

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 29 October 1971

SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 14



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WORKING PARTY TO STUDY THE PROBLEM OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE BUILDINGS (1)

Minutes of the 14th meeting of the Working Party
to study the problem of Council of Europe buildings
held in Paris from 10.30 a.m. on 1 October to
12 noon on 2 October 1971

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10.30 a.m. and welcomed Mr. Vivien, Architecte en Chef des Bâtiments Civils et des Palais Nationaux, appointed by the French Government to replace Mr. Bernard as a member of the Working Party. This was the first time Mr. Vivien had attended one of their meetings.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as appended hereto (Appendix II - doc. SG/GT/Bât. (71) OJ 14).

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 13TH MEETING

The minutes (doc. SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 13) were adopted unchanged.

III. STATEMENT BY THE ARCHITECT, MR. H. BERNARD, EXAMINATION OF DRAWINGS FOR THE AVANT-PROJET IN ITS FINAL FORM

and

IV. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE AVANT-PROJET

Mr. Bernard said he would be brief since the drawings he was presenting to the Working Party were for the same architectural layout as he had described in July 1971, except for a few detailed modifications requested by the Secretariat. The drawings showed: ./.

(1) See list of participants at Appendix I.

- (a) how the site would be used according to a precise building programme;
- (b) how the interior of the building was arranged.

He would be glad to hear any comments the Secretariat or the Working Party had to make.

Mr. Daussin said that the Secretariat was entirely satisfied with the present plans.

The Chairman said he had examined the whole file most carefully and expressed his appreciation concerning the building programme drawn up by the Secretariat. Before giving his views on the plan itself, he would ask members of the Working Party to make their comments on its functional and aesthetic aspects.

Mr. Wilby thought that the general design and internal layout of the building fully met the Council of Europe's functional requirements. The aesthetic aspect was an architectural matter on which he did not feel qualified to comment, but he found the project pleasing.

Mr. Amatucci said that he found the plans satisfactory from both the functional and aesthetic points of view. However, he could not contain his doubts whether the cost could be kept within the limits laid down by the Committee of Ministers and asked the architect what was the estimated cost per m³.

Mr. Lange was agreeably surprised at how the various functional problems had been dealt with and solved. He felt however that, because of the design of the building, it would be difficult to keep within the cost limit and suggested that the financial estimate be checked by the French administration. The cost would not be definitely known until the tenders had been examined.

Mr. Peyrot thought the plans were very satisfactory from all points of view. There were two aspects to the financial question: firstly, the estimate based on October 1970 prices and, secondly, the subsequent adjustment of that estimate.

With regard to the estimate itself, it was regrettable that this fine project should have to be executed from the outset with economies in mind, for the sake of keeping within the budgetary limit laid down. It was the Working Party's duty to bring this point to the attention of the Committee of Ministers without making any precise suggestions.

Adjustment of the estimate should normally be effected by applying the official indexes.

Mr. Vivien took this opportunity to thank the Chairman for his kind welcome. With regard to the plans, he thought they met the requirements of the programme. On the matter of cost, he shared his colleagues' concern but was less apprehensive: the limit need not be exceeded if the project was executed economically. Nevertheless, he agreed that the average cost per m2 was on the meagre side and should be increased by 160 FF.

The Chairman, while agreeing with the general design of the project, felt obliged to express grave doubts about the cost. The project, which he liked very much, could not be executed within the limits laid down, even at the price of substantial economies. He had arrived at this conclusion after making estimates based not on floor space, but on wall areas and structures.

He summed up the discussion so far as follows:

- (a) the Working Party agreed unanimously that the project was satisfactory and met the requirements of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament;
- (b) there were varying degrees of apprehension with regard to the cost;
- (c) a suggestion had been put forward by Mr. Lange to the effect that the financial estimates should be checked by the French administration;
- (d) the Working Party found itself in an awkward position, having to take a decision on the project in the light of the financial limit laid down.

Mr. Daussin said that the Chairman's statement was a matter of great concern to the Secretariat, since the Committee of Ministers had stated most firmly that the limit must not be exceeded. Furthermore, the Secretariat had been assured by the consulting engineers that the cost could be kept within the limit subject to stringent economies on the fixtures and fittings. Mr. Vivien appeared to share this view. Since there were differences of opinion on the matter, it would be as well if Mr. Ovtchikov explained his point of view once again.

Mr. Ovtchikov reaffirmed that the budgetary limit need not be exceeded if the keynote of the finishing work was austerity.

