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THE STATUS OF ASSISTANTS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN THE COUNTRIES OF EUROPE

Based on the information from the website of

the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation

ALBANIA

In the Albanian Parliament the duties of the assistant are performed by the councilors of the committees and secretaries of the committees.

Besides that an MP-s has the right to have **a personal secretary** who has the duty **to keep in contact the MP-s with the constituency**. This secretary is proposed by the MP himself and his/her **salary** is provided by the **local government**.

AUSTRIA

The status of parliamentary assistants is regulated by an **Act of Parliament**, the so-called “**Parlamentsmitarbeitergesetz**”. It is the status of **an employee**. That means the contract follows the general conditions for working contracts ("Angestelltengesetz") in Austria.

Assistants are paid from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration **of MPs' assistants**.

The Parliamentary Assistants Act provides for reimbursement of expenditure for the salaries of the personal assistants of the members of the National Council, but up to a certain amount only (currently 2.468,5 €, 14 times a year, including employer's contributions, which means that the gross salary of a parliamentary assistant currently would be about 1.950 €, 14 times a year). It is incumbent on the members of the National Council to set their assistants' pay, but in case they go beyond the above-mentioned limitation they have no claim to reimbursement of the exceeding amounts.

There are **no limitations as to the number** of assistants.

There is no legal status of a “voluntary assistant” which does not exclude that there may be such assistants.

There is **a register of assistants** at the parliament, kept by Parliamentary Administration, Legal and Legislative Service. It is not made public.

In accordance with section 2 of the Parliamentary Assistants Act they have to declare that there is no reason for disqualification from reimbursement as enumerated under section 2 para. 1; beyond that, there is no obligation to disclose professional activities.

As to the passes to the parliament Section 19 of the House Rules for the Parliament Buildings determines the groups of persons entitled to be granted a permanent pass (badge) by the Parliamentary Administration.

The relevant Austrian law, **doesn't name requirements to fulfill the position of MP Assistants**, but **describes the kind of support** for the MP, namely

- **preparation of committee and plenary activities**
- other tasks in line with the parliamentary Rules of Procedure or related legislation
- parliamentary tasks on the **international level** and external contacts
- **contacts with citizens**
- **information of the public** about the above-mentioned activities of the MP.

The **procedure of hiring of MP assistants** starts like this:

- after having chosen an assistant the MP writes an application to the Speaker of the National Chamber. This application has to include a description of the duties of the assistant and all documents which are necessary for a working contract in Austria in general.
- The Speaker, after having consulted the so-called "Präsidiale" (= an advisory board consisting of the speaker and his two deputies and the leaders of the parliamentary clubs), has nominated one chartered accountant, who is responsible for administrating the contracts of the Parliamentary Assistants.

The term of office of MP assistants is limited by the end of the legislative period or shorter and thus renewable.

BELGIUM

The status of MP assistants is governed by a set of **internal regulations of parliamentary administration**. The rules are set by an internal parliamentary structure: Collège des Questeurs and Board. The assistants **don't have a civil servant status**, but are, in matters of social security, considered **employees**. The assistant can be promoted to a higher scale after 8 and again after 15 years of services at the House. Seniority obtained as a collaborator in one of the other Belgian parliaments or in the European Parliament is also taken into account.

The assistant's salary is paid from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration **of MPs' assistants**.

Parliamentary administration pays directly the MPs' assistants. The pay is set by an internal parliamentary structure: Collège des Questeurs and Board.

The number of paid assistants is limited: **one full time for administration** (secretary) and **one halftime for research (university level)**. MPs are also assisted by unpaid (**voluntary**) assistants.

MP assistants **are entitled** to:

- represent the MP before State administration authorities,

- represent the MP before local government authorities,

- represent the MP in contacts with NGOs,

- represent the MP in contacts with constituents,

- participate in meetings of parliamentary committees if the MP is present,

- hold permanent passes into Parliament's buildings just for the duration of the job.

There is a **register of MPs' assistants** kept in the parliament by the administration. The register is public.

MPs' assistants **are required to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

MP filing the request for permanent pass for a particular person is required to provide justification therefore.

As to **the requirements** though it is not formally required most assistants have finished secondary school or a higher education.

As to the **hiring procedure**: the assistant is proposed by the MP. The Personnel Department of the House controls whether the candidate has a EU nationality and is of good conduct.

Recruitment:

The assistant is **recruited and paid by the House of Representatives**. The salary scale is determined by the Bureau of the House and is the same for all the assistants. The assistants are appointed for the duration of the mandate of the MP they are working for. If the MP is not reelected his assistant is given notice.

They work either **at the office of the MP in the House in Brussels**, either at his office **in his district**.

BULGARIA

Each Member of Parliament at the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria has the right of one **supernumerary assistant**, who is given a permanent pass for access to the buildings of the National Assembly. The pass is issued after a written request made by the MP, addressed to the Secretary General. The passes are issued by the Technical Services Department after the order of the Secretary General and are signed by him.

In the Annex to the **Rules of organization and procedure of the National Assembly** – “Financial rules for the budget of the National Assembly” it is foreseen that the National Assembly undertakes the additional expenses of the Members of Parliament and the Parliamentary Groups, referred to their activity, within the amount of 2/3 of the basic monthly money reward of the MPs. This sum of money is placed at the disposal of the Parliamentary Groups which determine its allocation. These resources are used for assistant’s salaries, consultations, expertise, bureaus and other activities connected to the work of the MPs at the National Assembly and their constituencies.

The conditions and the order for issuing of permanent passes are regulated in the **Rules of Internal Order of the XXXIX National Assembly**. The rules are endorsed by the President of the National Assembly.

Each **Parliamentary Group** has a right to a **particular number of passes for experts /assistants/**. The total number of passes is 100 which are distributed according to the proportional representation of the Parliamentary Groups /Unions/ at the Parliament. The proposals for experts to the Parliamentary Groups, according to the quota approved, signed by the Chairman of the corresponding Parliamentary Group, are addressed to the Secretary General who gives an order for the issuing of passes for the proposed experts.

Moreover, for the purpose of assisting the work of the Standing Committees their Chairmen could make a proposal for the issuing of permanent passes for experts at the corresponding Committee. The maximum number of passes for experts for one Standing Committee is 12.

