

For debate in the Standing Committee — see Rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure

Doc. 11279  
30 April 2007

## Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2008 financial year

Report  
Committee on Economic Affairs and Development  
Rapporteur: Mr Paul WILLE, Belgium, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)

### A. Draft opinion

1. In pursuance of Resolution (53) 38 of the Committee of Ministers and Rule 24 of the Financial Regulations, the Parliamentary Assembly issues an opinion each year about the appropriations relating to its operation. The amounts allocated to the Assembly appear in Vote III of the Ordinary Budget of the Council of Europe, and these cover expenditure on staff, the costs associated with the functioning of its political groups and its own operating expenses, including the interparliamentary co-operation programme.

2. Since June 1975, the Committee of Ministers has allowed the budgetary package technique to be applied to that part of the Assembly's budget covering its operating costs. It has agreed that "the development of the Assembly's budget – which is an operating budget – cannot be linked with that of the Organisation as a whole, whose evolution often depends on decisions connected with the Organisation's work programme, and also on factors totally extraneous to operational expenditure which play their part in the annual variation of the budget total".

3. In its opinion on its 2007 expenditure, the Assembly agreed to a significant reduction of € 107 700. However, when it adopted the 2007 budget the Committee of Ministers imposed an additional cut of nearly € 190 000. After taking account of inflation and adjustments to the appropriations for permanent staff salaries, this resulted in a real reduction in operational expenditure of over € 300 000.

4. The Assembly regrets that these last minute reductions for 2007, which specifically affected certain elements of its operating budget (interpretation, translation and official journeys), were imposed on it without prior consultation or discussion.

5. The Assembly wishes to point out that in the case of its operating budget, which constitutes an overall package and has been acknowledged as such by the Committee of Ministers, it alone is in a position to make the adjustments necessary to achieve the total level of expenditure imposed by the Committee of Ministers.

6. The Assembly cannot accept the double speak of member states' governments, which loudly proclaim their total commitment to Council of Europe principles and then elect to finance the growing needs of the European Court of Human Rights by reducing the Organisation's machinery for co-operation, together with that of the Parliamentary Assembly. Such a policy could permanently weaken the organisation and upset the financial and operational balance between the various institutions of the Council of Europe.

7. The Assembly is the Council of Europe's democratic conscience and has been the moving force behind its main legal instruments. Its debates, its election observation missions, its procedure for monitoring compliance with the obligations and commitments entered into by European states when they join the organisation and its activities in the field of interparliamentary co-operation have made a major contribution to the Council of Europe's visibility. In view of its acknowledged role, it cannot accept the Committee of Ministers' current approach whereby expenditure arising from previous decisions is financed from a reduction in its own budget, and thus in its scope for action.

8. The Assembly regrets the unresponsive attitude of the Committee of Ministers in its reply to the Assembly's Recommendations 1728 (2005) on the budgetary powers of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and 1763 (2006) on the institutional balance at the Council of Europe and cannot accept the lack of clear answers to its calls for a better institutional balance between the Council of Europe's political bodies, and in particular its rejection of any changes to its budgetary powers.

9. Indeed, in a situation as difficult as that currently faced by the Council of Europe, and bearing in mind the progress made by other international parliamentary institutions in this area, the Assembly believes that its powers regarding the adoption of the Council of Europe budget must be strengthened, particularly as far as its own appropriations are concerned.

10. The Assembly will only be able to fulfil its role of monitoring compliance with democratic standards and rules if it is granted the necessary resources.

11. In 2008, the Assembly will continue its monitoring procedures and fact-finding missions in several member states, the observation of elections in states that are subject to the monitoring or post-monitoring procedure, the interparliamentary co-operation programme and the part of the programme concerned with training parliamentary officials of Council of Europe member states and of other parliamentary institutions.

12. It is also planned, with the agreement of the European Union's European Reconstruction Agency, to continue the co-operation programme to support parliamentary institutions in Serbia and in Montenegro, 90% of which is financed by the Agency and 10% by a Council of Europe contribution, divided equally between the Assembly and Vote II of the activities programme.

