

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1981 - 1982

30 October 1981

DOCUMENT 1-659/81

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgets

on Section V - Court of Auditors - of the
draft general budget of the European
Communities for the financial year 1982

Rapporteur: Mr V. ANSQUER

On 25 May 1981 the Committee on Budgets appointed Mr ANSQUER rapporteur on Section V 'Court of Auditors' of the draft general budget of the European Communities for 1982.

At its meeting of 19-21 October 1981 the committee considered and adopted the draft amendments annexed hereto.

At its meeting of 28 October it considered and adopted the following motion for a resolution by 17 votes in favour.

Present: Mr Lange, chairman; Mr Notenboom, 1st vice-chairman; Mr Ansquer, rapporteur; Mr Adonnino, Mr Baillot, Mr Balfe, Mr Balfour, Mr Fich, Mr Habsburg, Mr Helms (deputizing for Mr Lega), Mr Howell, Mr Langes, Mr Newton Dunn, Mr Nord, Mr Pfennig, Mr Price, Mr Saby, Mr Konrad Schön, Mrs Scrivener and Mr Simonnet.

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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 Section V 'Court of Auditors' of the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1982

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft general budget for the financial year 1982, as prepared by the Council (Section V 'Court of Auditors'), and to the Council's explanatory memorandum (Doc. 550/81),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 1-659/81),
 - (a) whereas, consequent upon Parliament's deliberations on the 1980 and 1981 budgets, the number of staff employed at the Court has reached a satisfactory level overall,
 - (b) whereas, therefore, the few additional requests made for 1982, although justified, must not initiate a departure from this position,
 - (c) whereas, on the other hand, the Council has failed to give any precise explanation of its decision to reject the Court of Auditor's requests for posts and whereas, moreover, the fact that certain available posts have not yet been filled cannot be taken into account, since the posts in question are considered essential to the structure of the Court's Secretariat,
1. Decides to strengthen the establishment plan of the Court, but enjoins that Institution not to make requests for new posts when the draft budget for 1983 is submitted;
 2. Acknowledges the validity of the Court's requests concerning the need to increase the appropriations set aside for mission expenses, consultations and studies and vocational training; considers, however, that only the appropriations earmarked for mission expenses should be increased and that those needed to strengthen the 'consultation and studies' and 'vocational training' lines can be drawn from the overall amount of the appropriations entered in the draft budget;
 3. Approves the draft budget for the Court, which entails an increase (9.3%) that is lower than the rate of increase of non-compulsory expenditure established by the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTESTABLISHMENT PLANIntroduction

1. Pursuing a policy based on the budgets for two years (1980 and 1981), Parliament helped provide the Court with an establishment plan which fitted in well with the structure it had evolved for exercising its function as the organ of external control of the financial activities of the Communities. The Council, for its part, while rejecting - at least initially - the Court's requests, did not offer any opposition to the budgetary decisions adopted by Parliament in 1981. However, in the resolution embodying the decisions taken by Parliament in 1981, it was made clear that a number of posts requested for that year - notably, a few posts still bound up with the consequences of Greece's accession to the Community (1 A5, 1 B1, 1 B2) - had been 'put to one side' and would be taken into account during the examination of the draft budget for 1982.

The Court's requests for 1982

2. The Court felt that it was justified in requesting 10 new posts for 1982. The Council has granted it, albeit on a temporary basis, the A5 post requested, which leaves the following 9 requests:

- 1 B1 post for an official to carry out administrative tasks in the language service (this is one of the four posts requested but not granted in 1981). This post would be allocated to a service with the following existing staff complement: 1 LA3, 7 LA4, 7 LA5, 9 LA6, 8 LA7 and 15 C.
- 1 B2 post for an official to audit the accounting operations of the Social Fund and the ESCS (this post was also requested in 1981 in connection with the enlargement of the Community, but not granted). The existing staff complement of the ESCS, Social Fund and Borrowing and Lending sectors is as follows: 1 A3, 2 A4, 2 A5, 4 A6/7, 6 B and 2 C.
- 4 LA posts (2 LA6 and 2 LA7) for the assignment of extra officials to the Danish, Italian, Dutch and Greek sections of the language service. In the light of its translation requirements, the Court feels that there is at present an imbalance between the other translation sections and the 4 mentioned above. This imbalance causes delays and considerable difficulties which threaten the smooth functioning of the entire language service which, as we have already seen, is numerically very small.