Data for the passes issued for assistants to MPs, experts to the Parliamentary Groups and to the Standing Committees are recorded in a Register. This Register is not open to the public.

In **Rules of organization and procedure of the National Assembly** there are texts which determine the **exact requirements and restrictions** for the supernumerary assistants to the MPs, but their concrete tasks are given directly by the Members of the Parliament whom they serve.

CROATIA

The status of MP assistants is governed by a **set of internal regulations of parliamentary administration**.

The assistant's salary is paid from the **budget**.

Assistants' pay is set by the Government Decree on salaries of civil servants.

There are **no formal limitations as to the number** of assistants employed by one MP.

There are also **voluntary** assistants.

Assistants **may not represent** the MP before State administration authorities, represent the MP before local government authorities, represent the MP in contacts with NGOs, represent the MP in contacts with **constituents**.

Assistants may participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.

They hold permanent passes into Parliament's buildings.

A **register** of MPs' assistants is kept by The Department of Human Resources. It is not open to the public.

MPs' assistants, also voluntaries, **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

They **are not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to any parliamentary services.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The function of MP Assistant exists in the Czech Republic, although there is **no legal act** which regulates the Status of MP Assistant.

It is fully in the **competence of the MPs** to choose their Assistants.

Therefore, there are **no special requirements** for the position of MP Assistant.

The law stipulates only that the **expenses** for the MP Assistants are covered by the **Office of the Chamber of Deputies**.

In accordance with the provisions of the *Rules of Procedure* (Article 117 of Law no. 90/1995 Coll.) and the rules set forth in a resolution of the *Budgetary Committee*, each of the MPs receives a sum of 35 000 CZK (1270 EUR) for the purposes of assistant's remuneration. This sum is divided, if the MP has more than one Assistant. The lowest sum for one MP Assistant is 1000 CZK. Thus, the highest number of Assistants of one MP can be 35.

The Assistant concludes a deputy assistant contract with the Office of the Chamber of Deputies.

Currently there are **2 assistants for each MP on average**.

DENMARK

The Status of assistant of a Member of Parliament is governed by a **parliamentary custom**.

The Folketing allocates an **allowance to the Parliamentary Groups**. The total amount **depends on the number of MPs**, in average the Folketing allocates approximately 5.000 EURO pr. MP pr. year. The allowance is designed to finance **research activities, collaborations, secretarial work** and other support activities connected to the parliamentary mandate. Each MP is within this allowance entitled to secretary assistance within an amount corresponding as a minimum to approximately 1.666 EURO per month. The political parties may finance supplementary assistants by own means.

The contract between MPs or the Parliamentary Groups and the assistants represents a **private agreement**, and the Folketing is not part in the relationship between MPs and their assistants (paid or unpaid voluntary). Thus the payment of assistants is part of this private agreement.

The parliament administration in Denmark has nothing to do with recruitment of assistants to the MPs. It's up to the MPs to hire their own assistants and they have individual requirements and decide the working conditions including salaries for the assistants.

There are **no formal limitations as to the number** of assistants employed by one MP.

There are also **voluntary assistants**.

An assistant **may represent the MP**

before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

in contacts with NGOs,

in contacts with constituents.

The assistants may **not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.**

The parliaments administration makes a **phone book** with the phone numbers of the employees in the parliament, members, members assistants and press. It is public.

The MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to any parliamentary services, nor **to declare/disclose various kinds of their income.**

The granting of permanent passes is based on internal rules laid down by the Presidium of the parliament and the administration.

ESTONIA

The **members of the Board** of the Riigikogu have **assistants**, but other members of the Riigikogu do not have personal assistants.

The **staff of the political parties and committees assist** members of the Riigikogu. Each political party is entitled to an allowance from the budget of the Chancellery of the Riigikogu for hiring the assistants. The number of assistants of the political parties varies from two to six. If a member of the Riigikogu needs researches, background information for the draft laws, **statistics etc, then these are the duties of the Department** of Economic and Social Information. The **staff of our parliamentary library** helps to find books, magazines, articles etc.

Only the members of Riigikogu, officials of the Chancellery of Riigikogu, police guards of the parliament building, employees of the establishments servicing the Riigikogu in the parliament building (like cafeteria) may be granted permanent passes. Permanent admittance permission for the positions - President of the Republic, Prime Minister, Ministers, the President of the National Bank, the Chairman of the Board of the National Bank, Chief Justice, Auditor General, Chancellor of Justice, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, State Secretary.

The granting of permanent passes is based on the internal rules.

FINLAND

The status of assistant of a Member of Parliament is governed by a **set of internal regulations** of parliamentary administration. Each member of the Parliament of Finland is entitled to **one personal assistant**. These assistants are employed under a **private-law contract** between them and **the Parliamentary Office**. Thus their contractual partner is the Parliamentary Office rather than the individual Deputy. Contracts with assistance are signed by the Administrative Director on behalf of the Parliamentary Office. The period of validity of the contract is normally one legislative period. On special reasons, or on the request of the assistant, the contract can be shorter than the whole period. The contract can be dissolved according to the normal labour laws on employment contract. The assistant must be at least 18 years of age and maximum of 64.

In practice, the concerned Deputy chooses his or her assistant, but the ultimate decision as to whether to conclude a contract rests with the Parliamentary Office (the Administrative Director and the Chancellery Commission). A Deputy is responsible for the direction and organisation of the assistant's work according to the labour laws and the regulations of the Chancellery Commission. An assistant's **duties** include **personal secretarial** and **office** services connected with the **Deputy's work as a legislator**, maintaining **contacts with linkage groups** and **compiling information and background material** needed in the legislative procedure.

The assistant's salary is paid from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration **of MPs' assistants**. The assistants' pay is set by the Chancellery Commission. The Chancellery Commission decides on the disposal of the allocation for paying Deputies' personal assistants. Its decision includes a stipulation of the procedures to be followed with respect to assistants' remuneration and other employment benefits. The Parliamentary Office is responsible for the services made available to assistants (e.g. occupational health care, personnel training, etc.).

