

NOTES ON THE SENATE



SENATE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF POLAND

Chancellery of the Senate

CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE
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The principle of autonomy lies at the core of the functioning of parliaments. It enables parliaments to adopt their own regulations and decide on the structure and competencies of their internal bodies. One of the guarantees of the independence of the House from other branches of State power is found in having its own administration apparatus and a separate budget.

The Senate Chancellery was established by resolution of 1 September 1989 of the Presidium of the Senate and is institutionally subordinate to the Marshal of the Senate. Chancellery functionaries are politically neutral – they are forbidden by law to express their political views in public. **THE HEAD OF THE CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE** has the rank of state minister and is appointed and dismissed by the Marshal of the Senate. He or she is the official superior of the Chancellery staff and is accountable to the Marshal of the Senate for activities of the Chancellery.

The Chancellery is tasked with ensuring efficient operation of the Senate and its bodies. In particular, it provides support services for the sittings of the House and assists senators in the execution of their mandate. The most important role of the Chancellery of the Senate is to ensure the proper functioning of the Senate as



(Photo by: M. Józefaciuk)



a legislative body and this was entrusted to the Senate Proceedings Office and the Legislative Office, and – in matters concerning the European Union – to the Office for International and European Union Affairs.

The main responsibility of the **SENATE PROCEEDINGS OFFICE** is to prepare, service and document the sittings of the Senate and its committees. The Office provides secretarial services for all Senate committees except the European Union Affairs Committee, prepares shorthand reports from the sittings of the Senate and its committees and handles matters associated with lobbying activities conducted in the Senate.

THE LEGISLATIVE OFFICE deals with all legal aspects that the Senate must take into account when considering acts adopted by the Sejm or when taking legislative initiatives and resolutions. It sees to it that the Senate debates are held in conformity with its Rules and Regulations. It prepares legal analyses associated with the law-making process and the legislative activities of the Senate, prepares opinions on draft legislation of the European Union and submits comments on the execution of decisions of the Constitutional Tribunal.

THE OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS coordinates foreign contacts of the Senate, as well as activities associated with Poland's membership in the European Union. In particular, it is tasked with providing the European Union Affairs Committee with substantive and organizational support for its activities. In addition, the office coordinates cooperation between the Senate committees and their counterparts in the parliaments of other countries and in the European Parliament. It also organizes the Senate's cooperation with international parliamentary institutions and prepares foreign business trips of senators and chancellery staff.

THE OFFICE OF THE MARSHAL OF THE SENATE is tasked with providing the Marshal of the Senate and Deputy Marshals with substantive and organizational support, whilst also providing secretarial services for them: it arranges and organizes meetings in which they take part and handles patronage issues. The office is also responsible for servicing meetings of the Senate Presidium and the Council of Seniors.

The tasks of the **OFFICE FOR CITIZEN RELATIONS** include assisting the Senate in contacts with the general public, disseminating information on the work of the Senate, as well as education and outreach activity. The Office also replies to citizens' letters addressed to the Senate and helps with the processing of petitions. The Office staff popularize the knowledge of the Senate through publications, educational activities, exhibitions and organized tours of the Senate. It cooperates with the mass media, informing the public of the Senate activities, preparing communiqués and organizing press conferences. In addition, it operates the websites of the Senate and its Chancellery.

THE ANALYSES AND DOCUMENTATION OFFICE prepares and provides senators and the Senate bodies with useful information for their legislative work. In particular, it supplies analyses, expert opinions and statistics, such as are needed for activities of the Senate. It also cooperates with research and analysis services as well as archive services of parliaments abroad. Documents produced in the course of the work of the Senate and its bodies, and audiovisual recordings of the Senate sittings, are stored and processed in the Senate Archives.

The task of the **SENATORIAL AFFAIRS' OFFICE** is to provide organizational and legal assistance to senators, for example in setting up and running senatorial offices, attending to matters associated with staffing needs of senators, their accommodation in Warsaw and domestic travel. The office advises senators and provides them with legal opinions, collects and makes available information on the senatorial mandate, senators and their offices. The office also deals with affairs of the Senate clubs, groups and teams. It also maintains the Register of Interests and handles matters associated with the senators' declarations of assets.

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The task of the **LEGAL AND PERSONNEL AFFAIRS OFFICE** is to provide the Senate Chancellery with legal and organizational support, particularly by way of drawing up internal regulations and handling public procurement procedures. The office also deals with the human resources policy and staff-related matters of the Chancellery of the Senate.

THE FINANCE OFFICE is responsible for the finances of the Chancellery of the Senate. It prepares the draft of every budget of the Chancellery.

THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OFFICE provides IT and printing services for the Senate Chancellery. This includes preparation of its publications for printing.

THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE provides the Chancellery of the Senate with organizational and technical support. It manages assets of the Chancellery, supplies it with necessary materials and equipment and provides catering services and means of transport.

THE CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PROTECTION DIVISION ensures proper protection of classified information of the Senate Chancellery and proper workflows associated with incoming and outgoing documents and mail.

THE INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDIT DESK is responsible for assessing management and control systems in the Chancellery of the Senate in terms of their suitability and effectiveness. In particular, it sees to it that all Senate's activities comply with the law and monitors cost-effectiveness and financial credibility.

THE LEGAL ADVISER TEAM provides professional legal services for the Chancellery of the Senate.

Office for Citizen Relations, 2012



HEAD OF THE CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE

