

Report on Study Visit to European Parliament

9th -16th July 2012

Five officers of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat were deputed from 9th to 16th July 2012 for an Exchange Programme with the European Parliament to gain first- hand knowledge about the functioning of the EP, and its various wings. The programme was held in the European Parliament premises at Brussels, Belgium. At the outset, **Mr. Dick Toornstra, Director [OPPD]** inaugurated the programme and welcomed the delegation and in his opening address provided us with all essential information about the contents of Exchange Programme and also highlighted the relevance of such exchange programme to strengthening the democratic values and practices between India and European Union.

Schedule

Introductory- Parliament, Council and Commission

Exchange Programme

The speaker's, who were experts in their respective fields, delivered the lectures on the subjects mentioned below and also during the exchange programme, the following subjects/topics were given for discussion to all the participants.

1. **General Introduction to the European Parliament** by Ms. Ieva Galuyte [administrator & lecturer]
2. **Guided tour of the EP premises** by Mr. Marc Bentinck, Administrator OPPD
3. **Tour of the Parliamentarium Unit** by Mr. Stephane Van Wassenhove.
4. **Policy Department** for citizens rights and constitutional affairs by Mr. Wilhem Lehmann[Principal administrator]

5. **Legislative process** : Processing amendments in the EP, voting list by Mr. Andre Corrado [administrator, secretariat of the committee for international trade]
6. Reconciling openness and **security** at the EP by Mr. Mathieu Thomann, Director, and Directorate for security and risk evaluation.
7. **Inter-parliamentary delegation** by Tim Boden, Principal Administrator, Inter Parliamentary delegations.
8. **India and European Parliament** by Sir Graham Watson MEP [UK: Group of the alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Chair, Delegation for relations with India]
9. Special **committee meeting** on Organized Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering [witnessed the proceedings of the committee]
10. Parliamentary **Ethics** by Mr. Anthony Teasdale, Director, Impact Assessment and European Added value.
11. Members Statute, **Pay and Social Entitlements** By Ms. Maria Angeles Marine Valls and Mr. Xavire Thouvenin [Members Salaries and Social Entitlements Unit]
12. Meeting with Mr. Klaus Welle -**Secretary-General** of the European Parliament
13. **Parliamentary Committees of the European Parliament** : role and functioning by Mr. Silvio Gonzato
14. **Squaring uniformity of texts with multilingual accuracy: translation at the EP:** by Mr. Paraskevi Chavaki, Administrative manager, Multilingualism and External Relations Unit.
15. **Maximizing efficiency in a multilingual parliament:** the EP's approach to cost effective interpretation. By Juan Carlos Jimenez Marin, Director of Directorate and Head for the Recruitment of Auxiliary conference Interpreters.
16. **Research and Reference facilities:** Support to MEPs by Iain Watt and Ms. Irmgard Anglmayer , Head of Unit , DG for presidency.
17. **The EP and ICT:** current services and strategy for the future by Ms. Marie-Cecile Bernard, Director of **Information and Technology**.
18. Meeting with the Policy Department of **DG external policies** by Mr. Etienne Bassot, Head Unit –Policy Department.
19. **Documentation of EP proceedings and access to documents** by Ms. Eleni Malouta

Some of the highlights of the above sessions are detailed in the following paragraphs:

The Training Programme began with an introduction to the European Union as well as the European Parliament by Ms. Ieva Galuyte. She gave us a 360 degree perspective of the formation of the EU, the three branches of the European Union, viz. the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament; as well as their respective roles and responsibilities.

The EU consists of 27 member states. Croatia is slated to join the EU by May 2013 as its 28th member.

The number of MEPs for each country is roughly in proportion to its population. Under the Lisbon Treaty no country can have fewer than 6 or more than 96 MEPs. The current numbers in the Parliament were set, however, before the coming into force of the treaty. The numbers will be adjusted for the next mandate of the European Parliament. For example, the number of MEPs for Germany will thus be reduced from 99 to 96, whilst for Malta this number will increase from 5 to 6.

The European Parliament has three places of work – Brussels (Belgium), Luxembourg and Strasbourg (France). Luxembourg is home to the administrative offices (the ‘General Secretariat’). Meetings of the whole Parliament (‘plenary sessions’) take place in Strasbourg and in Brussels. Committee meetings are also held in Brussels.

The three organs are inter-connected and work somewhat similar to our Executive, the Upper House and the Lower House. The Commission is the government of the EU and consists of 27 Commissioners, and deals with the implementation of European Policies, and with the Budget of the Union.



The European Parliament is the only multinational parliamentary assembly in the world, and the only EU institution directly elected by Europe's citizens. It represents approximately 500 million people in the EU's 27 Member States. Elections are held every five years. The June 2009 election marked the 30th anniversary of elections by universal suffrage. Following the election, 736 Members were elected to Parliament. They join together in political groups on the basis of political affiliation rather than nationality.

The European Parliament's official seat is in Strasbourg, on the border between France and Germany, a city that symbolizes the reconciliation of Europe after the two world wars. As decided by the Member States of the EU, every year Parliament holds 12 plenary sessions in Strasbourg. Its Members meet in parliamentary committees in Brussels, where additional plenary sessions are also held. Debates are conducted in all the EU's official languages, reflecting its commitment to a varied and multicultural Union which is 'united in diversity'.

Since 1979, successive European treaties have increased the powers of the European Parliament when it comes to drafting the EU budget and laws. MEP's political control of the EU's other institutions and bodies, has also been strengthened.

The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, has greatly increased the Parliament's budgetary powers to cover all EU expenditure, including common agricultural policy spending, on which the Council (representing the Member States' governments) previously had the last word.

Further, the Lisbon Treaty also brings its influence to bear on the Union's foreign policy. All international agreements and any EU enlargement now requires the approval of MEPs. Decisions on the implementation of trade policy, development cooperation policy and humanitarian aid policy must be taken jointly by Parliament and the Council. MEPs regularly debate human rights issues and send monitors around the world to check that elections are conducted freely and fairly.

Meeting with SG

The meeting with the Secretary General, Mr. Klaus Welle, was held on 11th July 2012. It was a very fruitful discussion with the young and dynamic Secretary General from Germany having many new ideas on active interaction between our two Parliaments. The main point raised by the Secretary General was that the Indian Parliament and the European Parliament should have greater interaction with each other and a sharing of experiences. He also wanted more focussed Member of Parliament-level meetings. In addition to the Indo- EU Friendship Group, which the EP is eagerly awaiting the formation of, the SG of the EP also suggested that there could be visits of the Committees of Parliament, particularly those dealing with external trade, foreign treaties etc. We suggested that the Committee on Commerce, being

serviced by our Secretariat could be considered for invitation to such a programme. The SG agreed to this proposal.

Committees-

The EP has 20 Committees. These Committees hold open house sittings and run throughout the year. The following are the Committees of EP:

1. Committee on Foreign Affairs
2. Committee on Development
3. Committee on International Trade
4. Committee on Budgets
5. Committee on Budgetary Control
6. Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
7. Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
8. Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
9. Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
10. Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
11. Committee on Transport and Tourism
12. Committee on Regional Development
13. Committee on Agriculture
14. Committee on Fisheries
15. Committee on Culture and Education
16. Committee on Legal Affairs
17. Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
18. Committee on Constitutional Affairs
19. Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
20. Committee on Petitions

We also had the opportunity to attend a meeting of the Special Committee on Organised Crime, Corruption, and Money Laundering (Crim)

Inter-Parliamentary Delegations :

European Parliament's delegations maintain relations and exchange information with parliaments in non-EU countries. Through its delegations, the European Parliament helps to represent the European Union externally and to promote in third countries the values on which the European Union is found, namely the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

There are currently 41 delegations. The number of Members in each delegation varies from 12 to cover 70 for parliamentary assemblies.

There are several types of delegations:

- Joint Parliamentary Committees
- Parliamentary Cooperation Committees
- Other Inter-Parliamentary Delegations
- Delegations to Multilateral Parliamentary Assemblies

The delegation chairmen coordinate their work within the Conference of Delegation Chairs. Inter-parliamentary meetings are held once or twice a year, alternately in one of Parliament's places of work and in a place decided by the partner parliament in the non-EU country concerned.

Principles governing delegation activities

The prime objective of the Inter-parliamentary delegations is to maintain and develop Parliament's international contacts. Accordingly, delegation activities are, on the one hand, aimed at maintaining and enhancing contacts with parliaments of States that are traditionally partners of the European Union and, on the other hand, contribute to promoting in third countries the values on which the European Union is founded, namely the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. Parliaments' international contacts are governed by the principles of public international law. Parliament's international contacts are aimed at fostering, wherever possible and appropriate, the parliamentary dimension of international relations.

Members' Salaries and Social Entitlement :

Ms. Maria Angeles Marine Valls and Mr. Xavire Thouvenin made a presentation on the Members' Salaries and Social Entitlement. There are 723 Members in the European Parliament who are entitled for the following monetary and other benefits:-

1. **Salary** – EUR 7,956.46 monthly.

2. **Transitional allowance** – Paid at the end of an MEP term of office.
3. **Pensions** – No contribution is withheld from pay of MEPs and covers old age, survivor's and invalidity.
 - (i) **Invalidity Pension** – Available only to MEPs.
 - (ii) **Survivor's and orphan's pensions** – Beneficiaries are the official partners or spouses at the date of death, and dependant children.
4. **Disability Assistance** – Covers only MEPs.
5. **Medical expenses** – Primary cover for sickness expenses, providing for reimbursement. MEPs are also provided additional sickness cover by way of private insurance scheme, intended to cover the amount of medical expenses not reimbursed by the system.
6. **Accident Insurance** – Accident cover applies only to MEPs during their term of office, even during the holidays.
7. **Loss & theft Insurance** – It only applies when MEPs are on official journeys. A maximum of EUR 5,000 per theft or loss and per accident is guaranteed.

Parliamentary Ethics :

In European Commission, code of conduct for its members was introduced following the 1999 corruption scandal which brought down Santer Commission. There was no similar stand-alone code for Members of European Parliament (MEPs) until 2011 when a lobbying scandal was exposed and there was reports revealing that MEPs were prepared to take bribe in return for tabling amendments to legislative reports. In response thereto, Parliament of EU called for the introduction of a code of conduct for MEPs and a working group was set up whose draft Code of Conduct was approved by Parliament Conference of Presidents (composed of the political group leaders) in July, 2011. The Draft was adopted by European Parliament in December, 2011 and the rules were made effective from 1st January, 2012.

2. This Code of Conduct codifies and enforces ethical standards and rules of conduct in the areas in which MEPs are functioning with a view to maintaining public trust in elected representatives. The scope and objective of the Codes of Conduct is to outline the overall principle of proper conduct in

the Parliament. The code describes what is generally agreed to be desirable behaviours and what is not.

