## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## Working Documents

1980-1981

DOCUMENT 1-546/80

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgets on the fadaptations to Section I - parliament of the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1981

Rapporteur: Mr V. ANSQUER
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On 28 April 1980 the Committee on Budgets appointed Mr ANSQUER rapporteur on the estimates of the European Parliament for the 1981 financial year.

Parliament adopted these draft estimates on 27 June 1980. Council deliberated on these estimates on 23 September 1980 when it drew up the draft budget.

At its meetings of 9/10 October 1980 and 28/29 October 1980 the Committee on Budgets further considered the draft budget of Parliament.

At its meeting of 29 October the Committee on Budgets adopted the following motion for a resolution by 20 votes to none with 2 abstentions.

Present: Mr Lange, Chairman, Mr Spinelli, second Vice-Chairman; Mr Ansquer, rapporteur; Mr Adonnino, Mr Arndt, Mr Balfe, Mr Battersby (deputizing for Mr Newton Dunn), Mr Brok (deputizing for Mr Ryan). Mr Colla, Mr Doublet (deputizing for Mr Flanagan), Mr Forth, Mr Gouthier, Mrs Hoff, Mr Howell, Mr R. Jackson, Mr Jalton, Mr Lega, Mr Megahy (deputizing for Mr Motchane), Mr O'Leary, Mr Pfennig, Mrs Pruvot (deputizing for Mr Rossi), Mr Konrad Schon, Mr Seeler (deputizing for Mr Orlandi), Mrs Scrivener, Mr J.M. Taylor, Mr Tuckman, Mr von der Vring, (deputizing for Mr Dankert).
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The Committee on Budgets hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement;

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the adaptations to Section I - Parliament - of the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 198]

## The European Parliament,

- having regard to its draft estimates for the 1981 financial year and to the report of its Committee on Budgets (Doc. ]-276/80),
- having regard to the draft general budget for the 1981 financial year drawn up by Council (Section I - Parliament) and the explanatory memorandum (Doc. 1-465/80).
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (Doc.'1-546/80),
(a) Whereas the principal factors which have led to large increases in its budgets and its establishment plans since 1979 have been:
(i) the doubling of the number of members of Parliament;
(ii) the obligation to work integrally in all Community working languages;
(iii) the obligation to work in three working places
(b) Whereas the absence of a seat for the institution is due to the inability of the Member States' governments to agree on the choice of a seat,

1. Considers that the expenditure resulting from the absence of a seat cannot be justified before public opinion and now amounts to a major source of waste and inefficiency;
2. Calls upon the govermments of the Member States to assume their responaibilities on this question, after consulting the European Parliament,
3. Considers, nonetheless, that a permanent internal review of structures is required: therefore, decides to continue this review with the appropriate Parliamentary bodies, and for this purpose, will avail of the expertise of external independent bodies to assess the best means of meeting its organisational requirements;
4. Points to the reductions that it has already carried out generally on a flat-rate basis, for nineteen lincs where the utilization of expenditure had been noticeably lower in 1979 than the amount entered in the budget; recalls that these reductions amounted to more than 10 mEUA ;
5. Points out, however, that the scope for further economies is limited in view of the particular difficulties referred to above;
6. Modifies its 1981 establishment plan to allow for the creation only of those posts to be reserved for Greek officials;
7. Brings up-to-date the reserve of posts for officials seconded to the political groups;

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8. Points to the fact that many of the administrative problems confronting it are common to all the institutions, notably those concerning recruitment and other administrative procedures;
9. Instructs its Committee on Budgets to invite the heads of administration of all the institutions to examine with it the possibilities of finding common solutions to the common problems confronting the European public service, and particularly as regards recruitment.

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10. Agrees to amend its provisions concerning Members' travel allowances in such a way that those Members in receipt of travel concessions under their national legislation will not be able to claim from the Parliament for travel where they may make use of national concessions.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The European Parliament bears the brunt of the Community's organisational problems