- 3 C3 posts which are closely linked to the posts requested above and are needed to cope with work of a clerical nature.

With these posts, the Court's establishment plan would be expanded to include a total of 284 members of staff, i.e. nine more than in 1981.

APPROPRIATIONS

3. In its explanatory statement in Section V of the preliminary draft budget, the Court made it clear that it 'wishes to show the utmost caution in drawing up its requests for appropriations'. It nevertheless proposed an increase of 10.85% (equivalent to 265,313 ECU) in operating expenditure, drawing attention to the existence of factors that made such an increase inevitable. The increase proposed for expenditure on staff remuneration was 13.4%. Here, however, the Court had calculated its requirements on the basis of an outlay corresponding to 6 months' salary for new staff and, as in other institutions, by applying a standard abatement of 5% to all appropriations connected with staff salaries. On the basis of the Court's proposals, its budget would have risen to 16,516,150 ECU, representing an increase of 1,751,335 ECU, or 11.8% against its budget allocation for 1981 (14,764,815 ECU).

4. The Council has reduced the total expenditure proposed in the preliminary draft budget to 16,133,290 ECU, which represents an increase of 9.27% on the 1981 allocation.

REQUESTS MADE BY THE COURT TO PARLIAMENT

5. The Court has drawn the attention of the Committee on Budgets to the need to increase certain appropriations reduced by the Council, particularly for the following budget lines:

- Item 1301 Mission expenses
- Article 260 Limited consultations, studies and surveys
- Chapter 24 Expenditure on formal and other meetings
- Chapter 15 Language courses and vocational training.

As regards mission expenses, the Court points out that the Council has fixed the relevant appropriation at 350,000 ECU, whereas in 1981 the resources available to the Court were greater: an appropriation of 350,000 ECU for the financial year, plus non-automatic carry-overs amounting to 50,000 ECU; the Court's request is for 470,000 ECU.

As regards limited consultations, studies and surveys, the Court requested entry in the budget of the appropriation of 50,000 ECU frozen in 1981, but the Council has accepted only a token entry and 10,000 ECU in Chapter 100. The Court makes it clear that this appropriation is required not to cover audit operations, which are carried out by its own staff, but to finance preliminary consultations

on the technical aspects of certain problems, for which the recruitment of permanent or temporary staff is not warranted.

As regards expenditure on formal and other meetings, the Court points out that the Council has rejected any increase on the appropriation allocated for 1980 and 1981, i.e. 50,000 ECU. It adds that the appropriation granted by the Council is identical to that allocated when the Court consisted of only 9 members.

As regards language courses, the Court indicates that, although the Council has fixed the relevant appropriation at 80,000 ECU, which represents an increase of 3,000 ECU compared to 1981, this amount is substantially less than the 96,000 ECU the Court itself had requested.

PROPOSALS OF THE RAPPORTEUR

As regards the establishment plan and the appropriations relating thereto:

6. In view of the existing structure of the sectors to which it is proposed to allocate the 9 posts requested but rejected by the Council, of the 'job description' of the posts submitted by the Court of Auditors and of the fact that most of the new posts requested are intended to meet the requirements of the language service - requirements that could not easily be met with fewer posts - the rapporteur is favourable to the creation of the 9 posts requested.

However, the rapporteur considers that he should not recommend to the Committee on Budgets that it endorse the reinstatement of the appropriations needed to cover the salary payments corresponding to the 9 posts requested for a period of 6 months. These appropriations would amount to 122,958 ECU.

Since, however, the Court only recently started the open competitions for the recruitment of persons to fill the 50 or so posts still vacant on its establishment plan and since, therefore, initiation of the procedures for filling the 9 posts in question can be scheduled for the second half of next year, he considers that no appropriation should be entered in the budget as a consequence of the creation of those 9 posts.

7. As regards the reinstatement of certain appropriations, the rapporteur considers the circumstances to be such as to warrant reinstatement, in accordance with the Court's wishes, of the appropriations for mission expenses, since, in relation to the appropriations actually used by the Court, the cuts made by the Council could well hinder the Court in the fulfilment of its tasks and the appropriations actually used in 1981 already exceed those originally entered in the 1981 budget. The rapporteur believes, then, that the Court's request

must be met and that, accordingly, the appropriations in Item 1301 should be increased from 350,000 to 470,000 ECU.