3. **Penalties provided under EP's Code of Conduct**

It is an interesting reading to go through some of the penalties provided in EP's Code of Conduct. Rule 153 provides that-

- (i) In exceptionally serious cases of disorder or disruption of Parliament in violation of the principles laid down in Rule 9, the President, after hearing the Member concerned, shall adopt a reasoned decision laying down the appropriate penalty, which he shall notify to the Member concerned and to the presiding officers of the bodies, committees and delegations on which the Member serves, before announcing it to plenary.
- (ii) When assessing the conduct observed, account shall be taken of its exceptional, recurrent or permanent nature and of its seriousness, on the basis of the guidelines annexed to these Rules of Procedure.
- (iii) The penalty may consist of one or more of the following measures:
 - a) a reprimand;
 - b) forfeiture of entitlement to the daily subsistence allowance for a period of between two and ten days;
 - c) without prejudice to the right to vote in plenary, and subject, in this instance, to strict compliance with the Members' standards of conduct, temporary suspension from participation in all or some of the activities of Parliament for a period of between two and ten consecutive days on which Parliament or any of its bodies, committees or delegations meet;
 - d) submission to the Conference of President, in accordance with Rule 19, of a proposal for the Member's suspension or removal from one or more of the offices held by the Member in Parliament.

4. Further, it was gathered that the issues relating to imposition of penalty on violation of Code by MEPs are decided either by the President of European Parliament or by the Conference of President consisting of President and Leaders of various groups. As regards removal of MEP from membership, there is no power with the President, Conference of President or the European Parliament under the Code of Conduct or otherwise to remove any Member from the membership of the European Parliament. MEPs can only be suspended for a maximum of 10 days from participating in all or some of the activities.

Research and Reference Facilities :

Support to Member of European Parliament

Library in European Parliament provides an effective, impartial and professional information service to the European Parliament and Members of European Parliament (MEPs) with information of value. There are various types of Library and Research Services which are provided to MEPs. The Library and Research Services are performed by the Policy Department of the European Parliament such as:-

- (i) Analysing and commenting on expert opinion;
- (ii) Identifying evidence of census and generation of new policy option from available knowledge;
- (iii) Primary research on policy issues; and
- (iv) Impart assessment.

2. The library of European Parliament provides the following services to the Members of European Parliament and other European Parliament staff:-

- (i) Provides an information service which assists MEPs fulfill their individual parliamentary functions;
- (ii) Produces analytical papers of topics of interest of the EP, as an exclusive service for the MEPs;
- (iii) Makes its information services available to other EP staff as required for the functioning of Parliament;

- (iv) Enables effective information work by clients through design for self-service, provision of structured information literacy training and information consultancy work;
- (v) Delivers its services through media and channels which better fit its clients' needs;
- (vi) Ensures that its services evolve according to technological and professional innovation and clients' needs;
- (vii) Cooperates with other providers of information in the Parliament to ensure that corporate needs are met effectively and efficiently;
- (viii) Cooperates with national parliament information services.

3. The focus of library service is on individual MEPs and support to Committees/delegations including the Secretary-General. The library has subscription to 23 news agencies and 73 external data bases. It has subscribed to 1150 periodicals and has a collection of books bearing 75000 titles. There are certain direct services provided by the library staff and the most important of which is the portal "Ask the Library". Under this portal, Members of European Parliament can ask any question on any topic by using the interface between the Members and the library through the website of the library. Besides this, staff also receives online requests for supply of material on various topics. A very interesting feature in library service is that it provides analytical services which are published in the form of library briefing and summaries. These Library Briefings are published periodically and provide accessible overview of expert information on a current topic in Parliament work.

Translation and Interpretation :

On 20th July, 2012, in the course of discussion, Mr. Juan Carlo Jimenez Marin, Director, DG for Interpretation and Conference and MS Paraskevi Chavaki, Administrative Manager, DG for Translation explained in detail about the functioning of multilingual system in European Parliament.

1. The European Union is a community of 27 countries, whose unity and diversity is expressed via 23 official languages. In the European Parliament,

all Community languages are equally important. All parliamentary documents are published in all the official languages of the European Union (EU) and every MEP has in the right to speak in the official language of his/her choice. There are 23 official languages of the institution of EU, viz. Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish. All languages of EU are also the working languages.

2. Firmly rooted in the European treaties, multilingualism is the reflection of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the European Union. It also makes the European institutions more accessible and transparent for the general public, which constitutes a guarantee for the success of the EU's democratic system.

3. The right of each Member to read parliament documents, to follow debates and to speak in his/her own language is expressly recognized in Parliament's Rules of Procedure. In addition, in its role as legislator, the European Parliament is obliged to guarantee that the linguistic quality of all the laws which it adopts is beyond reproach in all official languages.

4. The Treaty provisions also allow all European citizens to follow Parliament's work, to ask questions and to receive replies in their own language.

5. To produce the different language versions of its written documents and to correspond with citizens in all the EU languages, the European Parliament maintains an in-house translation service able to meet its quality requirements and to work to the tight deadlines imposed by parliamentary procedures. It also has recourse to freelance professional translators for non-priority texts. Parliament employs almost 700 translators in its translation services whose job is to translate into all the official languages several categories of documents, including:

Plenary documents and committee documents: agendas, draft reports, amendments, adopted reports, opinions, resolution, written and oral questions, minutes and reports of proceedings, notices to Members, etc;

- Documents of other political bodies, such as the joint parliamentary assemblies consisting of Members of the European Parliament and national MPs or elected representatives of third countries;
- Decision by the European Ombudsman;
- Information for the citizen and for the Member States;
- Decision of Parliament's governing bodies (Bureau, Conference and Presidents, Quaestors)

6. As a general rule, translators translate into their mother tongue. At present the total number of languages are 23 and 27 Member States and in view of the high number of language combinations of 506 (23 Official languages which can be translated into 22 others), it is sometimes difficult to find someone able to translate from a given source language into a given target language, especially in the case of the least widely spoken languages in the Union.

7. To translate texts written in these languages, the European Parliament has therefore put in place a system of 'relay' languages; a text is first translated into one of the most widely used languages (English, French or German) and from there into the minor languages.

8. All priority documents and sensitive political texts, as well as a substantial proportion of other documents, are checked and proofread internally before delivery. In addition, sample quality checks both of external and internal translations are regularly carried out.

9. If sufficient capacity is not available in-house, some low-priority documents may be translated externally; they can also be sent for translation to another institution.

10. The main task of the European Parliament's interpreters is to render orally the speeches given by MEPs faithfully and in real time into all the

official languages. Interpreting services are provided for all multilingual meetings organized by the official bodies of the institution. The European Parliament's Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences employs approximately 430 staff interpreters and has at its disposal a reserve of some 2500 freelance interpreters (auxiliary conference interpreters) whom it calls on very regularly as required to cover its needs.

Interpreting is mainly needed for:

- Plenary sittings;
- Meetings of EP committees, parliamentary delegations, joint parliamentary assemblies;
- Meetings of political groups;
- Press conferences;
- Meeting of Parliament's governing bodies (Bureau, Conference of Presidents, etc.).

11. Between 800 and 1000 interpreters are on hand for the plenary sittings of Parliament, at which simultaneous interpretation is provided from and into all the EU's official languages. For other meetings, interpretation is provided as required, increasingly often to other than official languages of the Speaker. It is not always easy to find someone who can interpret from a given language into another and in such cases a relay system is used, whereby the interpretation from one language to another passes through a third, the 'pivot' or relay language.

12. Interpretation is provided at the Parliament's three places of work (Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg) and elsewhere, for example for inter-parliamentary delegations. The more languages, the more complicated interpreting becomes. The Parliament has around 400 permanent interpreters who can be joined by the same number of free-lances during the busiest periods.

13. A complete interpretation team for a meeting with 23 active and passive languages requires 69 interpreters, each 3-person booth directly covering as

many languages as possible. The number of interpreters available to work from some of the lesser-spoken languages can be limited, so the team relies on pivot-interpreters, from whom a relay translation is. In other cases, particularly for the newer member states, interpreters might work into and out of their mother tongue, which is known as “retour” or “bi-active” interpretation.

14. Preserving this unique linguistic diversity is a big challenge. As the EU operates in 23 languages, it is worth looking at the meaning of multilingualism, its benefits and its cost.

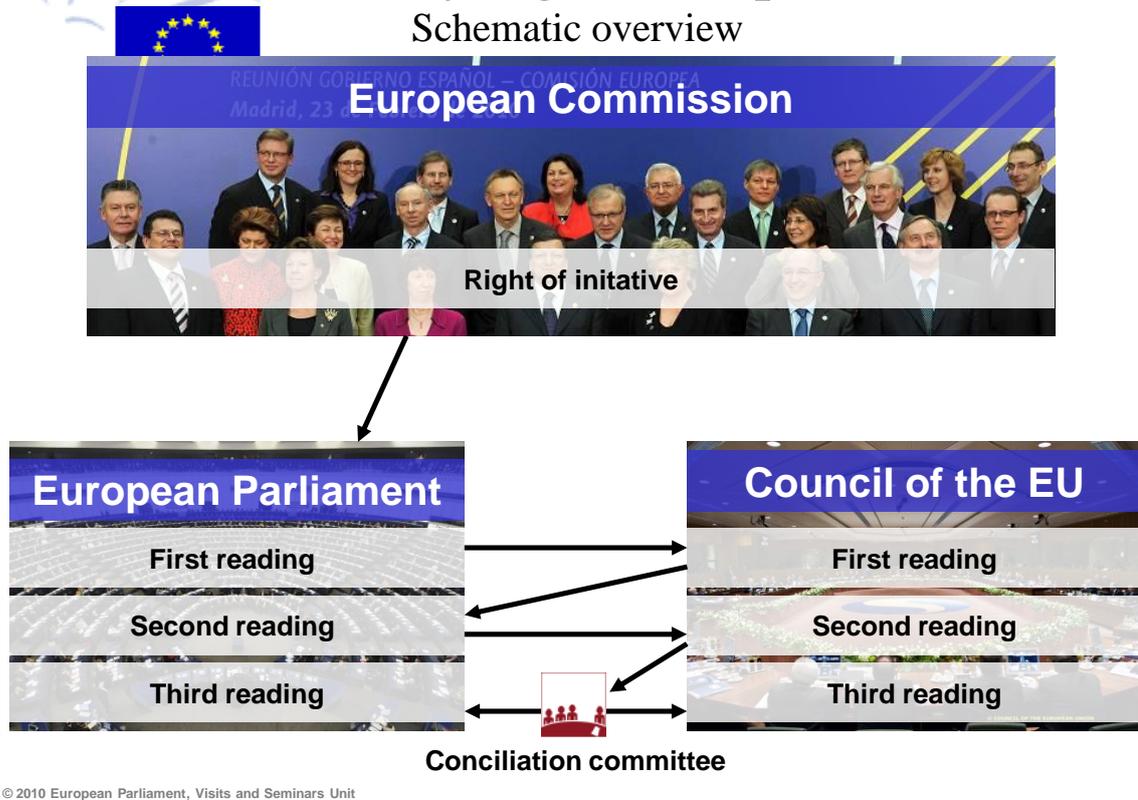
- (i) The EP translated 673,000 pages during the first half 2007 (165, 000 of them externally)
- (ii) Since 2005 the EP has translated over a million pages a year.
- (iii) EU system on average requires over 2000 translators and 80 interpreters per day.
- (iv) Multilingualism expenditure represents over one third of the total expenditure of Parliament.
- (v) For 2006, the cost of translation in all EU institutions is estimated at €800 million.
- (vi) The cost of translation and interpretation - was €1,123 million in 2005, which is above 1% of the annual general budget of the EU, or €2.28 per person per year.

15. However, due to recession in Europe, the cost and staff level of multilingual system has become an issue. So from the next year the European parliament has decided to cut down the budget of multilingualism by way of reducing the number of meetings of the committees.

Legislation- Mr. Andre Corrado gave a very insightful talk on the process of legislation and amendments of the EP.

The ordinary legislative procedure

Schematic overview



Legislation is always initiated at the Commission and then sent to the Parliament. The Council of the EU functions like an Upper House of most conventional bicameral legislatures. There are three separate readings of the Bill in both the EP and the Council. In case of a deadlock, the Bill is referred to a Conciliation Committee to resolve the differences between the EU and the Council. There is almost 100% success rate of every Bill i.e. every Bill, save one has been passed by the EP and the Council and become law

Security-

Brussels, Belgium:

Mr. Mathieu Thomann, Director of Security and Risk Assessment welcomed the participants and during a short period of time explained about the security arrangements in the complex. Directorate for security and risk assessment comes under the direct supervision of Directorate General of personnel who report to President of EP. The Directorate for Security and Risk Assessment is entrusted with overseeing the functioning of the risk

management unit, internal security unit, technical security unit and accreditation unit. The methodology and functioning are almost similar to our system and it has been observed that EP has enforced more rigid norms of security and procedures in the context of the changing global security scenario. DG for personnel has given a special emphasis on developing a security culture among the citizens as security is the concern of the every citizen, evolving a risk based security management, establishing different levels of access, extra effort on professionalizing and internalization and cooperation with national police forces to collect intelligence report from local levels.

The Palace of the Nation is the seat of the Federal Parliament. It is divided into two chambers: the House of Representatives [150 members] and the Senate [71 plus 3 Royal family members]. Federal Members of Parliament are elected for a term of four years, using proportional representation. The office of Senators and Representatives are located in Parliament Office building. There are two houses in Indian Parliament i.e. Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. On the same pattern, Federal Parliament comprises of the Senate and the House of Representatives and even the color representation of the Chambers are the same *i.e.*, Red (Senate) and Green (House of Representatives), respectively. The House Clerk announces the arrival of the Presiding Officer in the Chamber. The Secretary-General and other officers sit besides the Presiding Officer on both the sides on the Dias. The commander of the Palace is controlled by the Speakers of the Federal Parliament [Chamber of Representatives and Senate], Speakers of the Regional Assemblies [Flemish, the Walloon and Brussels Assembly].

General Jean-Maire Jockin, Military Commander is directly under the command of the Federal Parliament. For the safeguard and to protect the complex, the **Security Agents** have been deputed in ample strength to control the different accesses to the building, inside and underground parking, escorting the delegations, reinforce the civil servants, prepared for action during the activities where a lot of visitors are involved like open doors etc. and also to provide mobile patrol inside the buildings. Also, armed **Military**

Police have been mainly placed outside the internal perimeter of the Parliament to control the outside parking place who also manage the traffic to and from the Parliament Building, provide escorts and protocol guards, responsible for maintaining law and order in the place where the public is admitted to attend the plenary sessions of the Parliament and, if necessary, reinforce the security agents. Due to the less threat perception, there is no such stringent security concept as adopted in the Parliament of India. The Card Swiping system is installed in unmanned Entry Gates. The employees have been issued with punch cards. However, there are some Security Ushers, who are the permanent employees entrusted with the responsibilities of taking the visitors to the galleries and coordinates with the Military Police as well. The entire complex is closely and constantly monitored by the security staff through the high-tech CCTV cameras.

During the meeting with a Military Commander, he explicitly expressed his opinion on the security, i.e., keep a valuable balance between Security and Accessibility, be efficient and effective, and link the procedures with the threat level and above all the Security should be everybody's concern.

The complex of European Parliament in Brussels is interlinked with three other buildings. The reputed outsourced security agency (Group 4S) have been assigned the responsibility to safeguard the entire complex. The aspect of Security comes under the purview of DG- Presidents and very often the concerned wing reviews the security threat etc. No drastic measures are in place in the EU premises in Brussels as we weigh against the security preparedness in our Parliament Complex. One of the major reasons is, perhaps, to reach out to the people and make EU more people oriented. Any citizen of the EU countries who wishes to witness the proceedings can approach the Reception office with valid Identification documents and can get their Casual Entry Permits. These Casual Entry Permits are bar-coded plastic cards with photo on it. The employees of the Secretariat have been issued with Punch Cards. The employees gain access by swiping their punch cards which in turn opens the flap barriers. **However, a separate entry/exit for MEPs (to distinguish the gate a blue carpet is laid on the floor) for**

permanent staff and the visitors have been made. An exclusive gate has been earmarked for President of the EU and other dignitaries. The Door Frame Metal Detector [DFMD] has been placed at the entrance and the Security officers are provided with the Hand Held Metal Detector [HHMD] and they randomly use the same at the gate. A separate provision is made to bring the materials in to the complex which has to be gone through X-ray Baggage Scanners. There are Parliamentarium, Malls, Shopping complex, Restaurants, Metro Stations inside the complex. The TV Station and the Radio Station is stationed in the Lobby. **It was observed that no marshals were deputed to assist the Presiding Officer (PO); and the employees of the Secretariat only escort the PO. The press reporters inside the plenary sittings are allowed to carry mobiles and cameras, however, only still photography is not allowed. The entire complex is under strict CCTV surveillance.**

Procedure to Visits to European Parliament at Brussels: Individuals and Groups :

The European Parliament offers multimedia-guided visits for individual visitors for part-sessions and parliamentary sitting from Monday to Thursday in two batches i.e. at 1000 hours & 1500 hours, and on Friday in one batch only at 1000 hours only. These visits are conducted in all official languages of the EU without any charge/cost. There is no provision to reserve the visits in advance. If any visitor/s wishes to take part in a multimedia-guided visit, visitor/s has to approach the visitors' entrance about 15 minutes before the time fixed for visit along with individual Identification Proof (Passport/DL/IC card etc) for registration purposes. The same procedure is adopted to witness the proceedings of plenary sitting of the European Parliament. It is because of the limited number of seat that the permission is for only one hour and the visitor/s must be at least 14 years old. A European Parliament official organizes information visits for groups composed of a minimum of 20 people and a maximum of 45 and exceptionally, larger groups can be entertained on request. An EP official explains the role and working of EU Parliament

including the General Introduction. This may be followed by a discussion with an MEP, if the Parliamentary Business allows. When the European Parliament is in session, groups may be able to observe MEPs' debates 'live' from the visitors' gallery. These visits are free of charge and are conducted in most of the official languages of the EU.

Documentation of European Parliament proceedings and access to documents :

Ms. Eleni Malouta, Clerical Officer [*Public Register and Access to Document Unit, DG for the Presidency*] briefed on documentation of EU, proceedings and access to the documents to the citizens of the EU.

Objectives:-

Article 225 of the Treaty [Amsterdam] on the functioning of the European Union states that citizens and residents of the European Union or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State have a right of access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

1. Transparency: The major objective is a key element of transparency and bringing EU institutions closer to citizens; ensure wider possible access to the documents, Transparency is a prerequisite of good governance, it empowers citizens, allows them to scrutinize and evaluate the activities of the public authorities. It also renders more effective use of other public and political rights namely the freedom of speech and right to information.

2. The register of documents, a valuable search aid. In order to facilitate access to documents, as provided for in regulation [EC] No1049/2001, the EP has established an electronic Register of documents. Intended as a search aid, it contains the reference of documents drawn up or received by the EP since 2001. The public has direct access to the vast majority of these documents in their electronic form which is free and no justification is necessary. In case the citizen is not seeing for specific documents but simply

for information about the EP citizen can contact “Citizens enquiry Services also”

3. The documents which are directly accessible: - The register provides direct access to the majority of European Parliament documents via a search form via electronic format. A facility of special form for request can be submitted to Parliaments Transparency unit through which information can be gathered even through e-mail.

4. The Documents which are directly accessible on request and it includes the documents which cannot be directly on the register may be supplied on request. Access to them is free of charge and the request, via an electronic form, does not require any special justification. After due process, the service responsible in the EP will sent a reasoned reply within a period of 15 days. It also Promote good administrative practice.

5. Revision of Regulation 1049/2001.

An attempt of regulation EC No 1049/2001 of the EP and Council of 30.5.2001 regarding public access to EP, Council and Commission documents has been made in the recent past. The matter was brought to the consideration of EP, Council and Commission and having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 255 (2) thereof. The proposal from the Commission has been thoroughly discussed and the Hon’ble MEP’s expressed the feeling of openness which will enable citizens to participate more closely in the decision making process and guarantees the administration enjoys greater legitimacy and is more effective and more accountable to the citizen in a democratic system. This regulation consolidates the initiatives that the institutions have already been taken in a view to improve the transparency in decision-making process. A report was authored by Mr. Michael Cashman, MEP and the said report on revision of the Regulation, failed to achieve a compromise position satisfactory to all political groupings in the Parliament in December 2011. Mr Cashman’s first report was discussed over two years ago and, despite several attempts; cross-party compromise agreement was not succeed. The Lisbon Treaty then came

into effect and reinforced the commitment of EU institutions to greater transparency. The Treaty requires that the Regulation on access to documents is updated to comply with the Treaty. The European Commission subsequently tabled new proposals with a view to increase the transparency. The text confuses 'access to documents' with 'administrative procedures' and goes beyond the remit of its legal base. This also puts into questioning the inter-institutional agreement on the use of classified material.

While assessing, what was being proposed we also had to give due consideration to the protection of privacy, data protection and the protection of commercial secrets and sensitive data, such as information used in court proceedings, competition cases and documents relating to EU staff. The Cashman report should have clearly defined what the term 'documents' was intended to cover. This was relayed to the report's author in a bid to agree on a revised text that all MEPs could support. Unfortunately, the amendments suggested were not sufficient.

6. Restriction/Exception

Under this act , there are certain provision of restricting to disclose information have been adopted in the area of Public security, defense, military matters, financial, monetary or economy policy, court proceedings/audits, commercial interest, private life and sensitive documents etc...unless there is an overriding public interest in disclosure. In case parts of the requested document are covered by any of the exceptions, the remaining parts of the document may be released. The exceptions applied for the period during which protection is justified on the basis of the content of the document. The exceptions are applied for a maximum period of 30 years. If the document is covered by the exceptions related to privacy or commercial interests and in the case of sensitive documents the exception may, if required, continue to apply after the stipulated period.

7. Statistics

Large number of citizen sought information continuously for several years; the number of access requests submitted to the Commission has remained at the same level in 2010 and 2011. The commission handled approximate 6500 requests per year, related to institutions and bodies of the European Union. This stabilization of the volume of requests is possibly an indication that the right of access to documents has reached a significant level of public recognition among European citizens, civil society and economic operators. In the spirit of the Treaty of Lisbon, such awareness paves the way for increased public debate and their closer participation in shaping European policies. On the other hand, the need to make requests for access to documents diminishes as the Commission gradually increased proactive disclosure of documents and information through public registers and websites. Active transparency has been largely achieved with regard to the legislative activity. A significant amount of access requests and almost all confirmatory applications concern with the Commission's activities in the field of monitoring the application of EU law. These requests have to be handled in parallel with the investigations concerned. In such cases the Commission has to strike the right balance between ensuring transparency of its activities and protecting other rights which are guaranteed by law and by case law of the European Courts.

8. Complaints against EP for refusal to grant access to documents.

The European Union provides many benefits to EU citizens, residents, businesses, and associations. Nationals of EU Member States are also EU citizens, and enjoy a range of rights as a result of European citizenship. The European Ombudsman is an independent and impartial body that holds the EU administration to account. The Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in EU institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies. This covers administrative irregularities, unfairness, discrimination, abuse of power, *failure to reply*, refusal of information, and unnecessary delay. Any citizen or resident of the EU, or business, association, or other body with a registered office in the EU, can lodge a complaint.

European Ombudsman can only deal with complaints concerning the EU administration and not with complaints about national, regional, or local administrations, even when the complaints concern EU matters.

Document Management:

To ensure that the documents drawn up or received within the Directorate-General or equivalent department are managed in accordance with the rules. The composition of document management center's consisting of **centralized** [*represented by 1 or more teams within a Directorate-General or equivalent department*] and **decentralized** [*represented by 1 or more officials designated for a unit, a direction*] All documents that are received or formally drawn up, involve the responsibility of the Commission or one or more of its department or are likely to require action, follow-up or a reply from those, and contain important information which is not short-lived **have to be registered**. The **current registration tools** include a corporate mail management application and other specific registration systems. Some registered documents are available in **public registers** containing lists of documents by document number, title, subject, etc to carry out, at regular intervals, in co-operation with the departments responsible for files, an appraisal of the documents and files which could be transferred to the European Commission's Historical Archives.

The European Commission officially started the e-Domec project, the new electronic archiving and document management policy of the Commission, in January 2002. The Secretariat-General is responsible for the normative part and is also project owner for several informatics applications of document management. Document management takes account of the life cycle of documents and files, from the time they are received or formally drawn up until their transfer to the Commission's historical archives and their opening to the public or until their destruction. These stages include the

registration of the documents, the filing, the preservation and the transfer to the Historical Archives.

Documents are increasingly preserved in electronic format. In the near future various other Electronic Document Management Systems at the European Commission will also contain preservation and archiving modules.

These rules are laid down by the Secretariat-General of the European Commission. On the pursuance of the rules adopted, files and documents that are no longer of current administrative use for the Cabinets/Directorates-General/Services are transferred to the central repositories managed by the Historical Archives Service (*Office for infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels*).

The Historical Archives Service ensures the public availability of files and documents of the European Commission which are of historical, legal or informative value in accordance with the **30 year rule**. **ARCHISplus** is the database of the Historical Archives.

Library -

Parlamentarium -

This is a new scientific, interactive museum inaugurated only last October in Brussels which traces the history of the European Union from 1954 till present. The presentation begins with a walk through a dark corridor, personifying the years of World War II. Later one moves into the 60s and 70s, through to the 80s and 90s to the present. With each photograph, there is a voice interface in all the 23 languages of the EU. It contains recordings of voices of some of the founding leaders of the EU. Its management is out sourced to a team of young professionals. The Parlamentarium has become a regular on the tourist map of Brussels and has several visitors.

Conclusion

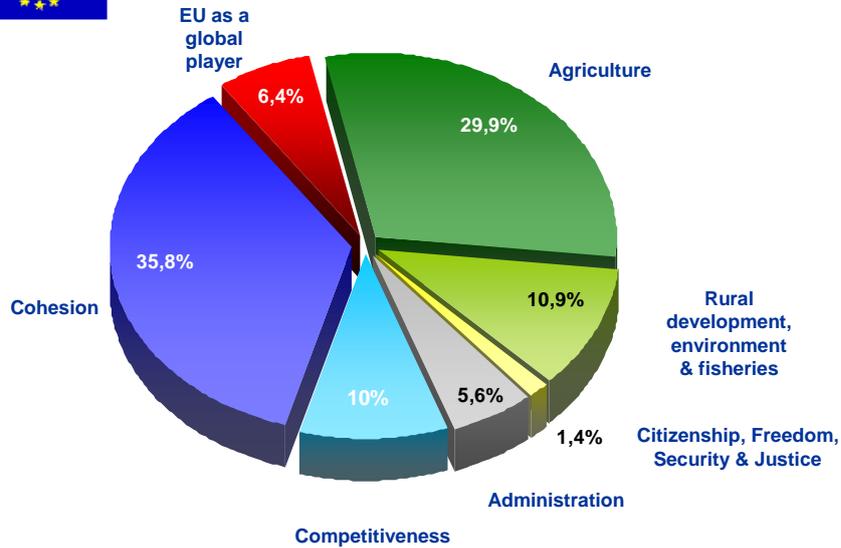
Overall, the Course was very useful, informative and rejuvenating as it has provided an exposure to the European Parliament. The hospitality extended by OPPD, European Parliament was outstanding and all best available facilities were extended to the delegation. The exchange programme was very informative, interesting and highly professional in nature. The Exchange Programme immensely enriched the undersigned in terms of being acquainted with the functioning of EP and its procedures. It is suggested that such type of exchange programme may be organized regularly to provide the opportunity to other officers also to be acquainted with the functioning of European Parliament.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Rajya Sabha Secretariat for nominating us and providing us an opportunity to attend a very informative and useful Exchange Programme.