Two or more Deputies can engage a joint assistant. The funds intended to remunerate an assistant can also be used **to outsource services** to a company or other organisation with which the Parliamentary Office has concluded a contract providing for this. With a Deputy's consent, either part or all of the **funds intended to pay an assistant can be paid to a parliamentary group instead**. The group can only use the funds to organise the assistance to the Deputy.

There are **no voluntary assistants**.

Assistants **may unofficially represent** the MP

before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

in contacts with NGOs

in contacts with constituents.

An assistant **may not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.**

An assistant **has an ID document and permanent pass to parliamentary buildings.**

A register of MPs' assistants is kept in the Administrative Department. It is public.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to any parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are not **obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to any parliamentary services.

To be granted a permanent pass to the Parliament of Finland you have to be an MP, employed by the parliament or an accredited journalist. The accreditation of a journalist is decided by the Chancellery Commission.

FRANCE – ASSEMBLEE NATIONALE

The status of MP assistants is governed by a set of **internal regulations of parliamentary administration**.

There is a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration of **MPs' assistants**.

The **salary is fixed by a deputy**. It is based on rules established by finance services.

The deputy is allowed to employ up to **5 assistants**.

There are also **voluntary** assistants.

Except participation **in committees meetings**, where assistant **may not be present**, MP **may be represented** by his/her assistant if he/she wishes so and there is a consent of the other party.

A **register** of MPs' assistants is kept in Financial Services Department. It is not open to the public.

MPs' assistants are not **obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to any parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to any parliamentary services.

FRANCE – SENAT

The status of MP assistants is governed by a set of **internal regulations of parliamentary administration**.

The assistant's salary is paid by administration from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration **of MPs' assistants**.

Six paid assistants may be employed by one MP.

Generally there are no **voluntary assistants** (but they are not forbidden)

Assistants **may not represent** the MP before

State administration **authorities**

local government **authorities**

Assistants **may represent** the MP in contacts with **NGOs** and with **constituents**.

Assistants **may absolutely not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**.

They have permanent passes into Parliament's buildings.

There is a **register** of assistants in parliament, but it is not public.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

They are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to parliamentary services.

GREECE

The status of MP assistant is governed by an **Act of Parliament**.

The procedure of hiring of MPs assistants is completely free. The assistant is chosen by the deputy whom is going to assist. The term of office of MP assistant is the term of office of the MP. They are considered **employees of the MP (civil law contract)**, but their **salary is paid by the Parliament**, from separate **appropriation** earmarked specifically for remuneration of **MPs' assistants**. The assistants' pay is set by Speaker's decision.

They are based everywhere is necessary.

One MP may employ **one assistant + three civil servants + one guard**.

There are **no voluntary** assistants but there is no interdiction.

An assistant **may represent** the MP

before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

MP in contacts with NGOs,

in contacts with constituents.

An assistant **may not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**.

Assistants have IDs and passes to parliamentary buildings.

The **register** of MPs' assistants is kept by Human Resources Department. It is not public.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to parliamentary services, **nor to declare/disclose various kinds of their income**.

ICELAND

There is **no separate function** of "assistant of a Member of Parliament".

Firstly, assistance to MPs is provided by **staff of the Parliament**. Secondly each **parliamentary group** receives annually a sum in accordance with the number of its members intended to pay for special services related to the work of the Parliament. All **parties** have used a part of that money to **employ an assistant for its Members**.

The Director of the Service Department decides on granting permanent passes on request from the mass media, i.e. newspapers, radio and television stations that have certain journalists and reporters present during sittings of the Parliament. Those are requested to have their pass visible when entering the Parliament House.

ISRAEL

In the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) each Member of the Knesset can employ **two full time assistants**, or several assistants part time. One position is for a **professional assistant**, and the other for a **technical assistant**.

It is the Knesset Member who chooses who to employ, and it is the **Knesset** that **pays the salary**. According to the Knesset Rules of Ethics a Member of the Knesset may not employ a member of his family, and must sign a declaration to the effect that the assistant is not a member of his family.

The employment **contract** is signed by the **Knesset Member and the potential assistant**. There is a standard contract, prepared by the Knesset legal department. The parliamentary assistants are not civil servants. Their rights and duties are enumerated in the contract.

The parliamentary assistants have their own employees' committee.

ITALY – CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI

Every MP may avail him or herself of **one or more assistant** or **personal aide** freely selected on the basis of personal trust.

The work or part-time work relationship **is directly and exclusively governed by mutual agreement between the parties** according to general legislation. No provisions therefore exist regarding the specific duties or responsibilities of such assistants.

Assistants are **paid directly by MPs**. The **Chamber of Deputies, through its Parliamentary Groups, reimburses** MPs every month on a flat-rate basis for expenses incurred in keeping up their relationship with their electors, and that sum can be used to pay assistants. The only condition is that **none** of the monies received may be **paid to family members**, near relations or distant relations within the fourth degree of kinship.

A specific regulation concerning assistants regards access to Chamber of Deputies premises and is invoked in certain decisions of the Bureau. The regulation specifies that individual MPs may obtain **access permits for no more than two assistants**. When applying for such access permits, MPs must specify whether the assistants are being paid or are offering their services free.

MPs holding specific public offices (members of the Bureau, Chairmen of Committees and similar bodies) are entitled to a **secretariat** where part of the personnel (depending on the kind of job they do) may be recruited from outside the Chamber of Deputies Administration.

Composition of the secretariats is governed by specific decisions of the Bureau.

Personnel from outside the Chamber of Deputies Administration may be freely selected by MPs holding any of the above-mentioned offices on the basis of personal trust. MPs should inform the Administration of the kind of work relationship they intend to set up. The Chamber then provides directly for emoluments to be paid and for tax and social security payments.

ITALY - SENATO

A function of an assistants of a Member of Parliament – a person supporting an MP in his/her activity - exists in the Senate.

The MP assistant is **not a civil servant** in the Italian Senate

The contract between Senators (sometimes, the Parliamentary Groups) and the assistants represents a **private agreement** and no link between the Senate and assistants exists. So Italian Senate is not part in the relationship between Senators and their assistants (paid or unpaid **voluntary**) and so the requirements to fill the position, the procedure of hiring the assistants, the candidatures and other **elements are freely agreed by the parts themselves**, under the general laws or regulations governing rights and duties of private employees and employers (or consultants, if this is the case). There are no specific laws or regulations governing their rights and/or duties, but civil and labour law.