13. The Assembly will also continue to co-operate closely with other European parliamentary assemblies, such as the European Parliament and those of the OSCE and CIS. As every year, a number of events are planned. Meanwhile, Assembly committees will hold several thematic hearings and conferences in 2008, including three or four major conferences, while the Sub-Committee on the Middle East will continue its co-operation with representatives of the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council, in accordance with Resolution 1420 (2005) of the Assembly.

14. Finally, in addition to the regular activities referred to above, the Assembly's 2008 work programme includes a conference of speakers and presidents of European parliamentary assemblies in Strasbourg, of which it will be meeting the entire cost. The conference has been held every two years since 1975, under the auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly.

15. The Assembly refers the Committee of Ministers to its previous opinions, in particular 249 (2004) and 257 (2005), in which it drew attention to its staffing needs to be able to carry out its tasks and responsibilities and the reasons why its budget should not be reduced.

16. It has made major efforts to cope with the reduction in its appropriation in 2007. It now believes that it has reached a minimum level of funding below which it cannot agree to go, if its activities are to retain any credibility.

17. The Assembly considers that its 2008 budget must be maintained at the same level as in 2007 (with the imposed budget cuts reincorporated) in real terms (not including adjustment for inflation), to enable it to carry on its activities, fulfil its responsibilities as laid down in the Statute of the Council of Europe and continue to play an important role among the other European parliamentary institutions.

18. The Assembly is the Organisation's parliamentary body and political forum and makes a significant contribution to its democratic legitimacy. As such it must also bring its equipment into line with modern communication requirements. It therefore asks the Committee of Ministers to make one of the Assembly investment priorities in 2008 the replacement of the vote display panels by two large-format video walls, composed of plasma screens without borders, as proposed in opinions Nos. 257 (2005) and 260 (2006) and not included in the 2007 budget.

19. Installing these video walls will benefit the Council since the plasma screens will increase the potential uses of the Assembly Chamber by offering facilities for videoconferences and other large screen presentations. The new technologies involved have considerably reduced the cost of the investment and the Assembly hopes that its request will be given rapid effect and treated as a priority in the revised investment proposals for 2008-2012.

20. In conclusion, the Assembly feels more strongly than ever that the Committee of Ministers should grant it the budgetary powers to match its parliamentary and political status and considers that the Council's overall expenditure level should be set by agreement between itself and the Committee of Ministers.

21. Finally, the amendment to Article 38 of the Statute requested in Opinion No. 260 (2006) remains one of the objectives it wishes to see achieved.

Appended to this opinion are:

i. a table of the requests for 2008 compared with the estimated expenditure for 2007, presented according to the results-based budgeting (RBB) method, which has led the secretariat of the Assembly to divide the budget into two activity sectors:

- a. plenary sessions;
- b. functioning of the Assembly's various bodies.

Expenditure is similarly itemised in each sector;

- ii. a brief explanation of the various items of expenditure;
- iii. a table setting out the Assembly's work programme according to the RBB method.

## Appendix I

<b>VOTE III of the ordinary budget – Expenditure of the Assembly</b>  TITRE III DU BUDGET ORDINAIRE – DEPENSES RELATIVES A L'ASSEMBLEE	<b>Appropriations for 2008</b> <b>Crédits ouverts au budget de 2008</b>  <b>EUROS</b>	<b>Expenditure foreseen for 2007</b> <b>Dépenses prévues pour 2007</b>  <b>EUROS</b>
<b>HEAD 0310 – Sessions plénières</b> <b>CHAPITRE 0310 –Plenary Sessions</b>		
<u>Dépenses de personnel/Staff expenditure</u>		
Sub-heads/Articles		
0000001 - Remuneration of staff recruited on established posts Rémunération du personnel recruté dans le cadre des emplois permanents	1 472 300	1 454 600
0000003 - Remuneration and accessory charges of temporary staff Rémunération et charges accessoires du personnel temporaire	831 700	831 700
0000005 - Salary, allowances and social charges of the Secretary General of the Assembly Rémunération, indemnités et charges sociales du Secrétaire Général de l'Assemblée	71 900	71 900
0000007 - Overtime – statutory and other allowances Heures supplémentaires – indemnités statutaires et autres	p.m.	p.m.
<u>Supplies, services and other operational expenditure</u> <u>Dépenses de matériel et autres dépenses de fonctionnement</u>		
Sub-heads/Articles		
0000080 - Official journeys Frais de missions.....	-	-
0000095 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly / Dépenses de représentation, frais de fonction et de déplacement des Membres de l'Assemblée.....	30 000	30 000
0000115 - Interpretation Interprétation.....	1 039 700	1 039 700
0000116 - Translation Traduction.....	169 200	169 200
0000124 - Publishing and printing Publications et impressions.....	450 000	450 000
0000125 – Outsourced production of documents Production externalisée de documents	28 600	28 600
0000129 - Consultation of experts.....	119 200	119 200
0000166 - Expenses for inviting guests of the Parliamentary Assembly Dépenses d'accueil des invités de l'Assemblée parlementaire.....	3 600	3 600
0000204 - Modernisation of the Assembly's equipment Modernisation de l'équipement de l'Assemblée.....	p.m.	p.m.
0000206 - Operating and maintenance costs of the electronic voting system Coûts de maintenance et d'exploitation du vote électronique.....	42 900	42 900
0000250 - Co-operation and monitoring programme Programme de coopération et du suivi des engagements .....	p.m.	p.m.
0000392 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote Autres dépenses non spécialement prévues au présent titre.....	15 000	15 000
<b>TOTAL HEAD 0310</b> <b>TOTAL DU CHAPITRE 0310.....</b>	<b>4 274 500</b>	<b>4 256 400</b>

<b>HEAD 0311 – Functioning of the Assembly's various bodies</b>		
<b>CHAPITRE 0311 – Fonctionnement des diverses instances de l'Assemblée</b>		
<u>Dépenses de personnel/Staff expenditure</u>		
Sub-heads/Articles		
0000001 - Remuneration of staff recruited on established posts Rémunération du personnel recruté dans le cadre des emplois permanents .....	6 736 700	6 577 400
0000003 - Remuneration and accessory charges of temporary staff Rémunération et charges accessoires du personnel temporaire.....	410 800	410 800
0000005 - Salary, allowances and social charges of the Secretary General of the Assembly Rémunération, indemnités et charges sociales du Secrétaire Général de l'Assemblée .....	167 600	167 600
0000013 - Secondment of national civil servants to the Assembly Fonctionnaires nationaux mis à disposition de l'Assemblée.....	61 000	61 000
0000016 - Recruitment, arrival and departure expenses – Home leave Frais de recrutement à l'arrivée et au départ – congé dans le pays d'origine .....	31 200	31 200
<u>Supplies, services and other operational expenditure</u>		
<u>Dépenses de matériel et autres dépenses de fonctionnement</u>		
Sub-heads/Articles		
0000054 – Equipement .....	2 700	2 700
0000080 - Official journeys Frais de missions.....	341 500	341 500
0000095 - Representational expenditure, other official expenditure and travelling expenses of members of the Assembly / Dépenses de représentation, frais de fonction et de déplacement des Membres de l'Assemblée.....	159 000	159 000
0000115 - Interpretation Interprétation.....	996 400	996 400
0000116 - Translation Traduction.....	353 600	353 600
0000124 - Publishing and printing Publications et impressions.....	161 100	161 100
0000125 – Outsourced production of documents Production externalisée de documents	14 700	10 800
0000129 - Consultation of experts Consultation d'experts.....	56 900	56 900
0000162 - Expenditure pertaining to the Private Office of the President of the Assembly / Dépenses du Cabinet du Président de l'Assemblée.....	110 600	110 600
0000163 - Official expenses of the President of the Assembly Frais de fonction du Président de l'Assemblée.....	123 700	123 700
0000166 - Expenses for inviting guests of the Parliamentary Assembly Dépenses d'accueil des invités de l'Assemblée parlementaire.....	p.m.	p.m.
0000171 - Organisation of ad hoc conferences Organisation de conférences ad hoc.....	112 400	112 400
0000203 - Forum for the future of Democracy Forum pour l'avenir de la démocratie.....	21 600	21 600
0000204 - Modernisation of the Assembly's equipment Modernisation de l'équipement de l'Assemblée.....	p.m.	p.m.

