appreciation to those member States and their parliaments (in particular Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Switzerland) which, through their contributions, have enabled it to finance activities relating in particular to the promotion of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, “Istanbul Convention”) and the

Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS No. 201, "Lanzarote Convention") and the outreach and prestige of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize.

18. As regards external communication and visibility, the Assembly will continue its modernisation efforts, in particular through technical developments concerning its website, with the incorporation of a video on demand (VOD) system. This policy also seeks to improve the integration of Assembly members so that their work within the Assembly is given a higher profile on their own websites and those of national parliaments.

19. The Assembly thanks the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for the major renovation work in the Assembly chamber scheduled for the next biennium under the Council of Europe's "Capital Master Plan" for building projects. The work due to take place from February 2018 to March 2019 will oblige the Assembly to hold the plenary sittings of four part-sessions elsewhere. High-level contacts have been made with the European Parliament, which has agreed to the Assembly's plenary sessions being held in its chamber during this period, as well as the 2018 session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the World Forum for Democracy (November 2018). Nevertheless, the Assembly will have to cover some expenses relating to security and organisational matters if the plenary sittings are held in the chamber of the European Parliament.

20. With regard to the budget for the next biennium, and given the member States' current policy of maintaining zero nominal growth in their contributions to the Organisation's ordinary budget (contributions are frozen at their current level with no adjustment for inflation), the Secretary General has asked all entities, including the Assembly, to submit budgetary proposals on the basis of the appropriations received in 2017, while taking account of the need to identify savings so as to offset the rate of increase in the ordinary budget (to offset the impact of inflation) and any salary adjustments in 2018 and 2019.

21. The Assembly will have to find the funds needed to cover the salary adjustments for its staff within its current appropriations package. The adjustment, the level of which will be known in the last quarter of 2017, is determined by a reliable and predictable mathematical method for calculating salaries shared by the coordinated organisations and based on the trend in civil service salaries in eight European reference countries. Given current estimates based on the figures from previous years, it is necessary to identify savings in the order of 1.5% of the Assembly's appropriations for the first year of the biennium, namely a total of €261 400.

22. If this sum were to be deducted from the budget on a pro rata basis for staff and operational expenditure, the Assembly would have to cut €150 000 in staff appropriations (or the equivalent of 1 A2/3 post and 1 B2 post) and €111 400 in operational appropriations.

23. The Assembly regrets the current budget policy which has the effect of financing salary adjustments through cuts in posts and positions. It should be noted that, over the last four years, the Assembly has had to reduce its staff by six posts or positions (1 A6, 1A2/3, 3 B2 and 1 C4) to cover not only the salary increases but also the technical abatements on the payroll imposed by the Committee of Ministers.

24. The Assembly reiterates its call on member States to return to zero real growth, that is to say at least to include inflation (which currently stands at 0.5% in France) in their contributions, so as to stop the erosion of the Organisation's financial resources and hence the budget cuts affecting all Council of Europe departments which will ultimately cancel out the positive impact of Turkey's decision to become a major contributor.

Appended to this resolution are:

- i. a brief explanation of the main items of expenditure;
- ii. a table setting out the Assembly's work programme according to the results-based budgeting method.

Appendix 1 – Expenditure of the Assembly

Vote III – 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 and of temporary staff.

2. The information provided here is based on the current structure of the Assembly comprising 9 committees: the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe has 93 seats, the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy has 87 seats and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights 86 seats; 4 other committees have 81 seats. The Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs has 38 seats and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights 22 seats. As at 1 January 2017, the secretariat comprised 83 permanent posts, 4 structural fixed-term positions, 1 fixed-term position in respect of a programme, 1 seconded staff member and 1 specially appointed official, broken down as follows:

Permanent posts	
1 specially appointed official	
1 A7	1 B6
1 A6	5 B5
8 A5	10 B4
11 A4	17 B3
23 A2/A3	6 B2

Positions	
3 A2/A3	1 B5 (programme)
	1 B3

Seconded	
1 A2/3	

3. At present, the secretariat of the Assembly is organised so that the 9 Assembly committees have 49 staff working for them (including 30 A-grade and 17 B-grade permanent staff members on posts, 1 B-grade staff member on a fixed-term position and 1 seconded A-grade staff member).

4. The remaining 41 staff members (1 specially appointed official, 40 permanent staff members) work for the Bureau of the Assembly, the Private Office of the President of the Assembly, the Table Office, the Election Observation Division, the Parliamentary Projects Support Division, the Central Division, the Communication Division and the Information Technology Unit.

5. In addition, over the two previous biennial budgets (2014-2015 and 2016-2017) and on account of the zero nominal growth policy, the Assembly reduced the number of its posts and positions (1 A6, 1 A2/3, 3 B2 and 1 C4) and its temporary staff appropriations in order to cover the technical abatements on the payroll imposed by the Committee of Ministers and the salary adjustments adopted at the co-ordinated organisations.²

Supplies, services and other operational expenditure

6. In recent years, the Assembly has made substantial savings by rationalising its work to reduce its operational expenditure. In 2016, the Assembly's overall budget increased to take account of the introduction of Turkish as a working language (as regards interpretation and translation).

2. The purpose of the co-ordination system is to make recommendations on salaries and allowances to the governing bodies of the Co-ordinated Organisations (OECD, NATO, Council of Europe, ESA, ECMWF, EUMETSAT).