As much the powers of representation conferred are concerned, they are defined by each Senator, but the assistants **may not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**, in any case.

The Senate allocates an **allowance to the Parliamentary Groups** - whose total amount **depends on the number of Senators** - designed to finance **research activities, collaborations, secretarial work** and other support activities connected to the parliamentary mandate. Of course parliamentary assistants have a status that allows them in possessing ID, identifying them as such, entering the building of Parliament, etc.

LATVIA

The status of MPs' assistants is governed by **Rules of procedure**, Art 195.-200 (see below and also: http://www.saeima.lv/Likumdosana_eng/likumdosana_kart_rullis.html).

The assistant's salary is paid from the **budget** of the Saeima, earmarked for wages. It is set by the Presidium of the Saeima.

One MP may employ **2 assistants**.

There are no specific rules as to voluntary assistants.

MPs' assistants **can not represent the MP before state administrative bodies, local government authorities, in contacts with NGOs.**

MPs' assistants **may represent MPs in contacts with constituents** to a limited degree.

MPs' assistants may **participate at open meetings of parliamentary committees.**

They hold permanent passes into Parliament's buildings.

A **register** of MPs' assistants is kept in Personal Department and it is **public**.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

Permanent passes to the parliament are issued by the Director of the Chancellery on the basis of internal regulations, adopted by the Presidium of the Saeima.

Rules of procedure

195. (1) *Each Saeima Member shall be entitled to have not more than two assistants. Salaries for the assistants shall be paid from the state budget; however, the total amount of remuneration for both assistants shall not exceed the amount allocated for the salary of one assistant.*

(2) *The duties of a Member's assistant shall be to settle all organizational, technical, consultative and other matters related to the work of a Member.*

196. *The obligations of a Member's assistant shall be the following:*

- 1) *to facilitate the Member's work in the Saeima and its committees;*
- 2) *to accept proposals and complaints from the electorate and to review their submissions;*

- 3) *together with the heads of local governments, enterprises and organizations, to arrange appointments for the electorate to meet the Member;*
- 4) *to organize meetings of the Member with the electorate;*
- 5) *to provide the Member with the necessary information and reference materials;*
- 6) *to receive the electorate outside the Member's regular reception hours and, upon the Member's request, to discuss proposed issues together with the relevant officials or establishments;*
- 7) *to ascertain the electorate's opinion about the performance of the Saeima and its Members;*
- 8) *upon the Member's instructions, to provide the electorate with relevant information;*
- 9) *to settle administrative and technical issues related to the Member's work;*
- 10) *to do all paperwork for the Member.*

197. *A Member's assistant shall have the right to be present at open meetings of the Saeima committees on behalf of the Member.*

(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)

198. (1) *A Member's assistant shall be hired for the term of office of the respective Member and dismissed by the Saeima Chancellery upon the Member's recommendation and in conformity with the provisions of the Labour Law. The limitation of the term of employment contract specified in paragraph 1 of Article 45 of the Labour Law shall not apply to a Member's assistant.*

(2) *Deleted by the 16 May 2002 Law.*

(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 16 May 2002 Law)

199. *A Member has the right to use the amount of money (or part of it) intended for the remuneration of the work of an assistant in order to pay for work completed under contract.*

200. *The Saeima Chancellery shall issue a Member's assistant a standard identification card.*

Lithuania

Under the Seimas' (Lithuanian Parliament) Statute¹ a Seimas Member (MP) is entitled to have **secretaries-assistants** who are paid from the **State budget**.

For this purpose the amount of 5 average monthly salaries is allocated to the fund of the salaries to be paid to an MP's secretaries-assistants. The number of secretaries-assistants is specified by the Decision of the Seimas Board – each MP is entitled to **3 secretaries-assistants**.

The positions of secretaries-assistants and other civil servants are stipulated by the Decision of the Seimas. According to the classification secretaries-assistants fall therein under **category A** (a master's (university) degree or an equivalent degree is obligatory) and **category B** (education not lower than college (higher non-university) is obligatory).

According to the Law on Public Service secretaries-assistants fall under the category of **civil servants of political (personal) confidence**. Therefore they are **recruited** without competition **by the choice of the relevant politician**. The service of secretaries-assistants terminates on the expiry of the powers of the MP. The Law on Public Service prohibits to hold more than one position in the Public Service. However the same Law allows an MP secretary-assistant to perform duties of a secretary-assistant to another MP, if both MPs belong to the same political group, to hold a position of a desk-officer of the Elder, or perform duties of employee under contract (not in public service), if the total duration of a workday does not exceed 12 hours.

A secretary-assistant on a request from an MP has a right to obtain copies of the registered drafts of laws, copies of laws and other acts passed by the Seimas, decisions and draft decisions of the Speaker of the Seimas, the Board of the Seimas and the Assembly of Elders, drafts of the legal acts prepared by the

¹ http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=284135 The Statute is the main document on the Seimas activities and has the power of a law.

Government, resolutions passed by other government and administration institutions, and legal acts of public officials (Seimas Statute, Article 9.).

Assistant **may represent the MP** in contact with NGOs, with constituents, **may participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.**

Assistants hold **permanent passes** into Parliament's buildings. Permanent passes are granted by the Chancellor of the Seimas (in general), Chairman of the Seimas (in specific cases).

Voluntary assistants have a document approving their status (Identification Card).

A **register** of MPs' assistants is kept by the Ministry of interior.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

LUXEMBURG

The status of an assistant of a Member of Parliament is governed by The **Luxembourg Electoral law**.

The assistants **salary** is paid from the **Budget** of the Parliament.

The MP(s) or the Parliamentary groups can set the pay of their assistants as they like. If their total salary expenses exceed the amount they are due from the Parliament, they have to find supplementary sources of financing. There are **no formal limitations as to the number** of assistants employed by one MP.

There is **no specific register** of assistants of the MPs, but it is known who works for the MPs, as they are provided with an access to the online information and KM system.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to parliamentary services.

Only the members of parliamentary groups may be granted permanent access to the parliamentary building

NORWAY

The Norwegian Parliament allocates money to the **parliamentary party groups** to hire **1 assistant pr. MP** (there are 169 MPs in Norway).