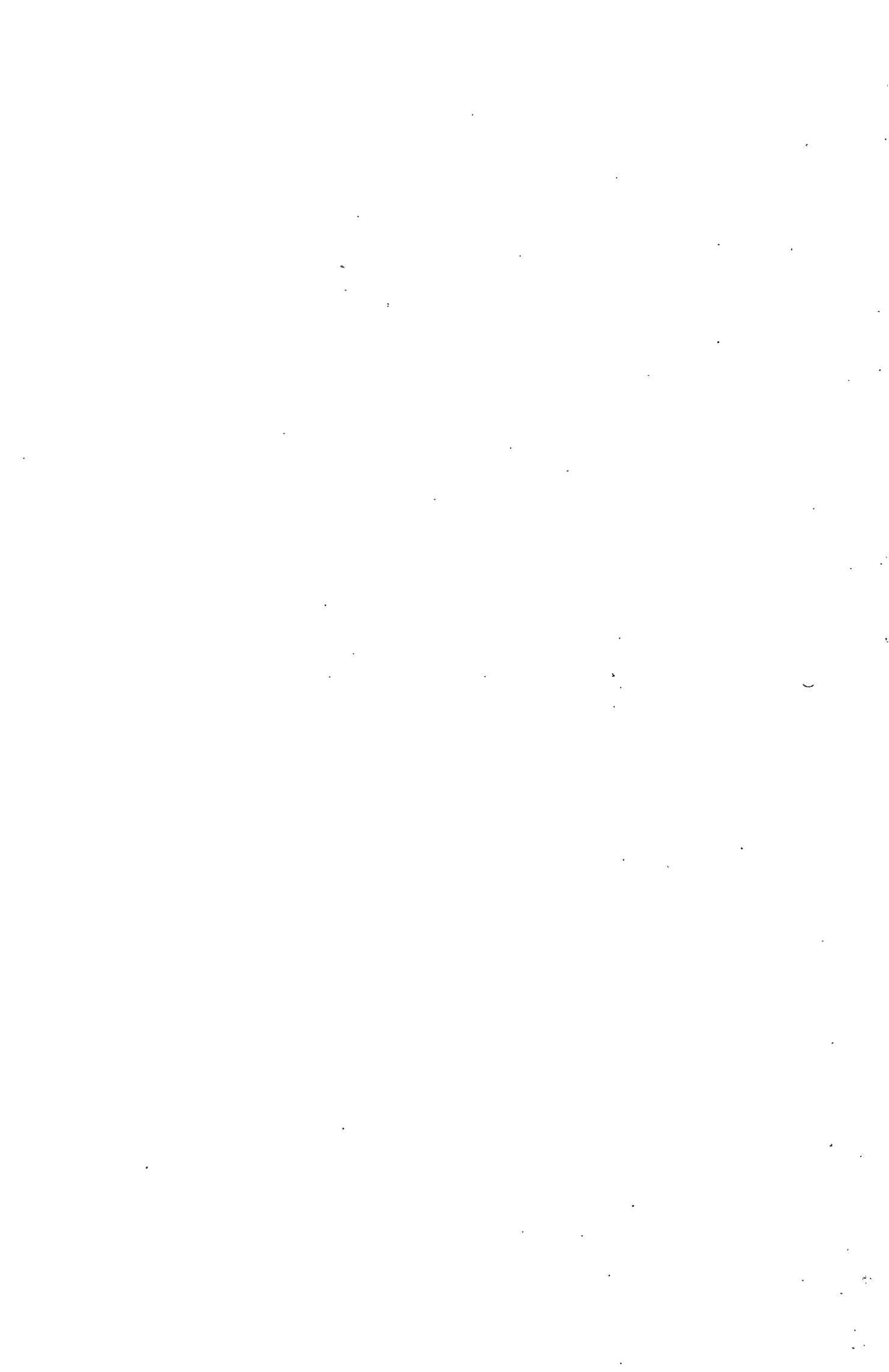
This increase is all the more necessary because of the paucity of the funds (only 50,000 ECU) available to the Court in Chapter 101 (Contingency Reserve).