Mr. Bernard recalled how the sum of 70 million francs had been arrived at. To begin with the Working Party, with no actual project to go on, taking an average price per m2, had calculated a figure of 70 million francs including taxes and fees for a building of 42,000 m2 above ground level and

16,400 m2 below, being careful to point out that this was an approximation. In December 1970, the Committee of Ministers agreed on a ceiling of 70 million francs excluding taxes (October 1970 prices), which amounted to an increase of 12% over the 1967 estimate; the actual rise in building costs over the same period, however, had been 30%, so that the new figure was in fact 18% lower. That was the reason for the financial problem. The Working Party should draw the attention of the Committee of Ministers to this very important point.

The Chairman fully appreciated the architect's arguments but was still convinced that the project based on the programme was costly. Moreover, the Working Party would be criticised if the finishing of the building was not up to the standard of the remainder.

Mr. Daussin said he was disturbed by the turn the discussion was taking. On the one hand, there could be no arguing with the Ministers' decision regarding the budgetary limit. On the other, they were assured by the architect that the limit would not be exceeded, subject to certain economies. Lastly, some members of the Working Party doubted whether this was possible. It was obvious that the truth would not be known until tenders were examined. This being so, the Working Party should submit a very precise report on this point to the Committee of Ministers without, at this stage, questioning the budgetary limit. To do so now would imperil the entire project.

Mr. Peyrot thought the report should state that the project should normally cost 80 million francs, that subject to economies on fixtures and fittings the cost could be kept within the limit laid down, but that such economies were regrettable because of their effect on the overall impression made by the building.

Mr. Wilby thought that the Committee of Ministers should be put clearly in the picture: they should be reminded that the Working Party's 1967 estimate had been made in the absence of any concrete project and was only an approximation. Because of the programme, the project had proved more complicated than expected and was more expensive. However, the design of the project was such that it could be executed more quickly than expected and the time gained would in fact mean a saving of money. The speed of execution would make it possible to reduce the final amount of expenditure despite an initial estimate in excess of the limit laid down.

Mr. Peyrot shared this view. He also thought that, since the project corresponded to the programme, there was no reason to change it. Whatever design was adopted, the cost would be much the same as for the present project. This being so, he proposed that the Committee of Ministers be told that the project could be executed in its economic form, adding that in order to finish the building to an appropriate standard, additional funds could be asked for in due course during construction.

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Mr. Bernard said he could see no point in a second opinion on the financial estimate. It was preferable to invite tenders for the main fabric so as to ascertain its cost more accurately and to adjust specifications for fixtures and fittings accordingly, so as not to exceed the ceiling.

Mr. Vivien agreed with Mr. Bernard that there was no need for a second opinion on the estimate but pointed out the disadvantages of separate tenders, which would tend to inflate the cost.

Mr. Lange said he did not insist on having the estimate checked;

The Chairman pointed out that:

- the cost of a building depended on the initial plans and that there was no need to await the detailed construction plans in order to establish the price ceiling;
- he had always made it clear that his administration was against separate tenders, since this procedure did not favour international competition;
- his administration was in favour of inviting tenders for all the work together, perhaps with a division into three main lots:
 - (a) main fabric and finishing
 - (b) electricity
 - (c) heating.

In some cases the latter two lots could be contracted for after the first. Lot (a) could be split up, provided individual lots could be combined.

Mr. Peyrot thought that the truth lay somewhere between the arguments put forward by the architect and the Chairman. There could be a general estimate, which could be broken down in greater detail later.

Mr. Bernard said that it was not a question of separate tenders but of preconsultation. He pointed out how difficult it was for him to prepare the specifications for tender, when he knew that 3/4 of the specifications would be changed.

Mr. Ovchikov suggested carrying out preconsultation with all contractors for the purpose of checking the estimates. If the estimates for the main fabric proved correct, adjustments could be made to the fixtures and fittings.

Mr. Peyrot asked Mr. Bernard whether he could make a cost estimate per m² of main fabric based on the cost of comparable buildings, so that the Working Party could see what could be done with the fixtures and fittings. He stressed that there was a relationship between the quality of materials used for the construction of a building and maintenance costs.

The Chairman asked Mr. Ovtchnikov for information about the structure of the building.

Mr. Ovtchnikov supplied the information requested by Mr. Peyrot and the Chairman (see Appendix III).

V. PROBLEM OF RESERVES

The Working Party took note of doc. SG/GT/Bât. (71) 7 and approved the conclusions set out in Appendix IV hereto, which would form an integral part of their report to the Committee of Ministers. However, since the problem was linked with an item on the agenda for the 202nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies beginning on 11 October 1971, the Secretariat was authorised to forward these conclusions to the Ministers' Deputies immediately.