1. The functioning of all the European institutions is complex and subject to increasing difficulties. Your rapporteur will suggest subsequently ways in which the institutions should tackle jointly some of their common problems.
2. However, it has to be remembered that the problems which would in any case exist in the European Parliament are severely aggravated by the obligation to work in three working places and integrally in six, and soon 7, languages. The second element, as Mr Robert Jackson, rapporteur for Parliament's budget for $1980^{1}$ pointed out, is an inescapable one: linguistic proficiency among European citizens has not reached a sufficient point at which it would be possible to limit, in any way, their right to elect representatives who are obliged to carry out their duties using a language other than their mother tongue. While rationalisation may be possible, the fact remainsthat the Parliament is, and always will be, a multilingual institution.
3. The absence of a single seat is a problem which can be remedied; but it is the duty of the Member States first to resolve this problem by taking the decision that the Treaty obliges them to take, namely the fixing of a seat for the institution. Their inaction on this point is one of the principal reasons why Parliament's budget has grown rapidly in the last few years and why increasing organisational problems are being confronted. This has had a substantial effect on staffing as well as the inevitable resultant loss in efficiency. Because the Parliament, in its new form, with many members not having the dual mandate, is implanted in three working places, more substantial facilities and important new buildings have been acquired in all three working places. For this reason rent (Chapter 20) has risen from 10 m EUA (actual expenditure) in 1979 to 23.8 m EUA in the 1981 draft budget. 2
[^0]The 'working place' component of Parliament's expenditure now approaches $15 \%$ of the total volume of the 199.3 mEUA in the draft budget.
4. Your rapporteur stresses again: this expenditure is wasteful and avoidable. But Parliament cannot be blamed for this waste - the responsibility lies with Council. So it ill behoves Council to point the finger at Parliamentary profligacy: the massive growth in Parliament's budget in the last few years is principally attributable to these problems.
5. Nonetheless, the existence of these extra complicating factors should not act as an alibi to discourage persistent scrutiny of Parliament's budget and establishment plan, to see where savings may be made and reorganisation required. Your rapporteur takes the view that the various bodies responsible for different aspects of the administration of the institution (the Bureau of Parliament, the Quaestors, the Committee on Budgets, the Bureau's working party on structures) have not as yet succeeded in grasping the nettle of reorganisation. On the one hand it has proved difficult to allocate responsibilities as betwcen these bodies: on the other hand each body, and the members composing the bodies, have many responsibilities and are not equipped with the full expertise necessary. The Secretary-General and his staff have, of course, provided valuable assistance both to your rapporteur and to the other Parliamentary bodies. It has to be said that the measures so for emerging for the restructuring of the institution have not been sufficiently radical to permit a major improvement in the functioning of Lhe institution. It may, of course, be that such an improvement cannot Lake place until the working place issue is resolved. Nonetheless, the Committee on Budgets believes that the time is now ripe for Parliament to jenefit from the advice of independent external experts as to the most appropriate structural reforms necessary for it to meet its needs.

A concrete example: the distribution service
(1. To obtain a clearer idea of these administrative problems, your I apportcur selected one key service - that which deals with the distribution , f documents and the preparation of files for Parliamentary committee meetings. He chose this service because it is central to the activities of the institution. All members are conscious of the problems that
arise when documents arrive late at committee meetings: Parliamentary work can be disrupted. In analysing the problems confronting this sector he observed that the service in fact receives documents from the translation at too late a date, that there are problems of coordination with the Directorate-General for Committees and Interparliamentary Delegations, that the service works in very cramped conditions, that the staff is not numerically sufficient to cope with the number of committees, the number of files to be prepared and the number of documents to be included in the files. Much overtime at weekends is required, particularly after sessions, to prepare the files for meetings taking place on the Monday after session weeks (as many as eight meetings per day). All the staff in the service are fully aware of these problems. Your rapporteur suggests that appropriate modifications to the existing structure should be made in an attempt to overcome some of these difficulties. The Secretary-General should report to the committee on Budgets with concrete proposals.

## The general problems confronting the administrations of the institutions

7. Many of the problems confronting Parliament's organisation are common to all the institutions. These problems have been highlighted in successive reports of the Committee on Budgets, both on the Commission's section of the budget (reports by Lord Bruce of Donington, Mr Shaw, Mr Bangemann and Mr Dankert) and on the administrative budgets of the other institutions (reports by Mr Cointat, Mr Ripamonti and Mr Robert Jackson). These reports placed the emphasis on the need for a common approach to certain key issues

- the need to reform the Staff Regulations,
- the need for greater internal and interinstitutional mobility,
- the need for a common recruitment service,
- the need for cooperation on accommodation policy and on the equipment of the institutions.