8. As regards the other appropriations requested, the rapporteur acknowledges the cogency of the arguments advanced by the Court for increasing the appropriations on the budget lines in question. However, in the interests of budgetary austerity, he feels that for Article 260 'Consultations, studies and surveys', an appropriation of 20,000 ECU should be provided. Of this amount, 10,000 ECU should remain in Chapter 100, where they have been placed by the Council.

As regards expenditure on formal and other meetings, the rapporteur recognizes that the amount granted is the same as that entered in the budget when the Court consisted of only 9 members. He feels, however, that he ought not to submit an amendment to the Committee on Budgets because total expenditure by the Court in 1981 could prove, at the end of the financial year, to be far lower than would normally be expected.

For the same reasons, the rapporteur will not propose amendments to increase the appropriation earmarked for language courses, even though he recognizes that this type of vocational training is absolutely essential for those officials at the Court who frequently have to carry out audits involving 10 national administrations.

In his approach both to the establishment plan and to the question of the reinstatement of certain appropriations, the rapporteur considers that he has made due allowance, both for the real needs of the Court, and for the constraints imposed by the principles of tight budgetary control which must be applied in 1982.




DRAFT AMENDMENT

BUDGET

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

26 OCTOBER 1981
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1-550/406 

DRAFT
GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1982

DRAFT AMENDMENT No. 406.

tabled by MR ANSQUER, RAPPORTEUR, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

SECTION V - COURT OF AUDITORS

ESTABLISHMENT PLAN

Add the following posts: 1 B1 - 1 B2 - 2 LA6 - 2 LA7 - 3 C3

Total: 9 posts

(A) EXPENDITURE

Unchanged

(B) COMPENSATION

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(C) REVENUE

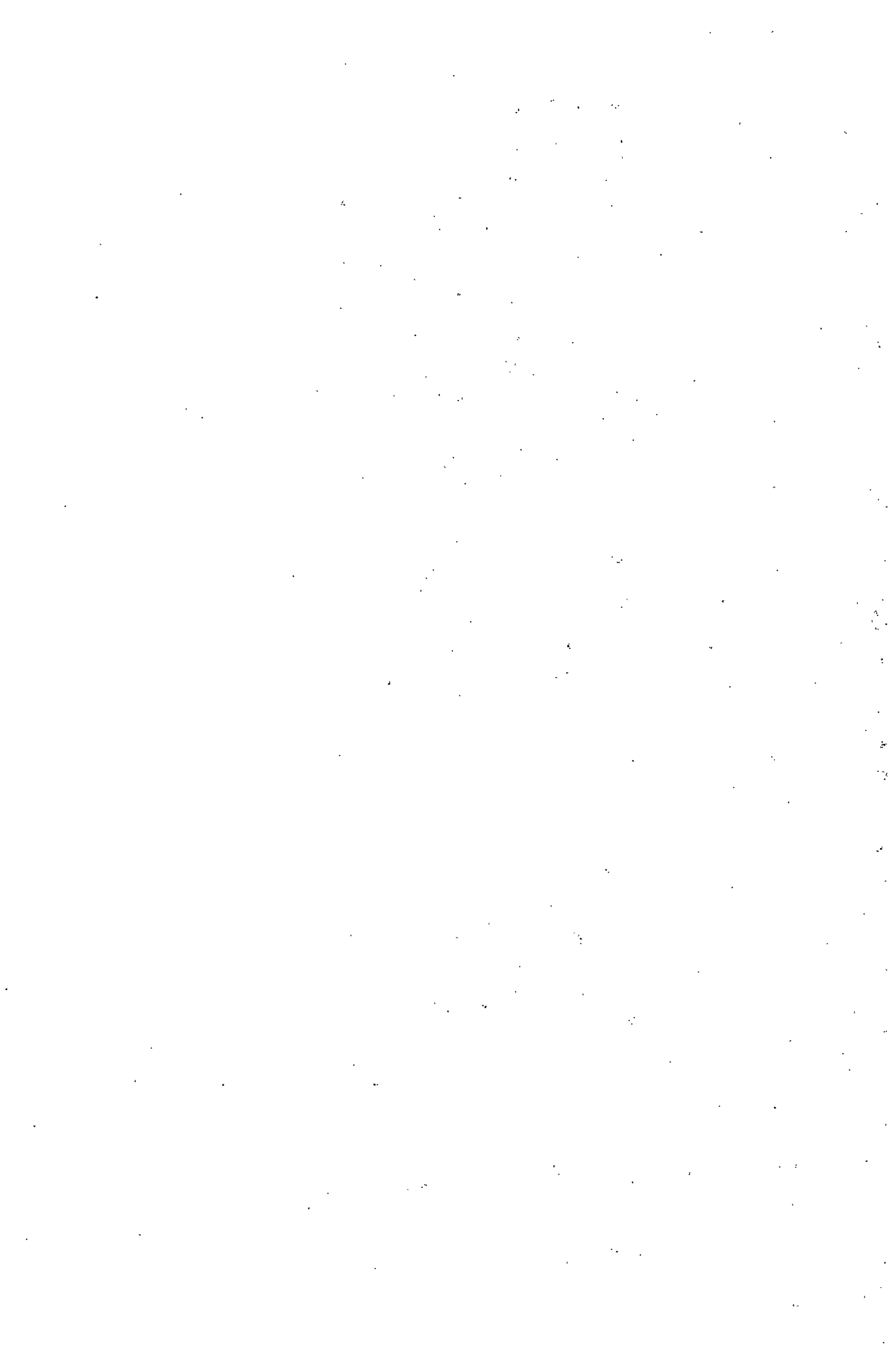
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JUSTIFICATION