VI. PREPARATION OF THE WORKING PARTY'S REPORT

The Working Party adopted the outline report proposed by Mr. Peyrot (SG/GT/Bât. (71) 6) together with the Secretariat draft of Sections I, II and III and the part dealing with the time schedule (SG/GT/Bât. (71) 8).

Mr. Clamer pointed out that the schedule required completion in respect of the earthworks and foundations, which would be put out to tender separately.

The Chairman said that, though he was generally against calling for separate tenders, he could agree to it in the case of the earthworks and foundations since the object was to reduce the construction time, on the understanding that the remainder of the work would be put out to tender together.

This was agreed.

The Working Party then discussed Section IV of the outline report.

1. Consideration of diagrams showing the accommodation requirements in graphic form

Mr. Peyrot suggested telescoping points 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 into a single paragraph.

The Chairman agreed and called for any other comments on the charts. Personally, he did not think that the communications flow diagram showed the density of traffic between parts of the building.

Mr. Tsimaratos pointed out that the communications flow diagram was intended to show links between various parts of the building and not the density of traffic, which would be dealt with separately.

Following this exchange of views, the Working Party declared its satisfaction with the charts.

2. Suitability of the plans in terms of declared requirements

The Working Party decided:

- in respect of points 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the outline, to repeat paragraph 6 of their July report (CM (71) 110);
- in respect of point 2.4, to state the following:
"The volumes making up the building are well set off the one against the other. The contrast between the severity of the quadrilateral exterior, the detailed final form of which has yet to be settled, and the flexibility of the interior containing the Assembly Chamber and the means of access to it, is both aesthetically and symbolically striking in its effect."
- under point 2.5, to state that the distribution of space satisfied the Secretariat and fully met the requirements of the programme and that the ratio of net space to gross space was normal and acceptable;
- to make no mention of points 2.6 and 2.7, on which no information had yet been given;
- under point 2.8, to point out that there was provision for future extension.

3. Special problems

This section was included at the request of Mr. Daussin in order to answer the Ministers' Deputies questions concerning reserves and to raise the question of the number of interpreters' booths. The section will therefore comprise two points:

3.1 Reserves

This question had been discussed under item 5 on the agenda and the conclusions set out in Appendix IV would be included in the report.

3.2 Number of interpreters' booths

The attention of the Committee of Ministers should be drawn to the fact that the five interpreters' booths to each committee room allowed for by the Working Party might prove insufficient as a result of the enlargement of the European Communities.

For this reason, the project included seven booths per committee room but the financial estimate was for five booths only. If the Committee of Ministers confirmed the need for seven, the necessary funds would have to be made available for providing them, not only in the Assembly Chamber, but also in the committee rooms (except the small ones which would be equipped for five languages only). The cost was estimated at 1,000,000 FF, to which must be added the cost of equipment.

4. Cost

The Working Party adopted the following text:

1. The Working Party has considered the financial aspects at length and wishes to address the following comments to the Committee of Ministers:

2. The figure of 70 million francs (completed building, excluding furniture, special equipment and gardens) was based on February 1967 prices and included taxes. The Committee of Ministers decision confirmed this amount but made it exclusive of taxes and based it on October 1970 prices. In point of fact, this amount was lower in real terms than the 1967 figure: the effect of making the amount exclusive of taxes was to increase it by 12%, but prices had increased, according to the official French indexes, by 30% between 1967 and 1970. The amount of 70 million francs is therefore worth 18% less than in 1967.

3. The architect's estimates amount to 75 million francs (October 1970 prices), to which must be added fees of 5 million francs, giving a total of 80 million (see details in Appendix) for a building finished to a standard appropriate to its function.

4. The architect considers it possible to complete the project for 70 million francs, i.e. to effect savings of 10 million, but the quality of the building would be substantially impaired, as witness the list of economies given in Appendix ...

5. The Working Party expresses reservations regarding the above-mentioned economies, considering that a project of this type cannot be carried out by cut-price methods. In its report of 21 July 1971, the Working Party recognised the

truth of the architect's remarks regarding the effect of inadequate adjustment of the estimate on the standard of comfort, particularly with regard to finishing. Furthermore, to reconsider the whole project at this stage would result in further delays and, consequently, added cost due to rising prices.

It is acknowledged that the exact cost of the project will not be known until the results of the international call for tenders are available. It is then that the question of a possible increase in funds will arise.

6. The Working Party points out that, in any event, additional sums will have to be made available to cover rises in prices between October 1970 and completion of the building and for the various items not included in the sum of 70 million francs (see Appendix ...).

