

NOTES ON THE SENATE



**SENATE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF POLAND**

Chancellery of the Senate

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. 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, manages the Chancellery with the assistance of his or her deputies and office directors.

The Chancellery of the Senate is responsible for ensuring that the Senate and its bodies function efficiently, in particular by organising the sessions of the chamber and helping senators exercise their mandates. Its most important role, however, is to ensure the proper functioning of the Senate as a legislative body. This task was delegated to the Senate Proceedings Office and the Legislative Office, and for matters relating to foreign affairs and the European Union – to the Office for International Cooperation.

CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE

6 WIEJSKA ST. | 00-902 WARSAW

TEL. 48 22 694 93 34

senat@senat.gov.pl

www.senat.gov.pl

www.senat.edu.pl



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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 Foreign Affairs Committee and 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, assessments of potential economic and social impacts of legislative initiatives and laws adopted by the Sejm, and submits comments on the execution of decisions of the Constitutional Tribunal.

The **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OFFICE** is responsible for all international contacts of the Senate and it coordinates activities resulting from Poland's membership of the European Union. A special task of the office is to prepare the sessions of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the European Union Affairs Committee, both in terms of substantive and organisational aspects. The office also coordinates the cooperation of Senate committees with relevant committees in the parliaments of other states and the European Parliament, organises the cooperation between the Senate and international parliamentary institutions, and prepares missions of senators and Chancellery officials abroad.

The **POLISH COMMUNITIES ABROAD OFFICE** provides services to the Senate and the Head of the Chancellery of the Senate in matters related to care for the Polish diaspora and Poles abroad. One of its tasks is to cooperate with public administration authorities, non-governmental organisations, and Polish institutions acting for the Polish diaspora and Poles abroad. Additionally, the office collects, processes and disseminates information about the situation and organisational structures of Polish communities and the Polish diaspora all over the world and the Senate's actions for the Polish diaspora and Poles abroad.

The **OFFICE OF THE MARSHAL OF THE SENATE** provides the Marshal and the Presidium of the Senate with substantive and organisational support necessary for their public and state activity. It coordinates their cooperation with external partners, including the Polish diaspora and Poles abroad, local governments and non-governmental organisations. It also provides secretarial services: among other things, it arranges and prepares meetings held by the Marshal and Deputy Marshals of the Senate. The office is also responsible for managing meetings of the Presidium of the Senate and the Council of Seniors.

The **SENATE INFORMATION CENTRE** is tasked with media coverage for the Chamber and its bodies, conducting information policy of the Senate and the Chancellery of the Senate. The centre provides information on the activities of the Chamber, including public information about the Senate, its bodies and the Senate Chancellery. The centre maintains the website of the Senate and manages other channels of communication of the Chamber.

The **ANALYSES AND PETITIONS OFFICE** provides the Senate, its bodies, Senators and the Chancellery of the Senate with expert input and information by preparing analyses, expert opinions, thematic papers and information and statistics necessary for the work of the Chamber. The office handles the petition examination process, deals with documenting the work of the Chamber, provides responses to non-official letters addressed to the Senate. It also cooperates with research, analysis and archive services of foreign parliaments.

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 governmental travel. 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 af-

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fairs of the Senate clubs, groups and teams. It also maintains the Register of Interests and handles matters associated with the senators' declarations of assets.

The **EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND PUBLICATIONS OFFICE** deals with popularization activities and publishing services for the Senate Chancellery. It popularizes knowledge about the Senate by e.g. educational and promotional activities, organization of group visits to the Sejm and the Senate, and by disseminating promotional and informational publications. It also provides printing services for the Chancellery of the Senate, including the preparation of its publications before they go to press.

The tasks of the **LEGAL, PERSONNEL AND ORGANISATION OFFICE** include providing the Chancellery of the Senate with legal and organisational support as well as office and archival services for the Senate, its bodies and the Senate Chancellery. The office draws up internal regulations and conducts public procurement procedures, manages the human resources policy, personnel matters and employee training. The office provides IT system for electronic documentation management and runs the General Chancellery. The office also includes a team of legal advisers who provide professional legal services to the Senate Chancellery and the Senate Archive, where the work of the Chamber is documented, archived and made available.

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 **ADMINISTRATION OFFICE** provides the Chancellery of the Senate with organisational and technical support. It manages the assets of the Chancellery, supplies it with necessary materials and equipment, manages catering services and means of transport. It also provides IT, telecommunication and TV services for the Chancellery of the Senate.

The **CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PROTECTION DIVISION** ensures proper protection of classified information of the Chancellery of the Senate and is in charge of security on the Senate premises.

The **INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT** is responsible for internal control and audit in the Chancellery of the Senate, including the performance audit of the tasks related to the custodianship over the Polish diaspora and Poles abroad.

The **DATA PROTECTION SUPERVISOR** ensures appropriate protection of personal data.

Education, Promotion
and Publications Office



(photo by T. Ozdoba)

Chancellery of the Senate

HEAD OF THE SENATE CHANCELLERY