0000205 - European prizes Prix européens.....	80 100	80 100
0000250 - Co-operation and monitoring programme Programme de coopération et du suivi des engagements .....	725 600	725 600
0000370 – Allocation to Assembly’s political groups Dotation des groupes politiques de l’Assemblée.....	700 600	700 600
0000392 - Other expenditure not specifically provided for in this vote Autres dépenses non spécialement prévues au présent titre.....	64 300	59 300
<b>TOTAL HEAD 0303</b> <b>TOTAL DU CHAPITRE 0303.....</b>	<b>11 432 100</b>	<b>11 263 900</b>
<b>TOTAL VOTE III</b> <b>TOTAL DU TITRE III.....</b>	<b>15 706 600</b>	<b>15 520 300</b>

## Appendix II

### VOTE III - EXPENDITURE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

#### HEADS 0310 and 0311 – STAFF

These heads cover the basic salaries, allowances (non-recurring and periodic) and social cover of the permanent staff of the secretariat of the Assembly (87 posts), and those of temporary staff. Staff expenditure has been broken down into the Assembly's two sectors of activity: plenary sessions and the functioning of its various bodies.

The Assembly currently has 10 committees, 9 of which have 83 members (with 83 alternates), while the 10th has 51 (with 51 alternates). On 1 January 2007, the secretariat comprised 87 permanent posts and one specially-appointed official, divided as follows:

1 specially appointed		
1 A7	1 B6	1 C4
2 A6	4 B5	
11 A5	16 B4	
10 A4	13 B3	
21 A2/A3	7 B2	

The Assembly remains convinced that, to be fully operational, each of the nine 83-member committees needs four A-grade staff members (one A5 head of secretariat, one A4 secretary and two A2/A3 co-secretaries), one B4 administrative assistant and one B2/B3 official. The 51-member committee needs two A-grade staff members (one A4 secretary and one A2/A3 co-secretary), one B4 administrative assistant and one B2/B3 official. This structure means that the 10 Assembly committees should have a total of 58 members of staff (38 A-grades and 20 B-grades).

At present, the secretariat of the Assembly is organised so that the 10 Assembly committees have 50 staff members (30 A-grade and 20 B-grade) working for them. Thus there is a shortfall of 8 A-grade staff for these committees.

The remaining 37 staff members work for the Bureau of the Assembly, the Private Office of the President of the Assembly, the Table Office and the interparliamentary co-operation and election observation, parliamentary assistance, administration, human resources and finance, communication, information technology and research and documentation units.

The current establishment table, however, does not allow the Secretary General of the Assembly to redeploy the Assembly's permanent staff in order to achieve the desired structure. In fact, some of the hardest-worked committees and units have experienced difficulties caused by the increased tasks and responsibilities resulting from their enlarged membership, their heavier workload and the political sensitivity of the subjects under consideration. The Assembly therefore requests the transfer or the establishment of 2 or 3 A2/A3 posts for the Secretariat of the Assembly.

#### HEAD 0310 & 0311 - SUPPLIES, SERVICES AND OTHER OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE

Since 1975, following a decision by the Committee of Ministers, the allocations under these heads have been voted in the form of a single appropriation, which continues to be divided into sub-heads. If the Assembly wishes 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 is effected by the Secretary General at the Assembly's request and in accordance with Article 31 of the Financial Regulations. Since 2005, and the adoption for the entire Organisation of a results-based budget, which has no effect at all on the above-mentioned decision, all operational expenditure of the Assembly, namely co-operation and monitoring programmes, publications, interpretation, translation, official journeys, experts, conferences, European prizes and so on, has been set out under Heads 0310 and 0311, corresponding to the new sector-based presentation of the Parliamentary Assembly's activities. The first activity sector comprises expenditure related to the four

Assembly part-sessions, while the second covers the operational expenditure of the Assembly's various bodies.

In 2008, the Assembly will continue its monitoring procedures in several member states, the interparliamentary co-operation programme and the part of the programme concerned with training parliamentary officials of Council of Europe member states and of other parliamentary institutions. It is also planned, with the agreement of the European Reconstruction Agency, to extend the co-operation programme to support parliamentary institutions in Serbia and in Montenegro, 90% of which is financed by the Agency and 10% by a Council of Europe contribution.