The Working Party recommends that the Committee of Ministers investigate the problem of additional finance, pointing out that a substantial amount of space in the project is accounted for by the requirements of the European Parliament."

5. Time schedule

The construction schedule proper was given in the architect's report of last June (SG/GT/Bât. (71) 1) but required completion by addition of the following points:

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------|
| 5.7 | time required for transfer from the old to the new building | 2 months |
| 5.8 | time required for demolition of disused buildings | 3 months |

VII. - CONCLUSIONS -

The Working Party adopted the following text:

"In conclusion, the Working Party hopes that the building will be completed in accordance with the schedule drawn up and reaffirms that, provided the necessary resources are available, it will meet the requirements of Committee of Ministers Resolution (70) 53."

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

IX. - DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The Working Party agreed not to meet until submission of the building specifications. However, should there be any serious differences of opinion concerning the facade plans, which would be circulated by post, the Chairman could call a meeting accordingly.

The meeting rose at 12 noon on Saturday 2 October 1971.

A N N E X E I
A P P E N D I X I

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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M. J.A. TSIMARATOS

Etaient également présents
Also present

M. OVTCHNIKOV
Ingénieur en chef du Bureau
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M. F. DEDEVER
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M. P. D'HAUTHUILLE
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A P P E N D I X II

AGENDA

of the 14th meeting of the Working Party to study
the problem of Council of Europe buildings
held in Paris from 10.30 a.m. on 1 October 1971
to 12 noon on 2 October 1971

1. Adoption of the agenda
 /SG/GT/Bât. (71) OJ 147
2. Approval of the minutes of the 13th meeting
 /SG/GT/Bât. (71) PV 137
3. Statement by the architect, Mr. H. Bernard
 Consideration of drawings for the avant-projet in its
 final form and discussion /architect's file and
 SG/GT/Bât. (71) 47
4. Consideration of financial aspects of the definitive
 avant-projet /SG/GT/Bât. (71) 57
5. Consideration of the problem of reserves
 /SG/GT/Bât. (71) 77
 - (a) estimated space required in 1975 based on a projection
 of present trends;
 - (b) comparison of this estimate with the space at present
 planned for, so as to determine whether there would
 be a shortage and, if so, how great it would be and
 how much it would cost to remedy it (1975 prices)
6. Working Party's report
7. Any other business
8. Date, time and place of next meeting.

A P P E N D I X III

Statement by Mr. Ovtchikov on the structure of the building and average cost per m² and per m³

In reply to the comments made by Mr. Peyrot and the Chairman concerning the skeleton and foundation envisaged and the estimated cost per m² and per m³, Mr. Ovtchikov gave the following details:

(a) 1. The aim has been to achieve the greatest possible flexibility in the offices on the top two floors (permitting a wide variety of arrangements).

For this reason, all pillars are positioned along the outside walls at 1.25 m intervals (0.20 x 0.35).

The floor will consist of 20 x 50 prestressed joists 2.50 m long, at right angles to the wall pillars, and a compression slab 0.10 m thick.

The end beams will be of much the same thickness as joists plus floor, i.e. approximately 0.60 - 0.65 m.

The window breasts of the office walls will be of prefabricated concrete sections which will contain provision for the insertion of plumbing pipes.

The two upper office levels will rest on a prestressed box structure forming a maintenance gallery and consisting of a prestressed upper slab 40 cm thick at the centre and 30 cm at the edges (the part extending beyond the gallery itself). The overhanging edges will bear the load of the wall pillars and transfer it to the 40 - 45 cm thick side panels of the box, leaving a space 2 m high between the upper and lower slabs.

2. The lower slab will form the ceiling of the committee rooms.

This extremely rigid structure will rest on panels 30 cm thick forming the committee room walls, the load being transferred by Freyssinet joints.

The concrete panels forming the walls of the committee rooms will extend vertically right down to the foundations, with the necessary apertures for corridors at the lower levels.

The arrangement of offices on the lower floors will allow for the positioning of these panels at approximately 16 m intervals, the lift shafts being placed between pairs of committee rooms and also having walls extending to the foundations.

3. From the committee room floor slab, a supplementary structure (beams and pillars) forming a grid of 5 - 6 m sections will divide up the office and car park areas, also determining the foundation pattern (bearing in mind the continuous load-bearing walls mentioned above).

4. The skeleton of levels ABCDE will provide support for the crown of offices.

The interior of the square (excluding the Assembly Chamber) will have the same skeleton pattern, but with expansion joints to separate it from the crown.

The floors of levels BCDE will be precast solid slabs, except those of the car parks and stores, which will be cast on site.

Level A, immediately above the groundwater level, will have a slabbed floor.

There will be no intermediate Level B floor in the storage areas, though the structure and foundations would permit it.

5. The roof shell of the Assembly Chamber will consist of curved concrete panels merging into pillars which extend down to the foundations.

The raised public gallery will be partly suspended from these panels, the anchorage points being strengthened to bear the overhanging load.

The floor of the Assembly Chamber will consist of a solid slab partly inclined to accommodate tiered seating, the whole being supported by panels forming the walls of the level below.

The ceiling will be of laminated wood and supported at points outside the Chamber itself.

6. The expansion joints of the office crown will be arranged perpendicularly on the facade at 21 m or 32 m intervals. Those of the box structure supporting the crown will be positioned 3.75 m from panel ends. This part of the box structure will be separated so that the other can be supported on a neoprene joint. This joint in the prestressed box will extend over the whole height but could possibly be repositioned.

7. The foundations beneath the pillars and beneath the load-bearing panels will be cast-in-place piles approximately 8 m long. The pile heads will be linked either by longitudinal beams or by the panels of the level above.

8. The design loads are as follows:

- offices	250 kg/m ²
- Assembly Chamber and committee rooms	500 kg/m ²
- corridors	400 kg/m ²
- car park	200 - 250 kg/m ²
- stores	800 kg/m ²

9. As regards heat insulation, the materials used must meet the following specifications:

- roof	K = 0.8
- outside walls	K = 0.9
- car park walls	K = 1.5

(b) With regard to cost per m² and per m³, the cost per gross m² excluding taxes for recently completed similar buildings is in the region of 930 FF (excluding fees and approaches), the estimated cost per m² of the Council project about 1,050 FF (the cost per m³ being between 290 and 300 FF).

In the case of the Val d'Oise Préfecture, the cost per m² of main fabric was 340 FF. Current estimates for the new building are about 360 FF per m². These figures show that the 1967 estimates, adjusted to October 1970 prices, correspond to actual prices in 1971.

A P P E N D I X IV

Conclusions of the Working Party concerning the
problem of reserves

The building project is based on the programme drawn up by the Working Party in 1967 and accounts for 26,989 m² net space above ground level and 18,400 m² below.

It covers:

- (a) the Council of Europe's requirements as estimated at 1 January 1974, excluding accommodation for the European Pharmacopoeia. It is estimated that, at 1 January 1975, there will be a shortage of some thirty offices;
- (b) the estimated requirements of the European Parliament following the expected enlargement of the European Communities in 1973. It should be noted, however, that the reserves originally planned for the European Parliament will then have been completely absorbed.

Consequently, there is no reserve provision beyond 1974. As soon as the building is occupied, therefore, there will be a shortage of 500 m² of office space for the Council of Europe and a further 500 m² for the European Pharmacopoeia, a total of 1,000 m².

It is obviously out of the question to find this additional space by changing the plans.

The Working Party points out that, in 1967, it estimated that a reserve office provision of 35% of the then current requirements (i.e. 1,730 m²) was necessary in order to cover estimated needs for the next ten years. This reserve has already been swallowed up by the unexpectedly rapid expansion of the Organisation. In order to allow for a similar reserve, an additional 2,000 m² of space would have to be provided.

If the Committee of Ministers share the Working Party's view that there must be a reserve of offices at the time of occupation of the building, the problem might be solved by adding an extra storey. This would provide an additional 3,600 m² of net space, making up the shortage of 1,000 m² and leaving a reserve of 2,600 m². When completed an extra storey would cost 8,500,000 FF (October 1970 prices).

The Working Party considers that, if the Committee of Ministers favour this solution, a decision must be taken immediately. It would be impossible to add the extra storey later because of technical difficulties and because of the disruption it would cause (roofing, etc.).

The Working Party points out that the addition of an extra storey, which would not spoil the proportions of the project as a whole would also be the most economic type of extension and make the best use of the available space and lay-out of the buildings. Of course, only 1,000 m² should be finished, the rest of the storey remaining closed off and covered but unequipped until needed, unless it is felt that the reserve should be put to some productive use, in which case the immediate expenditure involved would be 6,500,000 FF.

In conclusion, the Working Party considers that the extension discussed above would be desirable, being the only way of covering all the needs of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament and providing necessary reserves. It considers it its duty to apprise the Committee of Ministers of this situation, which is due partly to the time which has elapsed since 1967 and partly to political developments which have occurred since that date.