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KANCELARIA SENATU

Przedstawiciel Kancelarii Senatu
przy Unii Europejskiej

Sprawozdanie nr 18/2009

Kwestionariusz COSAC nt. roli i zadań stałego przedstawiciela

Questions:

- 1. When did your Parliament/Chamber send its first representative to the European Parliament / to the EU institutions / to the EU (henceforth “representative to the EU”)? Would you please enumerate the names and the terms of all your representatives to the EU so far?**

The first representative of the Chancellery of the Senate of the Republic of Poland to the European Union, dr. Magdalena Skulimowska, started her work on 1st April 2008. She has been working as a permanent representative ever since.

- 2. What were the reasons for your Parliament's/Chamber's decision to send / not to send a permanent representative to the EU?**

The primary reason for taking a decision to send a permanent representative to the EU was to ensure that the Senate has access to information about the functioning of the EU institutions, the legislative process taking place within the EU and the current EU affairs.

- 3. What is the title of the representative of your Parliament/Chamber?**

Permanent Representative of the Chancellery of the Senate of the Republic of Poland to the European Union.

- 4. Is there a fixed term in office of the representative of your Parliament/Chamber to the EU, or is the decision taken on a case-by-case basis? Is the term in office renewable?**

There is no fixed term in office of the representative. A decision to terminate representative's contract is taken by the Secretary General of the Chancellery of the Senate.

- 5. In case a bicameral Parliament has one representative to the EU, how does the representative coordinate his or her activities with both Chambers? In**

case both Chambers have their own representatives to the EU, how do these representatives coordinate their activities among themselves?

Each representative reports back to their own parliament. There is no coordination of the activities between representatives of two chambers, since each representative is accountable to a different superior. However, a different case is cooperation, based on collegial relations between representatives. Such cooperation exists, primarily in cases of inter-parliamentary activities, related to visits of members of parliaments and staff in Brussels. However, it has to be noted that there will be a need for an increased cooperation and coordination of representatives' activities during the upcoming Polish Presidency.

6. What are the main functions of your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU: reporting, inter-parliamentary cooperation, contacts with Members of the European Parliament, visits to the EU institutions or other functions? Please specify.

The functions of the representative include all the above-mentioned. However, the key function is reporting: on the legislative process, on the activities in the European Parliament, the European Commission and other institutions, on the inter-parliamentary meetings, etc.

7. Where does your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU focus his or her attention? Could you please list the activities in order of priority and, if possible, specify the time-share allocated to the respective activities?

- reporting to the Senate about the activities of the European Parliament and other European institutions, especially about the legislative process, the committee meetings, the Commission's initiatives and on the joint parliamentary meetings and other meetings between parliamentarians from the Member States – 50% and more;
- providing assistance in the contacts between the European Parliament and the Senate, including both organizational aspects and professional expertise – 20%;
- providing assistance in cases of visits of the senators in the European Parliament – on a case by case basis, but when such visit takes place it occupies 100% of the representative's time.
- cooperation with permanent representatives of other parliaments in the European Parliament – 15%;
- cooperation with DG Presidency – 10%;
- participation in the preparation of the training programmes in the EU institutions for both the senators and the employees of the Chancellery of the Senate – on a case by case basis, when there is a need for such trainings;
- cooperation with the COSAC secretariat – 5% (but it will increase during the Polish Presidency);

- representation of the Chancellery of the Senate in the European Parliament, European Commission, the Council, and in the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland – 5% .

8. Is your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU expected to report on developments in the EU on a regular or ad hoc basis? How is the decision on the topics for reporting taken?

There is no written rule as far as the frequency of reporting is concerned. Therefore it can be concluded that the representative to the EU is expected to report on an ad hoc basis, when there is something important to report back to the Senate. However, the representative sends regular reports on a weekly basis. A decision on the topics for reporting is taken by the representative.

9. Whom is your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU accountable to in your Parliament's/Chamber's administration and in terms of setting priorities of the representative's work?

The representative to the EU is directly accountable to the director of the Bureau of International and EU Affairs. Indirectly, the representative is accountable to the Secretary General of the Chancellery of the Senate.

10. Does your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU have a duty to report regularly on his or her activities? If so, to whom: the Committee on European Affairs, other Committee, the Secretary General, the Permanent Representation of your country to the EU or other body?

The representative has a duty to report twice a year on her activities to the Secretary General of the Chancellery of the Senate of the Republic of Poland.

11. Does your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU attend EU Speakers' Conferences, meetings of the Secretaries General and COSAC meetings?

The representative to the EU **does not** attend EU Speakers' Conferences. Neither does she attend the meetings of the Secretaries General.

The representative to the EU has a duty to **attend** the ordinary COSAC meetings – twice a year.

12. Does your Parliament's/Chamber's representative to the EU have an assistant/s? If so, what additional functions can the assistant/s perform on behalf of your Parliament/Chamber?

No.

13. Does your Parliament/Chamber have plans or ideas on future developments with regard to your representative to the EU?

This post is relatively new. A number of developments have been introduced so far, as a reaction to the needs arising in the process of everyday work. As for the future developments, there is a conviction that the representative to the EU should be able to maintain closer relations with the members of the Senate and the officials through the regular meetings held in Warsaw. On the one hand, it will help the representative to structure her/his work better in terms of its usefulness to the Senate. On the other hand, the members and officials will be better informed about the current activities of the representative to the EU. Such exchange of views and ideas will be beneficial for both sides. Apart from those, the representative to the EU will be able to maintain collegial relations with other officials from the Senate and will keep track of all the changes taking place back home.

Secondly, due to the amount of work and abundance of activities within the European Union, the Senate recognises the need for an assistant of the representative to the EU. In particular, such assistant would be essential during the Polish Presidency, when a number of duties of the representative to the EU increases, especially in the sphere of inter-parliamentary cooperation.

**Opracowała:
dr Magdalena Skulimowska**