The Assembly committees will continue to organise several thematic hearings and conferences. Three or four major conferences are held each year. The Assembly will also continue to co-operate closely with other European parliamentary assemblies, such as the European Parliament and those of the OSCE and CIS.

In addition, pursuant to Resolution 1420 (2005) on prospects for peace in the Middle East and 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.

Finally, in its Opinion No. 260 (2006), the Assembly emphasised that its investment priorities should be included in the Council of Europe's future investment plans.

It wishes to reaffirm these priorities, with particular attention being given to the replacement of the vote display panels, located on either side of the presidential rostrum facing the Chamber, by two large-format video walls, composed of plasma screens without borders. This highly effective system can be used to project the image of the speaker or the invited guests and display the results of votes, or for television presentations and videoconferences. Such facilities would increase the potential uses of the Assembly Chamber and benefit the Organisation as a whole.

Finally, the Assembly notes for the record that the President's desk and the rostrum, which are no longer suited to the Assembly's needs, should be completely refurbished.

#### **HEAD 0311 - ALLOCATION TO THE ASSEMBLY'S POLITICAL GROUPS**

Sub-head 0000370 – Allocation to the Assembly's political groups

The allocation to the political groups is based on a lump sum for secretarial assistance to each of the existing groups and an additional per capita allocation according to membership.



## Appendix III

<b>Plenary sessions</b>			
<b>Intervention logic</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Activity area objective</b> The Parliamentary Assembly is able to fulfil its statutory tasks			
<b>Expected Result 1</b> Complete the preparatory work of part-sessions	The part-session order of business and the reports are sent out two weeks before the start of the session. For each debate, the date and the time for the tabling of amendments are specified	Part-session calendar Feedback from MPs	Administrative support from secretaries of national delegations and political groups
<b>Expected Result 2</b> The Table Office ensures the efficient conduct of proceedings	Amendments are published in the 2 official languages within 4 hours of being tabled. Adopted amendments are published in the 2 languages within 4 hours of their adoption. A minimum of 50% of registered speakers are given the floor.	Part-session calendar Availability of texts and amendments in the distribution room for each debate Reports of debates List of speakers Feedback from MPs	Administrative support from secretaries of national delegations and political groups
<b>Expected Result 3</b> Adopted texts are transmitted to the bodies concerned	Proposals for the follow-up of adopted texts are ready and submitted to the Bureau of the Assembly for its meeting on the last day of the part-session.	Minutes of the Bureau Transmission of letters to the bodies concerned	

<b>Functioning of the Assembly's various bodies.</b>			
<b>Intervention logic</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>	<b>Sources of verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Activity area objective</b> Ensure the smooth functioning of the Assembly's various bodies			
<b>Expected Result 1</b> Committee meetings, seminars and conferences are efficiently organised	Meeting agendas, relevant documents and reports are ready for distribution on time	Minutes of committee meetings Proceedings of seminars and conferences	Ongoing political support from members of relevant committees
<b>Expected Result 2</b> The President of the Assembly receives efficient and effective assistance	Number of speeches, press releases and official visits prepared for the President	List of speeches, press releases and official visits	
<b>Expected Result 3</b> Co-operation with national parliaments is further developed	Level of satisfaction of beneficiary national parliaments Quality of the co-operation offered	Annual report prepared by the Secretariat and submitted for endorsement to the Bureau of the Assembly	Compliance with basic political standards necessary for establishing co-operation
<b>Expected Result 4</b> The Assembly's 5 political groups are provided with resources	Timely provision of financial resources	Annual report by the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development on the use of the appropriations by the Assembly's 5 political groups	Annual financial statements are submitted by the Assembly's 5 political groups
<b>Expected Result 5</b> Raising of the Assembly's external profile	Media coverage of the Assembly's activities Number of visitors to the Assembly's website	International and European press and news media The Assembly's website	

## B. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Paul Wille, Rapporteur

1. This report analyses Vote III of the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe, and particularly the appropriations to the Assembly to cover expenditure on staff, costs associated with the functioning of the political groups, supplies, services and other operational outlay and the financing of the Organisation's interparliamentary co-operation programme. This choice of topics means that the common services of the Council of Europe, which form an integral part of the Assembly's operations, are not discussed here. For example, Vote III does not cover telephone bills, office supplies and equipment or other consumables, which are items of expenditure common to all the Organisation's departments.