In view of the existing structure of the sectors to which it is proposed to allocate the 9 posts requested but rejected by the Council, of the 'job description' of the posts submitted by the Court of Auditors and of the fact that most of the new posts requested are intended to meet the requirements of the language service - requirements that could not easily be met with fewer posts - the rapporteur is favourable to the creation of the 9 posts requested.

However, the rapporteur considers that he should not recommend to the Committee on Budgets that it endorse the reinstatement of the appropriations needed to cover the salary payments corresponding to the 9 posts requested for a period of 6 months. These appropriations would amount to 122,958 ECU.

Since, however, the Court only recently started the open competitions for the recruitment of persons to fill the 50 or so posts still vacant on its establishment plan and since, therefore, initiation of the procedures for filling the 9 posts in question can be scheduled for the second half of next year, he considers that no appropriation should be entered in the budget as a consequence of the creation of those 9 posts.



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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1-550/405DRAFT
GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR .1982

DRAFT AMENDMENT No. 405

tabled by MR ANSQUER, RAPPORTEUR, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

SECTION V - COURT OF AUDITORS

Article 130: Mission expenses, travel expenses and incidental expenditure

Item 1301: Staff

(A) EXPENDITURE

Increase the payment appropriation by 120,000 ECU (from 350,000 to 470,000 ECU)