8. If we take the recruitment issue as an example, it can be seen that Parliament has called for the setting up of a common recruitment service as a medium term objective, and the organisation of common competitions in the short term, in every major budget report since 1976. The absence
of common recruitment procedures has caused much wasteful cost, particularly for the smaller institutions. For example, if, say, the Court of Auditors requires a security service official in the $B$ grade, it launches a separate recruitment procedure, even though the European Parliament may have a reserve list of security service officials. The filling of one post by external competition may cost as much as $700,000 \mathrm{BF}$. Rationalisation of these procedures is therefore vital. Furthermore, the existing procedures may cause entire competitions to be pointless: at the moment all the institutions are organising simultaneous competitions for Greek officials at the various grades. It is certain that many potential candidates will enter competitions for all the institutions. Some of the smaller institutions may find that all candidates who appear on their final list have already been taken on by the larger institutions, thus rendering the whole procedure pointless.
9. Your rapporteur understands that the heads of administration of the institutions have not yet been able to reach agreement on the necessary procedures for organising common competitions. There comes a time, however, when the political authorities must step in to help overcome administrative difficulties. Therefore, your rapporteur suggests that Parliament should authorise the Committee on Budgets and its rapporteurs to call together the heads of administration to examine these common problems and undertake the search for common solutions urgently.

The 1981 draft budget of Parliament
10. It will be recalled that in its draft estimates of revenue and 'xpenditure for 1981, adopted on 26 June 1980, the European Parliament proposed the creation of 320 permanent posts broken down as follows: 88 resulting from Greek accession, 76 for structural adjustments and 156 to take account of the increase in Parliament's activities. Sixteen temporary posts were also created, 15 of which were for the political groups. At the same time Parliament converted into permanent posts 113 temporary posts for the linguistic services. Finally Parliament converted 92 permanent posts, through regradings, to ensure equitable career development and a better structure of several services. Five temporary posts in the political groups were also regraded.
11. As regards the estimates proper, Parliament established them at 199.3 mEUA, being an increase of $12.4 \%$ over 1980 appropriations. This increase was primarily due to cover extra expenditure on the new buildings and rents, the application of the travel subsistence and secretarial allowances to members for the full twelve-month period and to pay for the new posts created.
12. In its draft budget (Volume 7 explanatory statement) Council, which respects the gentleman's agreement of mutual non-interference as regards the administrative budgets of the budgetary authorities, drew up Parliament's estimates and establishment plan unamended. Nonetheless, it permits itself to make certain remarks, the implication of which is that Council has adopted a more rigorous attitude to staff appropriations requested by the other institutions and that the attention of Parliament should be focussed on the fact that low utilisation of staff appropriations in recent years has encouraged the Council to make $\quad$ abatements in the appropriations requested for Chapters 11 and 12 for 1981 in the budget estimates of most of the other institutions.
13. Your rapporteur shares Council's view that such economies, based on the experience of previous years' budgets and their implementation, are desirable. But as he pointed out in his report ${ }^{l}$ he has already undertaken a major analysis of Parliament's estimates in the light of previous rates of spend which permitted him to reduce the estimates from the 210.8 mEUA originally proposed to 199 mEUA - a reduction of more than $5 \%$. Furthermore, in the course of this analysis he reduced 19 different articles and items, some of the reductions being very considerable indeed. Finally he suggested the reform of the presentation of the budget, making the remarks column much more transparent.
14. However, he agrees on the need to keep the level of appropriations under constant review. For this reason he asked the Administration to supply him with the latest figures on the utilisation of the 1980 budget. This reveals that at the end of September 1980, of the appropriations available at the beginning of the year (177.4 mEUA) payments made amount to 67.1 mEUA and commitments contracted to 119.3 meUA. Therefore, available appropriations (initial appropriations less commitments contracted) amount to 58.0 mEUA or $30 \%$ of the total budget ; to cover $25 \%$ of the financial year. In your rapporteur's view the rate of utilisation of the budget of Parliament for 1980 is satisfactory at loast that is the overall picture.

[^1]15. It should further be pointed out that traditionally the last quarter of the year is the most expensive for the institution (number of meetings, etc). Finally, for six months of the year the institution operated under the one-twelfth system. Contrary to what one might have expected, therefore, there is less slack in the 1980 budget than in previous years. Furthermore, there are two items where expenditure may be higher in 1981 than that envisaged in the draft budget (Article 142 'Restaurants' - where the contracts with outside firms for the new facilities in Strasbourg and Brussels may prove more expensive than budgeted for; the purchase of audiovisual equipment which may have to be postponed until 1981 because of delays in the approval of the $C l$ transfer).
16. Nonetheless, in cooperation with the appropriate administration departments, your rapporteur has proceeded to a line by line analysis of the rate of spend, and only noted one or two lines where further reductions could be made (Item 1060 'Members secretarial allowances': Item luOO 'Basic salaries of staff'). However, the potential savings are small. Furthermore, the rate of increase proposed for Parliament in the 1981 budget, in expenditure terms, is only $0.2 \%$ higher than the maximum rate of increase for non-compulsory expenditure and is less than the rate of increase proposed for the Court of Auditors and the court of Justice. Therefore, your rapporteur proposed no overall change in appropriations. The Committee on Budqets did, however, accept amendments to Items 2000 'Rents' and Article 204 'Fitting out of Premises' which would have the overall effect of decreasing appropriations by 4.1 m EUA. The inspiration for this amendment was more political than financial: to express Parliament's determination to curtail the growth of expenditure resulting from the obligation to work in 3 working places.

## Establishment plan

17. Your rapporteur made no proposals for increases in staff. He believes that the extra staff voted in the 1980 and 198 J budgets, while necessary, is sufficient to cope with the tasks assigned to the institution, provided that some rationalisation is achieved. He believes that restraint is now necessary: furthermore, the institution must be given a breathing space in which to absorb the very large number of new staff voted to cover the transformation period after direct elections.
18. In his report on the draft estimates for 1981 and in Mr Robert Jackson's report on the 1980 draft budget, the Committee on Budgets indicated its determination to overcome career blockages which have a damaging effect not only on morale but on the functioning of the institution. In some of the lower grades a competent official of long experience is obliged to seek a change of job in order to obtain promotion and career advancement. Mr Jackson used the example of the drivers service where a driver, after many years
experience, and in the D l grade, would have to change his job in order to stand any chance of access to the $C$ grade. Furthermore, drivers in particular perform an extremely valuable service for the institution and exercise very consiuerable responsibility.
19. Although the European Parliament approved some 92 regradings to ensure equitable career development, these regradings did not cover the drivers service. This was because the regulations governing the drivers conditions were undergoing review by the College of Quaestors. Your rapporteur understands that this review is now near completion and that the responsibilities of the service have by no means been diminished.
20. The Staff Regulations have been applied rather ambiguously as regards grading of officials in the different institutions. It is clear, however, that in the European Parliament the drivers service has taken on a magnitude and a significance that far exceeds driving services in the other institutions, simply because the European Parliament has 410 members entitled to facilities compared with 9 or 13 members in the other institutions.
21. Therefore in your rapporteur's view the Secretary-General should continue his work of assessing where regradings should be proposed to ensure equitable career development. In particular he should make proposals for the drivers and removal services in his report in the context of the 1982 establishment plan.
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It should be specified that because drivers would maintain the same responsibilities and functions, they should retain the specific allowances to which they are currently entitled.
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22. Finally, your rapporteur has been informed by the chairmen of the political groups that the reserve created to prevent posts being indefinitely blocked as a result of secondment to the groups from the general secretariat needs to be brought up-to-date in order to take account of changes in the administrative situation of group secretariat staff, and the extension of the group secretariats. Your rapporteur will table an amendment to this effect when he has received precise proposals from the chairmen of political groups.
23. The Committee on Budgets at its meeting of $27 / 29$ October, proposed to Parliament that the extra posts proposed for 1981 in its establishment plan (and frozen, with the necessary appropriations placed in the reserve chapter), and voted in June, be not created. This would have the effect of reducing the number of posts created proposed from 321 to 88 , the number of posts directly resulting from Greek accession. Your rapporteur has translated the wishes of the committee into the appropriate amendment. The Rules of Procedure, however, clearly stipulate that the responsibility for the establishment plan of the European Parliament is a joint one, shared by the Bureau and the Committee on Budgets: the proposal of the Committee on Budgets will, therefore, be the subject of internal consultations before final decision by Parliament. The committee also approved an amendment to create 4 IAA $7 / 6$ posts (temporary) for the institution's language teachers who currently have only auxiliary status. Finally it approved an amendment to add 1 A $7 / 6$ post to the establishment plan for the Political Affairs Committee.