7. The functioning of the Assembly covers the following range of tasks:
 - the holding of the ordinary session, divided into four part-sessions (which take place every year in January, April, June and September/October);
 - meetings of the Standing Committee between the part-sessions, held at a frequency of three meetings per year;
 - meetings, at times other than the four part-sessions of the Assembly, for each of the nine general committees, the sub-committees, the ad hoc committees of the Assembly or of the Bureau;
 - committee or sub-committee meetings outside Strasbourg or Paris;
 - conferences, colloquies, seminars and parliamentary hearings;
 - activities coming under the Assembly's programme of interparliamentary co-operation;
 - visits by rapporteurs in connection with the preparation of reports, including to countries subject to monitoring of the honouring of member States' obligations and commitments or to the post-monitoring dialogue;
 - election observation.
8. In 2018-2019, the Assembly will continue to carry out its priority tasks and pursue the following objectives:
 - strengthening the Assembly's political relevance and effectiveness;
 - establishing a sound ethical framework for its members with the support of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and ensuring effective compliance with it;
 - raising the profile of the work of the Assembly and of its members;
 - improving Assembly members' participation, while reinforcing interaction between the Assembly and national parliaments;
 - strengthening the capacity for interparliamentary co-operation throughout Europe, including co-operation with national parliaments holding partner for democracy status and with the European Parliament and other European Union institutions;
 - helping national parliaments to check the conformity of legislation with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) more effectively and strengthen their ability to monitor the execution of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.
9. During the next biennium, the Assembly will also implement a number of activities directly related to the three priority areas of action of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe: the fight against populism, the issue of migration and terrorism.
10. Corruption, political governance and the rise in populism are among the priority themes for several committees for the 2018-2019 biennium (the committees on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments; Political Affairs and Democracy; Equality and Non-Discrimination; Culture, Science, Education and Media; and Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs), with several reports planned in this connection.
11. The issue of migration will remain a priority for the Assembly, which in 2018 and 2019 will continue its work on migrants' access to rights, problems in terms of reception, transit and integration and humanitarian operations relating to the migration crisis.
12. In addition, the Assembly will continue to give close consideration to all other issues, in particular social rights. In this context, it intends to take into account in its work the sustainable development goals defined in Resolution 70/1, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015, on "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".
13. In the area of election observation, the Assembly will pay close attention to the dangers of the increase in populism and extremism in connection with electoral legislation and its implementation and during election campaigns, in particular through media coverage of elections and social media.
14. With regard to its assistance and co-operation programmes, the Assembly will continue to implement activities suited to parliamentary institutions' needs and linked to the Council of Europe's priorities, in close co-operation with its various committees. The programmes cover the following areas: sexual violence against children, violence against women, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, the campaign to end immigration

detention of children, the parliamentary anti-corruption platform and the implementation of several action plans (concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Ukraine). Most of the co-operation activities are funded with extrabudgetary resources. In 2016, the Assembly received €751 691 in extrabudgetary contributions (voluntary contributions and joint programmes with the European Union) for its various thematic activities (campaigns, action plans and the parliamentary dimension of joint programmes).

15. The Assembly will also continue to support its political groups through their allocation, which is based on a lump sum for administrative assistance paid to each of the existing groups along with an additional amount per person which varies according to the number of members in a group.

16. To sum up, the draft budget for 2018 and 2019 in real terms (not including inflation, salary adjustments and the possible freezing or abolishment of posts or positions), which includes pension contributions for staff, amounts to:

Year	Staff ³	Other expenditure	Total
2018	€11 312 600	€6 113 700	€17 426 300
2019	€11 312 600	€6 113 700	€17 426 300

For information, the budget for 2017:

2017	€11 434 600	€6 113 700	€17 548 300
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17. This sum of €17 548 300 corresponds to the 2017 budget adopted by the Committee of Ministers, including the additional appropriations granted for the remuneration of a national civil servant seconded to the Assembly for 2017. It does not take account of a reduction of €81 000 in staff expenditure to cover the 2017 salary adjustment.

Adjusted 2017 budget (following reduction of the staff appropriations to cover the 2017 salary adjustment):

2017	€11 353 600	€6 113 700	€17 467 300
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3. Based on the 2017 adjusted budget (including pension contributions), excluding additional appropriations for a seconded civil servant.

Appendix 2 – Functioning of the Assembly

Intervention logic	Performance indicators
<p>Expected result 1 The part-sessions were provided with an efficient secretariat in line with Assembly members' expectations.</p>	<p>Percentage of registered speakers able to take the floor (target 70%) (68.18% in 2016).</p>
<p>Expected result 2 Committee meetings, hearings and conferences were provided with an efficient secretariat in conformity with members' decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of meetings per committee held each year (target no more than 10 per committee) (70 in 2016 for 9 committees). – Number of conferences and hearings organised at the same time as committee meetings.
<p>Expected result 3 Parliaments of relevant member States have benefited from interparliamentary co-operation programmes implemented to respond to specific needs and priorities of the Council of Europe and national parliaments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of seminars/conferences held in connection with Assembly co-operation programmes.
<p>Expected result 4 The Assembly and parliaments of relevant member States have received observation reports which evaluate parliamentary or presidential elections and include targeted recommendations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of election observation mission reports adopted by the Assembly. – Evidence of improvement (change in national law and practices) following previous visits.
<p>Expected result 5 Public opinion in member States has been informed of the activities of the Assembly and of its members through traditional and social media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of articles published in print media in which activities of the Assembly are reflected (target: 2 500) (3 758 in 2016). – Percentage increase in the number of external users of the Assembly's website (target 2% increase) (2 454 000 pages viewed in 2016). – Number of interviews via the Media box (target: 100) (240 in 2016).