(B) COMPENSATION

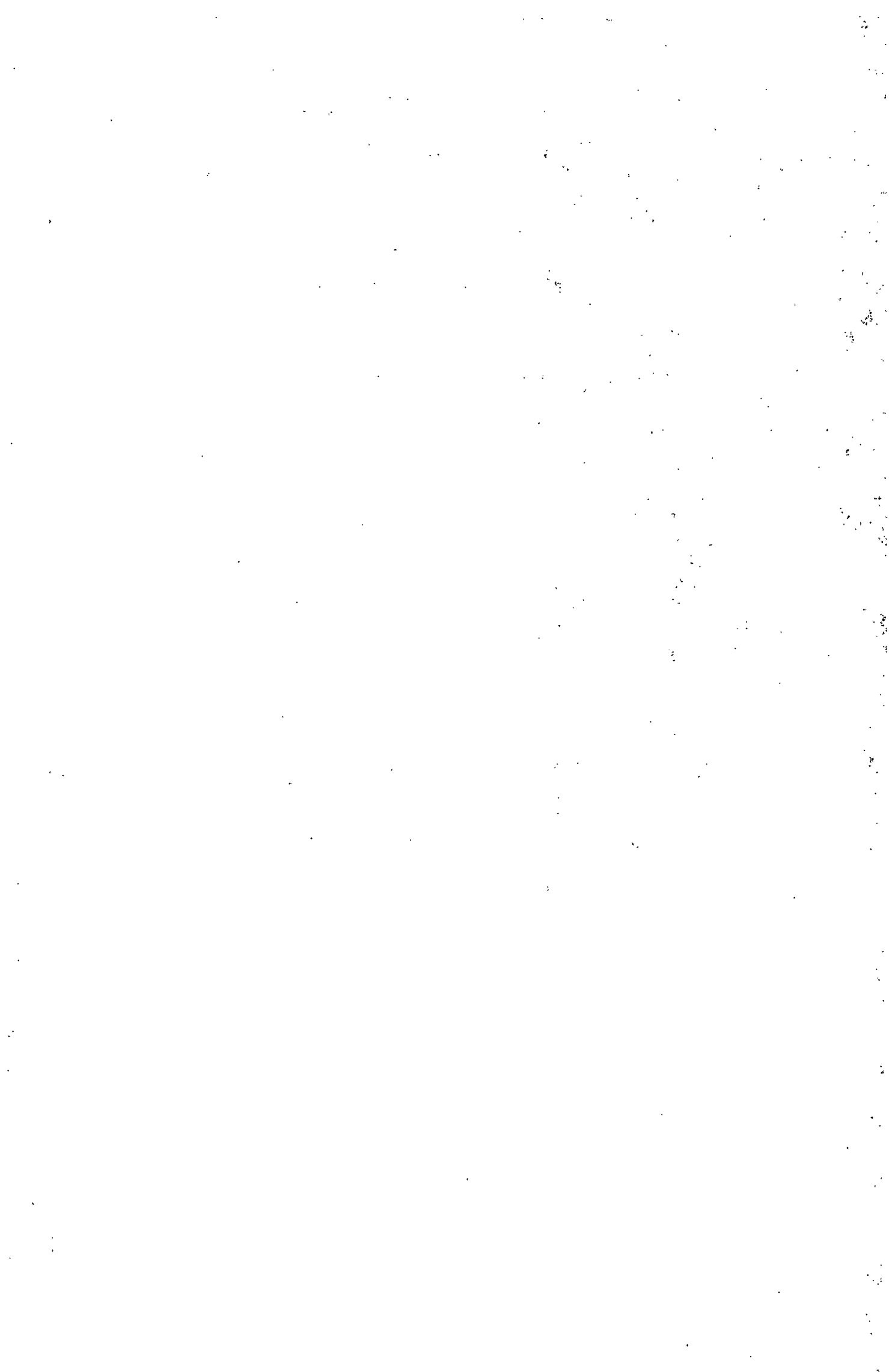
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(C) REVENUE

Increase revenue by the same amount

JUSTIFICATION

The rapporteur considers the circumstances to be such as to warrant reinstatement, in accordance with the Court's wishes, of the appropriations for mission expenses since, in relation to the appropriations actually used by the Court, the cuts made by the Council could well hinder the Court in the fulfilment of its tasks and the appropriations actually used in 1981 already exceed those originally entered in the 1981 budget. The rapporteur believes, then, that the Court's request must be met and that, accordingly, the appropriations in Item 1301 should be increased from 350,000 to 470,000 ECU. This increase is all the more necessary because of the paucity of the funds (only 50,000 ECU) available to the Court in Chapter 101 (Contingency Reserve).



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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1-550/407

DRAFT

GENERAL BUDGET OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1982

DRAFT AMENDMENT No. .407.

tabled by MR ANSQUER, RAPPORTEUR, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

SECTION V - COURT OF AUDITORS

Article 260: Limited consultations, studies and surveys

A - ExpenditureEnter a payment appropriation of 20,000 ECU (instead of a p.m.)B - CompensationReduce the appropriations in Chapter 100 (Article 260) by 10,000 ECUC - RevenueIncrease revenue by 10,000 ECUJUSTIFICATION

The rapporteur proposes that for Article 260 'Consultations, studies and surveys', an appropriation of 20,000 ECU should be provided. Of this amount, 10,000 ECU should remain in Chapter 100, where they have been placed by the Council. The rapporteur acknowledges the cogency of the arguments behind the Court's requests for increasing appropriations. However, in the interests of budgetary austerity, he feels that the amount requested by the Court for Article 260 (50,000 ECU) should be reduced.

