



## Opinion 52 (1969)<sup>1</sup>

# Budget of the Council of Europe for 1970

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to paragraph 1 of Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers, which stipulates : "When drawing up the draft Budget for the Council of Europe, the Secretary General shall consult the Assembly on that part of the draft Budget which comprises the relevant operational appropriations. Such consultation shall take place in accordance with a procedure to be laid down by agreement between the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General" ;
2. Having regard to the Secretary General's letter of 15 March 1962 defining the procedure for consultation both as regards the part of the Budget containing the estimate relating to the Assembly's operational expenditure and as regards the Budget as a whole ;
3. Having regard to the Budget of the Council of Europe for 1969 adopted by the Committee of Ministers and to the general accounts for the financial year 1967, being the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed and a discharge given ;
4. Bearing in mind its decision that in 1970 the session shall have a duration of twenty-five days ;
5. Bearing in mind the effects of devaluation of the French franc,
6. Adopts the following opinion :

### *Part 1- Draft Vote III of the 1970 Budget (Expenditure of the Consultative Assembly)*

1. It is proposed that Vote III of the 1970 Budget be drawn up as set out below :

#### **VOTE III - EXPENDITURE OF THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

##### **HEAD I - TEMPORARY STAFF**

##### **Sub-head 68 - Remuneration of temporary staff**

Estimate for 1970 - F. 1,080,000

Remuneration of days worked by temporary staff for sessions of the Consultative Assembly and meetings of its organs out of session time.

Article 32 of the Statute of the Council of Europe entitles the Assembly to meet for thirty days a year. Hitherto, in the light of experience, the estimate has been based upon 18 days, on the understanding that this did not prejudice the Assembly's rights under the Statute.

The Assembly has decided to change the dates of the plenary sittings for 1970 and to fix the duration of the session at 25 days.

---

1. Assembly debate on 29 September 1969 (8th Sitting) (see [Doc. 2625](#), report of the Committee on the Budget). Text adopted by the Assembly on 29 September 1969 (8th Sitting).



*Opinion 52 (1969)*

The Assembly, while aware of the resulting effect upon the Budget of the Council of Europe, desires to emphasise that the duration of the session will still be below the statutory limit.

Remarks :

The increase in the estimate results from the higher pay accorded to the staff in question and the lengthening of the session from 18 to 25 days. It also allows for the effects of devaluation of the French franc.

*Sub-head 69 - Travelling expenses and allowances for travelling time*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 150,000

Travelling expenses and allowances for travelling time for temporary staff recruited away from Strasbourg.

Remarks :

The lengthening of the session should not in principle have any great effect on this estimate, but the devaluation of the French franc entails raising it to 150,000 F.

*Sub-head 70 - Sickness and accident insurance*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 9,000

Share paid from the Council Budget (60 %) of sickness and accident insurance premiums in respect of temporary staff remunerated under Sub-head 68.

Remarks :

The estimate for 1970 takes into account the longer duration of the session.

*Sub-head 71 - Technical staff seconded from national administrations*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 54,000

Refund to various national administrations of the salaries of staff seconded to the Council for certain special services during Assembly sessions : travel expenses, subsistence allowances, and insurance for such staff.

Gratuities for special work performed by lower-grade staff of national administrations in connection with meetings of Assembly bodies outside Strasbourg.

Remarks :

The increase in the estimate is due mainly to the length of the session and the devaluation of the French franc.

**HEAD II - SUPPLIES AND SERVICES**

*Sub-head 72 - Publishing and printing*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 409,000

1. *Official Assembly documents.*

2. Circulation of certain adopted texts and supply of information to national parliaments.

Remarks :

Despite constant effort to keep down the official documents of the Assembly, and the rules adopted for the distribution of documents<sup>2</sup>, there is an increase in the volume of working papers requiring printing. Many of these relate to the tabling of reports from various sources (the Committee of Ministers, organs of the Council of Europe and other organisations).

The size of the estimate for 1970 will also be affected by the longer session, which will involve some increase in working papers and reports of debates, and by the devaluation of the French franc.

---

2. [Resolution 365](#) adopted by the Assembly on 2 February 1968.

For the reasons given above, it will be necessary to increase the estimate under this sub-head to 409,000 F.

*Sub-head 73 - Hire of cars*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 11,000

Hire of cars for the Assembly and its organs.

Remarks :

The increase in the estimate is due to the rise in hire charges and to the length of the session.

*HEAD III - OTHER OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE*

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

Estimate for 1970 - F. 48,000

Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses incurred by the President of the Consultative Assembly in the course of his duties :

F.

*Fixed amount for representation - 31,000*

*Travel and subsistence - 17,000*

Remarks :

The fixed representation allowance of the President of the Assembly, which was calculated on the basis of 1964 prices, has not been changed since the 1965 Budget.

Prices having risen considerably over the last five years, the Assembly considers that the allowance should be raised from 24,000 to 31,000 F ; this also takes into account the devaluation of the French franc.

With the 17,000 F for the President's travel and subsistence expenses, the appropriation requested for 1970 is 48,000 F.

*Sub-head 75 - Expenditure pertaining to the private office of the President of the Consultative Assembly*

Estimate for 1970 F. - 31,000

F.

-Special duties allowance - 4,800

- Remuneration of one shorthand typist - 9,700

- Official travel by staff - 16,500

-Sundry secretarial expenses - token entry

*Sub-head 76 - Representational and other official expenditure incurred by members of the Consultative Assembly*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 113,000

F.

-Entertainment and similar expenses incurred by the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and by the committee Chairmen and Rapporteurs - 18,000

- Travelling expenses and subsistence allowances of members of the Assembly attending, on behalf of the Council of Europe, meetings of certain Council bodies apart from sessions of the Consultative Assembly and its committees (Bureau of the Assembly, Joint Committee etc.), or undertaking official missions for the Assembly - 66,000

*Opinion 52 (1969)*

- Fixed amount granted to political groups to meet sundry expenditure incurred by members of the Assembly in the discharge of specific duties for the Council of Europe, such as secretarial assistance, documentation and travel expenses (Res. (58) 4 of 27 March 1958) - 27,000
- Accident insurance premiums for members of the Assembly travelling officially at the Council's expense (Decision of the Ministers' Deputies at their 108th meeting, March 1962 - Concl. (62) 108, Point V). - 2,000

Remarks :

The Assembly would like to see the daily allowances to members of the European Assemblies brought into line. The amount of the allowance should be raised to that paid to members of the European Parliament, namely 200 F a day. The estimate for 1970 has been adjusted accordingly. This increase of 65 F a day involves an increase of 10,000 F in the estimate.

In the Assembly's view the present appropriation is not enough to cope with the extension of its activities as instanced by its relations with the United States Congress, the Canadian Parliament and the Latin-American Parliament and that this constitutes a restriction on travel to distant places by certain members of the Assembly.

Hitherto it has been possible to develop these new relations thanks to assistance from several national parliaments but this has been to the detriment of some countries which cannot meet such high travel and subsistence expenses.

The Assembly does not wish for the present to ask for a specific appropriation for this purpose, although that possibility should be envisaged for 1971.

Apart from the effect of raising the daily allowance to Assembly members, the higher estimate for 1970 is due also to increases in three other items, namely :

*provision for travel by members of the Assembly (increase : 2,500 F) ;*

*representational and similar expenditure incurred by the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and by committee Chairmen and Rapporteurs (increase : 5,000 F) ;*

*secretarial and documentation expenses of the political groups (increase : 2,000 F).*

*Sub-head 77 - Official journeys*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 165,000

- Official travel by staff of the Office of the Clerk and by Secretariat staff required to attend meetings of Assembly bodies away from Strasbourg, or to attend meetings of experts.

Remarks :

The estimate for 1970 only takes into account the devaluation of the French franc. It may be necessary to adjust it if there is a change in railway fares or in the scales for allowances for official journeys during the year.

*Sub-head 78 - Consultation of experts*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 55,000

Remarks :

The Assembly recalls that the question of consultation of independent experts by committees was considered by the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly in conjunction at the meeting of the Joint Committee on 7 March 1968.

It is clear that if the Assembly is to do work of real use in certain increasingly complex fields it will necessarily have to call in experts, although it is very difficult to plan any programme in this connection. The increase in the estimate for 1970 should make it easier to adjust means to the Assembly's needs.