2. The Rapporteur has therefore concentrated on proposals for the Assembly's allocation for the year 2008, in accordance with existing budgetary procedures. As in previous years, the Assembly leaves it to the Directorate of Finance to assess, in due course, the adjustments to its allocation that are being or will be made for 2007 as a result of changes in salary scales, their implications for 2008 and the provision that needs to be made for salary adjustments in 2008. Similarly, it is for the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to adjust the other allocations in due course to take account of inflation.

3. The Rapporteur wishes to restate that the Assembly's major tasks, which shape its programme of activities, are:

- its four-part plenary sessions;
- meetings of the Bureau and the Standing Committee between the Assembly part-sessions;
- meetings in either Strasbourg or Paris, lasting one or more days at times other than the four part-sessions of the Assembly, for each of the ten general committees, the sub-committees, the Bureau's *ad hoc* Committees, and specialised working parties;
- 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;
- election observation;
- the work of the political groups.

4. Having examined the Assembly's *modus operandi* and current structure, the Rapporteur wishes to draw attention to its general strategy of having 58 staff members to service its 10 parliamentary committees, since the present structure of committee secretariats may well prove inadequate to maintain quality of work and the ability, essential in a political body, to respond efficiently and rapidly to unforeseen events. Firstly, internal restructuring has added to the workload of the Assembly's committees, which are currently served by only 50 staff members. Secondly, the Organisation's enlarged membership has increased the tasks and responsibilities of the Assembly's Secretariat, which is hard pressed and under strength.

5. In particular, the Rapporteur believes that certain committees – Political Affairs, Legal Affairs and Human Rights and Monitoring – and units (such as 'Communications') should be given long term reinforcement through a redeployment or creation of 2 or 3 A2/A3 permanent posts to the Assembly Secretariat.

6. The Assembly has made major efforts to cope with a reduction of € 300 000 in its operating budget. The current financial difficulties must not serve as an excuse to jeopardise the smooth functioning of the Organisation's parliamentary body, which defends the interests of all the member states, particularly by fostering parliamentary democracy, political pluralism and respect for human rights.

7. The Assembly's 2007 budget, as agreed by the Committee of Ministers, represents a minimum level of funding below which it cannot fall, if it is to carry out its tasks and responsibilities properly. The Rapporteur therefore opposes any attempts to reduce the Assembly's operating budget and presents a draft budget for 2008 at the same level as in 2007 in real terms (before the imposed budget cut of € 186 300) which means € 15 706 600, that is before taking into account the inflation rate and salary adjustments for 2008. The appropriations are broken down as follows:

Permanent and temporary staff:	€ 9 783 600
Interpretation:	€ 2 036 100
Translation:	€ 522 800
Printing of documents:	€ 654 400
Allocation to political groups:	€ 700 600
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Sub total:	€ 13 697 500
Activities:	€ 2 009 100
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General total	€ 15 706 600

8. Of the Assembly priorities for investment in the coming years, as identified in opinions 249 (2004) and 257 (2005), the Rapporteur considers that the most important is the replacement of the vote display panels by two large-format video walls, the costs of which have fallen considerably. Their installation would improve television coverage of all the events taking place in the Chamber and greater benefit could be reaped from the opportunities this unique conference location has to offer. The Rapporteur would therefore like this investment to be included in the Council of Europe's investment plan for 2008-2012.

9. Before concluding, the Rapporteur wishes to point out that Appendix III presents the Assembly's activities according to the results-based budgeting method now used for all Council of Europe budgets. The Assembly's budget is divided into two activity sectors. The first corresponds to the organisation and running of plenary sessions (Head 0310) and the second to the functioning of the various Assembly bodies (Head 0311). Each of these heads includes staff and operational expenditure. For each activity sector, an objective has been identified and represents what it is proposed to achieve, and for each objective a number of expected results have been defined, as well as performance indicators, sources of verification and, lastly, any eventualities that might prevent the expected results from being achieved.