**Sharada Subramaniam
Jagdish Kumar
Surendra Tripathi
Ashok Kumar Birla
Shaji Augustin**

Budget of the European Union

Expenditure 2012

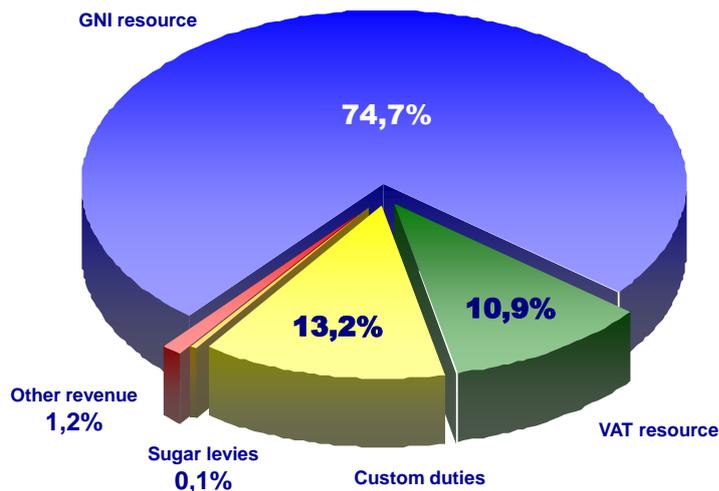


Total: EUR 129,1 billion

1,86 % increase on 2011
0,98 % of EU 27 GNI

Budget of the European Union

Revenue 2012



Total: EUR 129,1 billion

Estimate % of total revenue



EU languages

23 official languages
506 possible combinations



European Parliament:

+/- 700 translators
+/- 430 staff interpreters
reserve +/- 2500 freelance interpreters
plenary sittings: 800-1000 interpreters on hand

bg български

de Deutsch

fr français

hu magyar

pt português

fi suomi

es español

et eesti keel

it italiano

mt Malti

ro română

sv svenska

cs čeština

el ελληνικά

lv latviešu valoda

nl Nederlands

sk slovenčina

ga gaelic

da dansk

en English

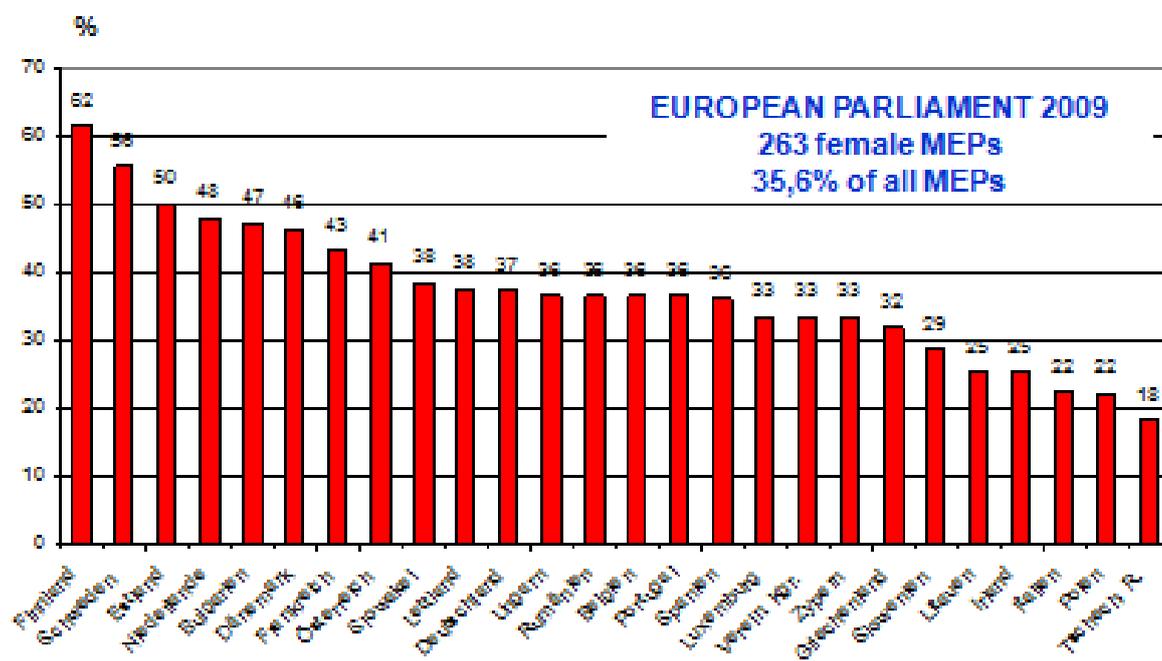
lt lietuvių kalba

pl polski

sl slovenščina



Women in EP 2009





Political groups

- **EPP: Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)**
- **S&D: Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament**
- **ALDE: Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe**
- **Greens/EFA: Group of the Greens / European Free Alliance**
- **ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists Group**
- **GUE/NGL: Confederal Group of the European United Left / Nordic Green Left**
- **EFD: Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group**
- **Non-attached**