The **parties in opposition** are given an **extra allowance** and the **minor party** groups are awarded a **relatively greater share** per MP than the larger party groups.

This money may only be used for **matters relating to parliamentary work** and an **audited account** must be submitted to the **Presidium of the Parliament**. **The party groups decide themselves how** many assistants they will hire. For example, it is possible for a party in government to decide not to hire the number of assistants they are given money for at one particular time and instead choose to save the money for later years when they are in opposition.

There are **no specific requirements** for the position of MP assistant. Normally assistants are hired by the party groups and are under the leadership of the head of secretariat of the party group and of the party leadership. Each assistant works for a number of MPs, normally based on **committee responsibilities**. When the party groups hire assistants, they would tend to advertise for an assistant in a specific field, depending on which position is vacant.

MPs can come up with candidates themselves, but the normal procedures would be a public announcement, with candidates having to apply for the job.

The MP assistants are employed by the party groups. If there is a decrease in the number of MPs for a particular party and consequently also a decrease in the amount of financial support, the MP assistants will be required to leave their job in the parliament.

The parliament **provides office space** in the parliamentary buildings for the MP assistants (on the same 1-to-1 ratio).

POLAND

The status of MPs' assistants is governed by the Law **on the Mandate of a Deputy and a Senator** and by a **set of internal regulations** of the parliament.

The law states that a senator (or a deputy) shall establish an **office** or offices in order to service his/her activity within constituency. The costs of running the office are covered from the **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for this purpose. The appropriation is set by the chairman of the house. Within this allowance a senator sets pay for the employees in his/her office(s). The expenditures have to be accounted for.

Senators' office employees are **not civil nor parliamentary servants**. They have a **civil law** standardized **contract** signed with a senator for the period not longer than his/her term of office. The pay is set by a senator. Assistants receive also an extra yearly wage, premiums and a final gratuity paid directly from the parliamentary budget.

There are **no limits as to the number** of assistants, but minimum wage standards need to be observed. It is possible to employ several part time employees.

It is also common for a senator to have a **lawyer** answering constituency requests at the assigned office hours. These lawyers work usually on a voluntary base.

The senators may also be assisted by **voluntary interns**. Some of them have 4-5 voluntaries working for them – usually students of last years of law, political science or journalism departments.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

The **register** is kept by the parliamentary office and it available in the **internet** with all the financial and activity declarations.

Assistants **hold passes** to parliamentary buildings.

They may **participate in open committee meetings**.

Assistants **may not represent MPs before state or local authorities**. They **may unofficially represent MPs in contacts with constituency**.

PORTUGAL

MPs do not have personal assistants in the Portuguese Parliament. They have to rely on the support of the **staff of the Parliament** (which are civil servants) or the **staff of the respective Parliamentary Groups**. Each Parliamentary Group is **assigned an amount for staff (advisers and secretaries)** according to the number of MPs of that Parliamentary Group. The assistant's salary is paid from a separate appropriation earmarked specifically for remuneration of MPs' assistants and it set by a parliamentary group. The Parliamentary Group is then free to hire the staff it deems appropriate. As the number of staff members is lower than the number of MPs, no MP has a particular assistant.

Parliamentary Groups staff are neither civil servants (unless they were civil servants when recruited to the Parliamentary Group) nor contractors. They are in a so-called "**commission of service**", similar to the situation of members of cabinets of Government ministers

This is regulated by article 46 of the **Law of Organization and Functioning of the Services of the Assembly of the Republic**, which may be considered a set of internal regulations of parliamentary administration.

There are no voluntary assistants.

Assistants **may not represent** the MP before **state** administration or **local administration** authorities. They **may represent** the MP in contacts **with NGOs** and **constituents**.

One assistant per Parliamentary Group may participate in meetings of **parliamentary committees** (and, of course, can not speak).

Nominations (and terminations) to Parliamentary Groups Staff are published in the Official Journal, in the same way as Civil Servants. Therefore, they become public.

The Directorate of Administrative and Financial Services of the Parliament maintains the **register**.. It is maintained, in particular, for payment purposes.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to parliamentary services.

Passes to the parliament building are granted according to The Secretary General. The above mentioned Law of Organization and Functioning of the Services of the Assembly of the Republic, and the Rules of Access to the Premises of the Parliament, as approved by Order no. 1/93 of the President of the Assembly of the Republic, of 22 March 1993, as amended by Order no. 124/VII, of 28 February 1998.

Parliamentary Group staff is based **in Parliamentary buildings** and office and communication equipment is supplied by the Parliament.

ROMANIA

The deputies are allowed to hire **collaborators** to support them in their activity in the district they represent. The collaborators are hired based on a **work contract**, concluded for a certain period (mandate length). Work contracts make it possible for this staff to be kept in evidence. The contract is signed **between the collaborator and the Secretary General of the Chambers of Deputies**. The collaborators receive a permanent pass that grants them access in the Palace of Parliament.

Apart from the collaborators, **there are some other persons working for the deputies**, on whose activity not much is known. The deputies address a written request to the Secretary General of the Chambers of Deputies asking that a permanent pass would be released for these persons. If the Secretary General of the Chambers of Deputies consents to the request, the Direction for Order and Security releases the pass that has to be reviewed and updated every six months. These persons are kept in evidence with the aid of the permanent passes register. They do not have any official tasks, they are not asked for any piece of information on their activity, and there is no information about their payment or even if they are paid at all.

The Secretary General of the Chambers of Deputies, at the proposal of the President of the Commission or group leader, sets the wages for the personnel who are working in commissions or parliamentary groups. The wages are paid from the budget of the Chamber of Deputies.

The personnel working **in the district offices** are **remunerated from the deputies' lump sum**. The deputy fixes the level of their wage.

Both the levels of wages for the personnel who is working in commissions or parliamentary groups as well as for the personnel who is working in the territory must be established within the limits set by law.

There is **no a formal limit on the number of employees** the deputy can have in a constituency. However, taking into account, the minimal wage established by law and the deputies' lumps sum, we could certainly assert that the deputies cannot hire an unlimited number of persons.

Assistants **can not represent MPs** before state administration or local government authorities, in contacts with NGOs or constituents, nor can they participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to parliamentary services.