## Miscellaneous questions raised by the Committee on Budgets

24. During the discussions in the Committee on Budgets various members posed questions to your rapporteur who, after consulting representatives of the Administration, has further comments and replies to make.

## (i) Members' salaries

It seems to your rapporteur that it would be inappropriate for the Committee on Budgets to prejudge in any way the results of the discussions within the Bureau and the decisions of Parliament on this sensitive matter. Only when a decision is taken can the appropriate level of appropriations be ontered in the Parliament's budgel, if indeed it is decided that Members should be paid from that budget. The Bureau's working party on this question should bear in mind the need for restraint in the provisional arrangements made and should seek to overcome any of the particular problems confronting Members with ad hoc measures rather than further generalized allowances. In this context, the committee on Budqets approved an amendment for constituency travel for Members: this allowance, however, should only be paid out on the basis of justifying documentation. Those Members who benefit from national travel facilities would then not be eligible for this allowance.

## (ii) Reserves in Title 1

Various members expressed surprise that contingency reserves existed within Title ], as well as the customary reserve chapters of 100 and 101. In fact, these reserves (Article 109 'Provisional appropriations to cover any adjustments to the emoluments of members of the European Parliament": 4.5 mEUA, and Article 119 'Provisional appropriations to cover any adjustments to the remuneration of officials and other servants ' : 5.5 mEUA ) are to be found in the budgets of all the institutions. This arrangement seems to your rapporteur to be coherent and sensible given that the Staff Regulations of the European Community envisage a salary review every six months.

## (iii) Visits programme

Questions were posed as to whether the appropriations for Item $299^{\circ}$ (],472,000 EUA) to cover subsidies and financial contributions towards the cost of group visits, were sufficient to cater for visitors from Greece. Your rapporteur understands from the Administration that the full membership of Greece in 1981 had been taken into account by the department concerned.

## (iv) Voting machine in Luxembourg

On 25 April 1979 the Bureau decided to override a Committee on Budgets opinion of 24 April and to proceed to purchase a voting machine. A call to tender had already been issued by the Administration (OJ 7 February 1979). 'The Purchasing Committee, which is consulted on all these calls to tender, made its choice on 26 April 1979. It will be seen from the dates that much liaste had been made by the Administration once the Committee on Budgets' position had been disavowed by the Bureau. It will only be known during the part-session at which this report will be examined, whether or not the machines work. The total cost of the installation in Luxembourg amounts to approximately 25 million $B F$ (including certain extensions of the scheme) which have been nearly all committed and paid: the system, however, is under yuarantee for a further six months.
(v) The car pool

The European Parliament currently disposes of a car pool of 42 : vehicles (including 8 large vehicles and 1 minibus with 17 places). This pool is managed by 3 officials - there being 28 chauffeurs. The rules "overning who has the right to the use of these vehicles and for what purposes were decided by the Quaestors at their meeting of 29 May 1978. 'These rules are currently being reviewed by the Quaestors who have consulted the services concerned. Priority is being given to the transport of members to and from airports nearest to the meeting places of the institution.

## Conclusions

25. The Committee on Budgets believes that progress must now be made on three fronts in order to gain a grip on the expenditure of the institution and on its organizational structure;
(i) the Council must be strongly encouraged to determine the working place of the institution in order to eliminate waste and inefficiency;
(ii) all the competent bodies of the institution must keep the organizational structure under review to make proposals for the necessary structural reform, on the basis of independent advice from expert external bodies;
(iii) the Committee on Budgets should be mandated to make contact with the heads of administration of all the institutions in order to accelerate the work on the finding of common solutions to common problems - such as recruitment.

In this context, the Committee on Budgets proposes to the Bureau and to Parliament further measures to reinforce the stringency necessary as regards Parliament's draft budget by foregoing the creation of all the new non-Greek posts voted in the 1981 estimates, and by further cutting back on certain budgetary lines

Deliberations of the Committee on Budgets at its meeting of 29 October 1980
NOMENCLATURE
POSITION GF COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

xs table its own amendment to indicate that the allowance would be paid on the basis of justifying docs.

$=$ POSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS




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[^0]:    1 Doc. 1-459/79.
    2 Furthermore, the reserves in Chapters 100 and 101, totalling 6.3 mEUA , may have to be mobilised to meet rapidly escalating rent costs.

[^1]:    ${ }^{1}$ Doc. $1-276 / 80$.

