

**RULES GOVERNING THE OPERATION OF THE MEMBERS'
RESEARCH SERVICE**

BUREAU DECISION

OF 16 JUNE 2014

THE BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

- having regard to the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure, and in particular Article 25(2) thereof;
- having regard to the rules on the provision of library services within the Parliament ('Rules of the Library') adopted by the Bureau on 16 January 2012;

Whereas:

- (1) the Bureau's Decision of 20 May 2013 establishes a new Directorate-General for European Parliamentary Research Services (DG EPRS), which began operation on 1 November 2013, and the progress report from the Secretary General on the establishment of the Directorate-General, adopted by the Bureau on 2 April 2014;
- (2) the purposes of DG EPRS are: i) to provide Members of the European Parliament and where appropriate, committees of the Parliament, with independent, objective and authoritative analysis of, and research on, policy issues relating to the European Union, in order to assist them in their parliamentary work, and ii) to increase the practical capacity of Members and committees to scrutinise and oversee the European Commission and other executive bodies throughout the EU policy cycle;
- (3) the Directorate for Members' Research Service forms one of three Directorates within DG EPRS, the others being the Directorate for the Library and the Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value;
- (4) it is appropriate, in the context of the establishment of DG EPRS, to adopt rules for the operation of the Members' Research Service,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Mission

1. The Members' Research Service of the Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services (DG EPRS) shall provide all Members with independent, objective and authoritative analysis of, and research on, European Union policies, issues and legislation, in order to assist them in their parliamentary work.

2. The philosophy of the Members' Research Service, like that of DG EPRS as a whole, shall reflect the following six principles:

- a) to be independent, objective and authoritative in the work undertaken;
- b) to provide a comprehensive service, backed by specialism in all policy fields;
- c) to be client-oriented and responsive directly to the needs of Members;
- d) to offer a single point-of-entry for Members and a rapid response to requests;
- e) to ensure the clear, simple branding of all products and services; and
- f) to complement written material with greater 'in person' briefing of Members.

Article 2
Services

1. Composed of thematic units staffed by subject specialists, the Members' Research Service shall provide a dedicated research capability for individual Members and generate a wide range of accessible briefing materials for all Members, across the various EU policy fields.

2. More specifically, the Members' Research Service shall provide:

(a) tailored, on-demand, analysis and research to individual Members, in response to specific requests which they make, in respect of policies, issues and legislation in any field of European Union competence; and

(b) general briefing material of a clear, readable and content-rich kind, which shall be made available pro-actively and collectively to all Members, in any field of European Union competence.

3. General briefing material may take the form of a variety of analytical and research products - notably 'at a glance' notes, fact-sheets, briefings, in-depth analyses and/or longer studies - published in electronic and/or physical formats. The Members' Research Service shall *inter alia* automatically provide easy-to-read briefing material to all Members on all significant EU policies and on legislative proposals at the successive stages of the law-making process.

4. Material produced by the Members' Research Service shall follow a standardised, visually attractive format and make full use of graphics, statistics and charts.

5. 'In Person' briefing to individual Members shall also be offered by the Members' Research Service as part of its normal range of services.

Article 3
Requests for research work

1. Requests for analysis and research may be introduced by all individual Members, including by parliamentary office-holders in respect of their responsibilities, and by the Secretary General.

2. Requests for analysis and research may be made through the dedicated 'EPRS Members' Hotline', which provides a single point-of-entry to the services of Directorates for Members' Research Service and for Library. The Members' Hotline may operate in person, by email, by telephone and by fax.
3. The Members' Hotline shall provide an initial response to all enquires within three working hours from the reception of the relevant enquiry. The official opening hours of the EPRS Members Hotline shall be published on the DG EPRS intranet website.
4. Accredited Parliamentary Assistants and staff of political groups may submit requests for analysis and research on behalf of Members, provided that they are doing so on an authorised basis, in pursuit of Members' parliamentary work. Requests made for personal purposes shall not be handled. If the response would entail a significant commitment of human or other resources, prior written authorisation of the Member concerned may be required.
5. Research related to parliamentary decision-making and/or research of greatest interest to the widest number of Members shall take priority. Account shall be taken of the desirability of ensuring broad equity over time in the provision of services among individual Members.
6. The Members' Research Service may not provide legal advice or legislative drafting services to Members.
7. The services of the Members' Research Service may not be requested for any commercial purpose, or for any other personal purpose unrelated to parliamentary work, or as a form of in-kind support or subsidy to the work of any third party or outside organisation. The Members' Research Service may not be used to conduct private academic research on behalf of any individuals within or outside the Parliament.
8. The Members' Research Service is not required to deal with requests that relate to matters that lie outside the competence of the European Union.

Article 4
Confidentiality, use of research and data protection

1. Confidentiality shall apply to all work undertaken for individual Members by the Members' Research Service. The identity of the Member and the specific subject matter of a Member's request shall only be disclosed outside the Members' Research Service with the prior written consent of the Member concerned. The research content generated by requests may, however, be re-used in response to any similar requests received from other Members, or for inclusion in material published for use by all Members, provided that such material is properly anonymised.
2. Electronic or paper research by the Members' Research Service published by the Parliament shall be included in the institution's Electronic Register of References. Materials published electronically shall feature *inter alia* on the Parliament's 'Think Tank' web-pages.

3. Any personal data collected by the Members' Research Service shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001¹ and the Bureau decision of 22 June 2005 defining the implementing rules relating to that Regulation².

Article 5
Research for Advisory Committees

Research shall be provided to the Members of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and of the Committee of the Regions, in accordance with the Cooperation Agreement between the European Parliament and the two advisory committees signed by the Presidents of the three bodies on 5 February 2014.

Article 6
Administrative cooperation

1. Within the Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS), the work of the Members' Research Service shall be supported by that of the On-site and Online Library Services Unit of the Directorate for Library, and shall complement and dovetail with that of Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added Value in relation to the *ex-ante* and *ex-post* phases of the legislative cycle.

2. The Members' Research Service shall work closely with the policy departments of the Directorates-General for Internal Policies (DG IPOL) and External Policies (DG EXPO) and with other relevant services within the Parliament's administration. The Members' Research Service and policy departments may develop and publish joint products, as appropriate.

3. Where appropriate, the Members' Research Service and On-site and Online Library Services Unit shall provide factual or statistical information in response to questions concerning written answer under Rules 130 and 131 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure and Annex III to those Rules.

4. The work of the Members' Research Service may be underpinned by appropriate cooperation with the research services and libraries of national parliaments, comparable services in other EU institutions and international organisations, and academic and other research bodies, in order to enable relevant analysis and research to be more widely available to Members and within the Parliament.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

² Bureau Decision of 22 June 2005 on implementing rules relating to European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (PE 359.177/BUR/ANN1).

Article 7
Implementation

The present Rules may be complemented, where necessary, by implementing provisions adopted by the Secretary-General, or by delegation, by the Director-General for Parliamentary Research Services, to ensure that the above principles and obligations are properly implemented and respected. Any implementing provisions shall be published *inter alia* on DG EPRS intranet website.

Article 8
Entry into force

This decision shall enter into force on *1 July 2014*.