RUSSIA – DUMA

The status of assistant of a Member of Parliament is governed the **Federal Law on the Status of MP**.

The assistant's salary is paid from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for **remuneration of MPs' assistants**.

One MP may employ **five assistants**.

MPs in the performance of their office may also be assisted by unpaid (**voluntary**) assistants. They may have a document approving their status of a voluntary assistant (Identification Card)

Assistants **may represent** the MP
before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

in contacts with NGOs,

in contacts with constituents.

Assistants hold permanent passes into Parliament's buildings.

A **register** of MPs' assistants is kept the Personnel Department. It is not public.

Only **voluntary assistants** are **obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services. They are also obliged **to declare/disclose various kinds of their income**.

RUSSIA – SOVET FEDERACJI

A separate function of "assistant of a Member of Parliament" is regulated by **Federal Law** 8 may 1994 №3 - ФЗ(art. 37).

The assistant's salary is paid from a **general appropriation** earmarked for **running of an MP's constituency office**. It is set by an MP.

An MP may employ 5 assistants.

MPs in the performance of their office are also assisted by unpaid (**voluntary**) assistants.

Assistants **may represent** the MP

Before state administration or local government authorities,

In contacts with NGOs.

They may participate in committee meetings.

They hold permanent passes to the parliament building.

The **register** of MPs' assistants is kept in personnel department. It is open to the public.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' **assistants are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

SLOVAKIA

A separate function of “assistant of a Member of Parliament” is governed by a **set of internal regulations of parliamentary administration.**

Assistants of MPs carry out their function as a sole trader on the basis of a **contract between them and the Office of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.** This contract is made under the provisions of the Slovak Commercial Code. It is valid only for the MPs’ term, which is four years in Slovakia.

The assistant’s salary is paid from a **separate appropriation earmarked specifically for remuneration of MPs’ assistants.** Assistant pay is set in Act of Parliament concerning salaries of the senior officials.

There are **no** formal **limitations as to the number of assistants** employed by one MP.

There is no legal status of a “voluntary assistant” which does not exclude that there may be such assistants.

Assistants **may represent** the MP

- before State administration authorities,
- MP before local government authorities,
- in contacts with NGOs,
- MP in contacts with constituents.

Assistants **may participate in meetings of parliamentary committees.**

They hold permanent passes into parliament’s building.

The public **register** of assistants is kept by the Office of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

MPs’ assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs’ assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

Permanent passes are granted by the Head of the Office of the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

The legal base for granting of such passes is laid down in internal regulation of parliamentary administration concerning parliament buildings security.

MPs’ assistants hold passes for the duration of their contract.

SPAIN

There is a function of an **Assistant of Senators of a Parliamentary Group**.

The status is governed by a Decision of the Bureau.

The assistant's salary is paid from the **Budget of the Chamber**.

There are limitations as to the number according to the number of the Parliamentary Group.

The register is kept by Parliamentary groups and it is not public.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to parliamentary services.

There are no special requirements to fill the position of MP assistant.

The assistants are **appointed by the Speaker on proposal of the parliamentary groups**. The Mesa (Bureau) of the Chamber sets the number of assistants for Mps of each group.

Individual MPs share assistants assigned to them through their parliamentary groups. The number of members of each group and the number of assistants assigned to them is as follows:

	Members	Assistants
GRUPO SOCIALISTA	164	43
GRUPO POPULAR	148	42
GRUPO CATALAN CIU	10	6
GRUPO ERC	8	5
GRUPO VASCO EAJ-PNV	7	4
GRUPO IV-IU	5	4
GRUPO CANARIO	3	2
GRUPO MIXTO	5	3

The term of office of MPs assistants depends on the group which has proposed their appointment, who can propose their dismissal. In any case, their term of office ends with the end of the legislature or when the Chamber dissolves. They may be proposed for a new term in the new Chamber, after the elections take place.

The status of Mps assistant is that of eventual staff, art. 2 Estatuto del Personal de las Cortes Generales, that you can find in <http://www.congreso.es>

SWEDEN

Introduction

In March 1999, a parliamentary group appointed by the Riksdag Board presented a proposal on support to Members of Parliament and the work of the Party Groups in the Riksdag. The purpose of the proposal was to improve the service to the parliamentarians, in light of the changing work of the Riksdag with Swedish EU membership and more international issues. The increasing workload of the parliament and the complexity of the issues at hand require more of the MPs in the form of research and service.

The proposal was intended to **shift the focal point of support to MPs from the administrative support previously provided by the Riksdag administration, to a more qualified support given by political secretaries at the MPs' own Party Group secretariat in the Riksdag. The political secretaries would help the MPs with qualified research, to help prepare political initiatives, write articles, speeches and letters and to reply to e-mail from voters, among other things.**

The proposal suggested that the Party Group secretariats in the Riksdag would channel the economic support from the Riksdag directly to its MPs through the creation of new jobs at the secretariat, and also influence which kinds of positions were needed at the Party Group secretariats. From the year 2000, the funds were calculated to cover expenses for ½ of a political secretary per MP. The proposals were accepted by the parliament on December 1st 1999.

The political parties represented in the Riksdag decide for themselves how the funds are to be used. It is, on the whole, up to the parties themselves to decide how the financial support is to be used. There is no public supervision of the funding. As a general rule, the cost of a political secretary is 46 000 SEK per secretary and month, but the party secretariats are free to allocate the money as they choose in order to build a functional secretariat to suit the needs of their MPs. From July 1st 2006, the funds cover the cost of one secretary per MP.

Distribution of State support to the Riksdag parties

The State financial support received by the Riksdag and distributed to the national party organisations according to the *Law (1972:625) on public financial support to political parties* consists of party assistance and office assistance.

Party assistance is paid as a contribution per seat in the Riksdag, taking into consideration the election results in the two latest parliamentary elections. The contribution is currently SEK 333,300 per seat and year. **Office assistance** is paid to all Riksdag parties and consists of a basic contribution and a supplementary contribution. The basic contribution amounts to about SEK 5.8 million per party. The supplementary contribution amounts to SEK 16,350 per seat for a party in government and SEK 24,300 for the remaining Riksdag parties.