10. The Rapporteur nevertheless remains sceptical as to the value of such a system, especially where the Parliamentary Assembly is concerned. At the Budget Committee's request, and with the assistance of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation, the Assembly secretariat has carried out a survey of member states' parliaments to determine whether such a system is used by national parliaments. More than twenty parliaments answered the survey, and only one, the Lithuanian Seimas, said that it had adopted a budgetary method similar to that of the Council of Europe. The British House of Commons has a management plan based on a five-year strategy with defined objectives. However, neither system includes performance indicators. The presentation of the Assembly system is based on that used by the House of Commons. Such a system can be useful in so far as it sets objectives for the Assembly secretariat concerning the smooth running of plenary sessions and of the various Assembly bodies. However the results and how they are assessed depend above all on the members themselves, since the secretariat's role is to make sure that the Parliamentary Assembly operates efficiently and correctly in accordance with the Council's Statute and the expectations of its members.

*Reporting committee:* Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

*Reference to committee:* Standing mandate

*Draft opinion* unanimously adopted by the Committee on 17 April 2007

*Members of the Committee:* Mr Konstantinos **Vrettos** (Chairperson), Mrs Antigoni **Papadopoulos** (Vice-Chairperson), Mr Márton Braun (Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Doris **Barnett** (Vice-Chairperson), MM. Ruhi **Açikgöz**, Ulrich **Adam**, Hans **Ager**, Mrs Edita **Angyalova**, Mr Abdülkadir **Ateş**, Mrs Veronika Bellmann, MM. Akhmed Bilalov, Vidar **Bjørnstad**, Jaime Blanco, Luuk Blom, Luc Van den Brande, Patrick Breen, Gianpiero Carlo Cantoni, Mrs Cornelia Cazacu, MM. Erol Aslan Cebeci, Ivané Chkhartishvili, Valeriu **Cosarciuc**, Ignacio Cosidó, Ioannis **Dragassakis**, Joan Albert **Farré Santuré**, Relu **Fenechiu**, Mrs Urszula **Gacek**, MM. Carles **Gasóliba**, Zahari **Georgiev**, Francis **Grignon**, Nick Harvey (Alternate: Mr James **Clappison**), Norbert **Hauptert**, Željko Ivanji, Ivan **Ivanov**, Mrs Danuta **Jazlowiecka**, Mr Miloš Jeftić, Ms Dagný Jónsdóttir, MM. Karen Karapetyan, Albrecht **Konecny**, Anatoliy **Korobeynikov**, Oleksiy Kunchenko, Serhiy **Klyuev**, Jean-Marie Le Guen, Harald Leibrecht, Ms Anna **Lilliehöök**, MM. Arthur Loepfe, Rune Lund, David Marshall (Alternate: Mr Tony **Lloyd**), Jean-Pierre Masseret, Ruzhdi Matoshi, Miloš **Melčák**, José **Mendes Bota**, Attila Mesterházy, Mrs Ljiljana Milićević, MM. Neven **Mimica**, Gebhard **Negele**, Bujar Nishani, Mrs Ganira Pashayeva (Alternate: Mr Sabir **Hajiyev**), MM. Manfred **Pinzger**, Mrs Liudmila **Pirozhnikova**, MM. Claudio Podeschi, Jakob **Presečnik**, Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando, Maximilian Reimann, Mrs Maria **de Belém Roseira**, MM. Kimmo Sasi (Alternate: Mr Markku **Laukkanen**), Bernard **Schreiner**, Samad Seyidov, Mrs Sabina **Siniscalchi**, MM. Giannicola Sinisi, Leonid Slutsky, Ms Geraldine Smith (Alternate: Mr Bob **Laxton**), Mr Christophe Spiliotis-Saquet, Mrs Aldona **Staponkienė**, MM. Stanislav Stashevskiy, Vjaceslavs **Stepanenko**, Han Ten Broeke, Frans Björn von Sydow, Oldřich Vojtř (Alternate: Mr Ladislav **Skopal**), Varujan Vosganian, Robert **Walter**, Paul **Wille**, Tadeusz **Wita**.

N.B: The names of the members who took part in the meeting are printed in **bold**

*Head of Secretariat:* Mr Newman

*Secretaries to the committee:* Ms Ramanauskaite and Mr de Buyer