



SENAT RP

NOTES ON THE SENATE

SENATE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF POLAND

CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE
OFFICE FOR CITIZEN RELATIONS

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Chancellery of the Senate

The principle of autonomy lies at the foundation of parliament functioning. It enables the parliament to adopt its own regulations and decide the structure and competencies of its 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 the Senate Presidium resolution of 1.09.1989 and is institutionally subordinate to the Senate Marshal. The Chancellery stands guard over the efficient operation of the Senate and its bodies (particularly over the smooth flow of their meetings) and helps senators in the execution of their mandate. Chancellery functionaries are politically neutral – they are forbidden by law to publicly demonstrate their political views.

The **Head of the Chancellery of the Senate** has the rank of state minister and is appointed and dismissed by the Senate Marshal. He is the official superior of the Chancellery staff and answers to the Senate Marshal for the performance of the Chancellery.

The principal task of the Chancellery is to ensure that the Senate functions properly as a legislative organ. That task has been delegated to the Senate Proceedings Office and 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 Senate sessions and Senate committee meetings. The office manages all Senate committee secretariats except that of the European Union Affairs Committee, prepares shorthand reports from Senate sessions and committee meetings, and handles matters related to lobbying activities taking place in the Senate.

The **Legislative Office** analyses legislative proposals adopted by the Sejm and legislative initiatives and resolutions of the Senate for legal compliance, ensures that deliberations in the Senate proceed in compliance with its regulations, prepares legal studies in the area of legislation development and legislative activities of the Senate, appraises European Union legislative proposals and submits comments associated with the execution of Constitutional Court decisions.

The **Office for International and European Affairs** coordinates Senate's foreign contacts as well as activities associated with Poland's membership in the European Union. Its particular task is to provide substantive and organizational support to activities of the European Union Affairs Committee. The office also coordinates cooperation between Senate committees and equivalent committees in foreign national parliaments and in the European Parliament, organizes Senate's cooperation with international parliamentary organizations and prepares foreign business trips by senators and chancellery personnel.



(Fot. J. Zawadzki)

The **Office of the Senate Marshal** is tasked with providing substantive and organizational support to the Senate Marshal and Deputy Marshals. It also performs secretarial services on their behalf: it arranges and organizes meetings which they attend and handles patronage issues. The office provides support at meetings of the Senate Presidium and the Council of Seniors.

The **Polish Communities' Abroad Office** performs tasks associated with the exceptional role played by the Senate in respect of our compatriots residing in foreign

countries. In the tradition of the Second Polish Republic, the Senate looks after the Polish émigré community and Poles living abroad, whereas the office assists Senate bodies and the Head of the Chancellery of the Senate in the performance of that task. It collaborates with the government and with non-governmental organizations that provide assistance to Poles abroad. It collects and processes information about the Polish Diaspora, assesses applications for public assistance to projects directed at the émigré community, and monitors their execution. The office also organizes the work of the Polish Communities' Consultative Board.

The tasks of the **Office for Citizen Relations** include assisting the Senate in contacts with the general public, disseminating information on the work and role of the Senate, as well as education and outreach activity. The Office also replies to citizens' letters addressed to the Senate and helps to deal with the petition examination process. Office personnel popularize the knowledge of the Senate through publications, seminars, exhibitions and organized tours of the Senate seat. It cooperates with the mass media, which it uses to inform the public of the Senate activities via communiqués and press conferences. Office personnel also maintain the Senate and the Senate's Chancellery website.

The **Analyses and Documentation Office** prepares and provides to the senator and Senate bodies information indispensable in legislative work, such as research papers, studies, expert opinions and statistics. It also cooperates with parliamentary research and archive services in other countries. 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 **Senatorial Affairs' Office** has the task of providing organizational and legal assistance to senators, for example in setting up and running senatorial offices, handling senators' staffing needs or dealing with issues connected to boarding senators in Warsaw and their domestic travel. The office advises senators and provides them with legal opinions, collects and makes available information about the senatorial mandate and about senators and their offices. The office also deals with affairs of the Senate clubs,



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circles and teams. It also maintains the Register of Benefits and handles matters associated with senators' financial declarations.

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 Chancellery's employment policy and personnel matters.

The **Finance Office** is responsible for the finances of the Senate Chancellery. It prepares the draft of the Chancellery's periodic budget.

The **Information Technology Office** handles computer and printing needs of the Senate Chancellery; it prepares Chancellery publications for printing.

The technical support is provided to the Senate Chancellery by the **Administration Office**. It manages Chancellery assets, supplies it with needed materials and equipment, and provides food and transportation services.

The **Classified Information Protection Division** cares for security of classified information and proper protection of the Senate Chancellery, and ensures the smooth flow of documents and consignments coming to and leaving the Chancellery.

The task of the **Independent Internal Audit Desk** is to assess Senate Chancellery management and control systems from the viewpoint of their suitability and efficacy, particularly as they relate to the legality of conducted activities, good management practices and financial reliability.

The **Legal Adviser Team** provides the Senate Chancellery with legal services.

*Public Information and Education Unit, November 2006
with later amendments, June 2009*