In addition to contributions from the State for the national party organisations, the parties in the Riksdag receive financial support for the activities of members of the Riksdag and the party groups according to the *Law (1999:1209) on support to Members of Parliament and the work of the Party Groups in the Riksdag*. The support consists of basic support, support for political advisers for the members and support for foreign travel.

The **basic support** consists of a basic amount and a supplementary amount **based on the number of members in the party group**. The basic amount is set at SEK 1.7 million per year. A party group representing the Government is entitled to one basic amount while other party groups are entitled to two times the basic amount. The supplementary amount consists of SEK 57,000 per member and year.

The **support for political advisers** is intended to cover costs for administrative and research assistance for the members. The political advisers compile information, prepare draft political texts, look after media contacts, answer e-mails and serve as a sounding board for the members.

Support for **foreign travel** is paid to enable members of the Riksdag to participate in international conferences etc. The contribution amounts to SEK 5,000 per member for the first twenty seats in the Riksdag and SEK 2,500 for all remaining seats.

Requirement to fill the position of MP assistant

As previously mentioned, the Party Group secretariats choose whether to hire political secretaries or not. There is no requirement per se to fill a position, and all the MPs may not need a secretarial backup.

The procedure of hiring MP assistants

The law states **no requirements** regarding the procedure of hiring an assistant. The Party Secretariats can appoint a person for the job, or they can put out an advertisement and interview potential candidates.

Is the candidatures of MP assistant submitted by the MP or are there other options?

According to the proposal on support to Members of Parliament and the work of the Party Groups in the Riksdag, the **MPs** should be given **substantial influence** in matters of recruiting personnel.

The term of office of MP assistants

The **Party Secretariat chooses for how long** the position of political secretary will be needed. This is of course directly related to the funds received by the Party Group, and the amount of financial support changes after a general election if majorities shift. A party which previously was represented in the Riksdag, and not getting a renewed mandate after a general election, receives funds for only 4 months after the election. A party returning after a general election with fewer mandates than during the previous term, receives for the first 4 months the amount of money previously given before the election, the amount is then lowered to match the level of the given mandates.²

6. Where MP assistants are stationed

The role of the political secretaries is to offer qualified help and support to the parliamentary work of the elected representatives, and the work should at first hand be carried out **within the Riksdag premises**. Within the framework of the financial support, other flexible solutions can be made if needed, such as placing political secretaries elsewhere than in the Riksdag.

On March 16th 2005, the Riksdag debated a proposal on more effective regulations of how the parties use the financial support. The Riksdag decided on March 17th 2005 that the Riksdag Board shall present new regulations on how the funds are to be used in terms of, for example, where MP assistants can be stationed. The Riksdag Board decided on May 17th 2006 to continue working on the revised regulation.

² Law (1972:625) on public financial support to political parties, paragraphs 9 and 10

SWITZERLAND

In Switzerland, there is no **official status of "assistant of a Member of Parliament"**. The deputies are free to work with personal assistants or not, and to choose these persons themselves. But these assistants have no official rights in the parliamentary arena.

Nevertheless, the deputies receive a **financial amount to help them in their duties** and they can personally decide how to make use of it. The Swiss Parliament does not have any regulations regarding the hiring, term of office or status of MP Assistants. Each MP receives an annual allowance of 30000 Swiss francs to offset general costs. They are **free to use this money in order to hire one or several assistants**.

It is specified in the following *article 35a* of the Federal Act called « *Loi sur les moyens alloués aux parlementaires, LMAP* » :

« 35. *Contribution annuelle aux dépenses de personnel et de matériel. Les députés perçoivent un montant annuel de 30 000 francs à titre de contribution aux dépenses de personnel et de matériel liées à l'exercice de leur mandat parlementaire.* »

As a personal and unofficial matter the hiring of the assistants is conditioned by no restrictions.

The deputies can even cooperate with **informal assistants** that are unpaid for their work.

As unofficial employees, the **assistants** (paid or voluntary) are **not authorized to represent the deputy nor before the State administration, neither before local government authorities**. The same rule is applicable to **contacts with constituents and meetings of parliamentary committees**. And they have neither a document approving their status nor permanent passes permitting them access to the Parliament's building.

Nevertheless, concerning this last point, the *article 69* of the Federal Act on Federal Assembly **allows the deputies to select two persons who will have access to non-public places of the Parliament's building**. A register identifies the persons. (answer also applicable for question 11)

" *Federal Act on Federal Assembly* " :

" 69. *Right to use Assembly Chambers and Access to the Parliament Building.*
Each Assembly member may have an entry pass issued for a specified period to any two persons who wish to have access to the part of the Parliament Building that is not accessible to the public. The details of these persons and their functions must be recorded in a register that is available for public inspection."

There is no register of MP's assistants on its own but some of them are recorded in the register mentioned above.

TURKEY

Members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly are entitled to have **one personal assistant**.

The requirements are:

- have a university degree, be at least 18 years old,
- comply with general conditions for the civil servants and not be banned from civil service,
- not have a criminal background,
- not dealing with any income producing activity,
- not be a family member of the concerned MP,
- not be retired from any social security organization.

In practice, the MP, after having chosen an assistant, writes a proposal to the General Secretariat and suggests hiring him/her. If the concerned person covers the necessary requirements, the Secretary General (acting on behalf of the Speaker of the TGNA) affirms the proposal.

The assistants are employed under a **private-law contract** between them and the Secretary General of the TGNA. The term of office of MP assistants is limited by the end of the legislative period.

The contract may be discharged;

- on the request of the assistant or the concerned MP,
- if he/she, after being hired, loses one of the conditions to be employed in the Parliament,
- if he, she commits an act subject to disciplinary action,
- if the concerned MP becomes a Minister,
- if the concerned MP, for any reason, loses her/his membership.

The MP is responsible for the direction and organization of the assistant's work. An assistant's **duty** is to **help MP regarding his / her legislative and research activities**.

UKRAINE

The status of assistant of a member of parliament is governed by an **Act of Parliament** .

The assistant's salary is paid from a **separate appropriation** earmarked specifically for **remuneration of MPs' assistants**.

MP sets pay for his/her assistants.

Four of MP's assistants are **official servants**, the **others** could be employed on the base of **labor contract**.