*Sub-head 79 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 40,000

Remarks :

In [Recommendation 553](#), the Assembly expressed the desire for a 4th Seminar on Inter-national Voluntary Service

The recommendations of the Assembly requesting the first three Seminars invited the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to take the necessary steps for the purpose.

Hitherto, no specific estimate has been made. The first three Seminars were extremely difficult to organise by reason of the insufficient means available ; this was particularly so in the case of the 3rd Seminar, where the number of participants was also considerably greater.

However, thanks to more rational timing it was possible to take care of this activity without having to ask for further funds. In view of the increase and intensification in the duties of the Secretariat as a whole, the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly cannot hold a 4th Seminar without adequate financial provision.

The estimate for 1970 is designed to provide the means necessary for putting [Recommendation 553](#) into effect.

*Sub-head 80 - Expenditure not otherwise covered in this vote*

Estimate for 1970 F. - 11,500

*Sub-head 81 - Europe Prize*

Estimate for 1970 - F. 6,000

- Europe Prize - 2,500

- Provision for the cost of awarding the prize (travel and reception in honour of the mayor of the winning municipality, diploma and medal) - 3,500

2. The Assembly once again recalls that the Committee of Ministers has taken no decision as yet on the appropriations required to implement Assembly [Resolution 188](#) of 29 September 1960 concerning the official languages of the Council of Europe.

This resolution was adopted in pursuance of Article 12 of the Council of Europe Statute which gives the Assembly an independent power to determine "in what circumstances and under what conditions other languages may be used".

The Assembly recommends that the appropriation necessary for the application of [Resolution 188](#) should consequently be added to those appearing in Vote III of the 1970 Budget.

3. The Assembly notes that the higher estimates resulting from the above proposals would raise the total under Vote III from 1,633,500 F in 1969 to 2,182,500 F in 1970, i.e. an increase of 549,000 F made up as follows :

*F.*

*Sub-head 68 : Remuneration of temporary staff - 332,000*

*Sub-head 69 : Travelling expenses and allowances for travelling time - 5,000*

*Sub-head 70 : Sickness and accident insurance - 3,000*

*Sub-head 71 : Technical staff seconded from national administrations - 16,000*

*Sub-head 72 : Publishing and printing - 99,000*

*Sub-head 73 : Hire of cars - 3,000*

*Sub-head 74 : Representational, travelling and subsistence expenses of the President of the Assembly - 7,000*

*Sub-head 76 : Representation and other official expenditure incurred by members of the Consultative Assembly - 25,500*

*Sub-head 77 : Official journeys - 5,500*

*Sub-head 78 : Consultation of experts - 13,000*

*Sub-head 79 : Organisation of ad hoc conferences - 40,000*

549,000

The largest increases are in the remuneration of temporary staff, publications and printing, and the organisation of ad hoc conferences. The incidence of the lengthening of the session on the aggregate estimates for temporary staff under Vote III can be put at 310,000 F in round figures.

4. The Assembly wishes to point out that the devaluation of the French franc accounts for an increase of 89,000 F in Vote III and affects mainly temporary staff, publications and printing, travelling expenses of members of the Assembly and official journeys.

## *Part 2 - General remarks and proposals relating to votes other than Vote III*

### *1. General remarks*

The Council of Europe Budget for 1969 totals 46,392,880.96 F, an increase of 6,759,362.92 F over the Budget for the previous year (39,633,518.04 F).

This increase includes :

*an appropriation of 2,727,000 F by way of provision for implementation of the decisions taken on the remuneration of permanent staff ;*

*an appropriation of 1,368,733.96 F carried forward for initial establishment expenditure on the permanent European Youth Centre ;*

*an appropriation of 100,000 F for the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Council of Europe.*

The appropriations under Vote III - Expenditure of the Consultative Assembly - show an increase of 163,300 F (11.1 %) over those for the year 1968, this being due in part to the temporary creation of an A5 post of Table Officer (90,000 F) and to sundry adjustments of appropriations.

The general accounts for the financial year 1967 show cancellations of appropriations to an amount of 1,057,411.57 F i.e. 3.03 %. This percentage is very small indeed, and the Assembly once more congratulates the Secretary General on the accuracy of his estimates.

The Auditors have stated that they are satisfied that expenditure under the Budget has been properly incurred and that the budget appropriations have been rationally and economically administered.

The Assembly takes careful note of these observations.

### *2. Staff of the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly*

(a) In its [Opinion No. 49](#) on the Budget of the Council of Europe for 1969 the Assembly recommended the establishment, in the Office of the Clerk, of a Table Office to centralise the control of documents and the creation on a permanent basis of an A5 post and a post of private secretary (B3).

In response to [Opinion No. 49](#) of the Assembly, the Committee of Ministers decided to create a post on a temporary basis, for a period of one year, so that proper experience of the operation of the proposed Table Office could be gained before any final decision was taken.

The experiment has not produced the results hoped for. While a number of persons having the necessary experience and qualifications evinced an interest in the post, they were not disposed to accept a purely provisional engagement, and the Assembly is of the opinion that the creation on a permanent basis of the posts requested remains the only reasonable solution.

The present situation is unsatisfactory and the Assembly attaches the greatest importance to the finding of a solution in 1970. The Assembly considers that its very functioning is jeopardised and that the Committee of Ministers should agree to this request. Moreover, enquiries made of various national parliaments by the Office of the Clerk have yielded arguments additional to those contained in the letter of 28 October 1968 from the President of the Assembly to the Chairman of the Ministers' Deputies.

Besides the functions of "table officer", this official would be responsible for supervising the work of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, the Standing Committee and the Bureau, that is to say all work relating to the Assembly's practices and procedure. He would also supervise the staff seconded from national parliaments for service during Assembly sessions.

The Assembly points out that the creation of this post will make it possible to reorganise the departments of the Office of the Clerk and to improve the servicing of committees, which is thought highly desirable : some members of the staff are at present occupied with duties which, while very important, are not a direct responsibility of the Office of the Clerk.

(b) The Assembly further recalls the need for bilingual assistants in the service of committees, in view of the exceptional nature of the work they are called upon to do.

It is to make these posts more completely bilingual that the Assembly requests the conversion of three B2 posts in the Office of the Clerk to B3 posts.

(c) In addition, since the Office of the Clerk has been made responsible for providing secretarial services for the Committee of Senior Officials, that is to prepare for the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers should include an appropriation in the Budget for the particular purpose of making it possible to increase the staff of the Office of the Clerk on a temporary basis for the year 1970.

### *3. Vote I - Common expenditure*

#### *Maintenance of furniture and equipment : replacement and purchase*

The Assembly is convinced of the desirability of making the appropriation necessary to the modernisation and rationalisation of equipment with a view to improving the working of the organisation and the efficiency of departments.

In this connection it recalls that the Committee of Ministers, in replying to [Opinion No. 49](#) of the Assembly, proposed to give these questions a prominent place in the general Budget of the Council of Europe for 1970.

In the case of simultaneous interpretation equipment it is becoming a matter of urgency to improve the audibility and operational conditions, which are no longer equal to the needs of the Assembly and its committees.

The Assembly therefore recommends to the Committee of Ministers that provision be made for the modernisation of the existing appliances and the purchase or hire of adequate equipment for interpretation at meetings held elsewhere than in Strasbourg or Paris.

The Assembly further notes that the conditions of work in the hemicycle are becoming more and more difficult and that it is imperative to install air-conditioning without awaiting the construction of new buildings.

The Assembly has found that during sessions journalists encounter certain difficulties. It requests that steps be taken to allow the Directorate of Press and Information to supply them with the necessary material and technical facilities.

### *4. Council of Europe buildings*

The Assembly notes that only the principle of erecting a new building has hitherto been adopted, and emphasises that the present premises do not provide the facilities which it needs for normal working.

The Assembly further recalls that on this subject it has given very precise information, which was appended to the report made in 1967 by the working party to study the problem of Council of Europe buildings. This report is still under consideration by governments

The Committee of Ministers has also not given full replies to several questions from members of the Assembly.

The Assembly urges the Committee of Ministers to take the necessary decisions quickly, having regard to the fact that a long time is bound to elapse before new premises are ready for occupation.

5. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers take steps to ensure that the Secretariat staff do not suffer by the devaluation of the French franc. In particular arrangements should be made in regard to the expenditure incurred by staff in their national currency and also in regard to Pension Fund benefits paid outside France.