There are also voluntary assistants.

The assistants **may represent** the MP

MP before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

in contacts with NGOs,

in contacts with constituents.

Assistants **may participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**.

They hold permanent passes to parliamentary buildings.

Bureau of Parliament is responsible for keeping of the MPs' assistants **register**.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

UNITED KINGDOM

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The status of MP assistant is governed by a **set of internal regulations of parliamentary administration**.

The assistant's salary is paid from a **separate appropriation earmarked specifically for remuneration of MPs' assistants**. It is set by House authorities – approved by Speaker's Advisory Panel on Members' Allowances.

Each Member of Parliament is entitled to an annual **Staffing Allowance** which currently has a maximum of £87,276 a year. This is intended to cover the salaries and other staff costs – such as social security contributions - of three full-time members of staff (or their equivalent) to support MPs. Practice varies widely among MPs as to whether these staff are full-time or part-time and whether they are based in the constituency or in London.

These assistants are **employed by the MPs directly**. They are **not employees of the House of Commons or civil servants**. A resolution of the House of Commons established that such staff are employed on standard employment contracts and paid according to standard pay bands. There are currently seven pay bands, each with a different standard job description, covering Office Managers/Executive Secretaries; Senior Secretaries; Junior Secretaries; Senior Caseworkers; Caseworkers; Senior Research/Parliamentary Assistants; and Research/Parliamentary Assistants. Members of Parliament are free to employ staff under any of these headings, as long as the total costs do not exceed their Staffing Allowance. Details are provided in the appendix.

There is **no fixed or limited term of office for MPs' staff** – they remain in post as long as the MP chooses to employ them (unless, of course, the MP loses his or her seat at an election).

A number of allowances and services are available for the staff of MPs; these are summarised in the guide *Facilities and Services for Members' staff*, which is attached.

There are no formal limitations as to the number of assistants employed by one MP. Note, there are, however, **limits on the number of passes** that Members are allowed to allocate.

MPs are entitled to have up to **three paid research assistants**. In addition they may have **one voluntary assistant** working for them one day a week.

Assistants **may represent** the MP

before State administration authorities,

before local government authorities,

in contacts with NGOs,

in contacts with constituents.

They **can not participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**.

They hold permanent passes to parliament's building.

The **register** of assistants is kept in the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. the register only covers those MPs' assistants who are **passholders**. **The register is updated** and published monthly, when the House is sitting. It is available online [House of Commons, *Register of Interests of Members' Secretaries and Research Assistants*,

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmsecret/041217/memi02.htm>]

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants **are obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

Appendix: Pay ranges and job descriptions for Members' staff, 1 April 2006

1. Secretaries/Office Managers:

Junior Secretaries should have a polite and courteous manner and good keyboard skills. In addition to this **Office Managers/Executive Secretaries and Senior Secretaries** need excellent organisational and planning skills; good interpersonal and customer service skills; the ability to use e-mail, Word etc; the ability to prioritise and work to deadlines and an understanding of the political environment.

Office Managers/Executive Secretaries should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide the full range of secretarial and administrative support 	£19,825 to	£19,825 (provinces) to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage the office, overseeing budgets, supervising other staff and volunteers etc 	£37,245	£27,034 (London)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deal with telephone enquiries and visitors ▪ Draft and sign letters on a range of issues ▪ Respond to e-mails and letters ▪ Manage the diary and arrange engagements 		

They may also deal with some constituency casework and provide secretariats to special interest groups. They may delegate keyboard work to others.

Senior Secretaries should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide secretarial/administrative support 	£16,221 to	£16,221 (provinces) to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deal with telephone enquiries and visitors ▪ Draft and sign letters ▪ Respond to e-mails and letters ▪ Manage the diary and arrange engagements 	£28,235	£21,026 (London)

They might also manage the office and/or undertake some casework.

Junior Secretaries should undertake:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Photocopying 	£13,216 to	£13,216 (provinces) to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Filing ▪ Opening and dispatching mail ▪ Dealing with simple correspondence and straightforward enquiries by phone or via e-mail ▪ Keeping office records ▪ Other straightforward office duties as required 	£23,429	£17,422 (London)

*Starting pay outside London is likely to vary considerably with local employment market conditions

2. Caseworkers:

Caseworkers need excellent interpersonal and customer service skills, a broad knowledge of welfare legislation, good organisational skills and a methodical approach to record keeping.

Senior Caseworkers should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from	Recommended Starting Pay*
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	01.04.06)	
▪ Provide information, advice and support for individuals on a range of financial, health, housing and other social issues	£16,221 to £27,634	£16,221 (provinces) to £21,026 (London)
▪ Liaise with government agencies, the voluntary sector and others to resolve problems		
▪ Correspond with constituents or meet with them		
▪ Develop knowledge on specialist areas		
▪ Analyse patterns of enquiries and produce reports		
▪ Keep records of client contact		

If they have a special area of interest, they may also provide secretariat services for relevant meetings and/or provide briefings etc.

Caseworkers should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
▪ Provide information, advice and support for individuals on a range of financial, health, housing and other social issues	£12,615 to £23,429	£12,615 (provinces) to £17,422 (London)
▪ Liaise with government agencies, the voluntary sector and others to resolve problems		
▪ Correspond with constituents or meet with them		
▪ Draft simple letters as required		
▪ Keep records of client contact		
▪ Assist with office administration as needed		

They may also undertake some general administrative/secretarial tasks such as managing the diary.

*Starting pay outside London is likely to vary considerably with local employment market conditions

3. Research/Parliamentary Assistants:

Research/Parliamentary Assistants are likely to be graduates. They need good research skills, the ability to think analytically, good communication skills and a good understanding of the political environment.

Senior Research/Parliamentary Assistants should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
▪ Undertake research, usually from secondary sources, on complex and difficult subjects	£25,833 to	£25,833 (provinces) to
▪ Analyse, interpret and present the results eg for parliamentary questions, briefing notes for committees, articles or press releases	£37,245	£30,639 (London)
▪ Liaise with the political party, lobby groups etc.		
▪ Deal with the media		

They might also progress some casework and/or deal with a range of correspondence independently.

Research/Parliamentary Assistants should:

	Pay Ranges (with effect from 01.04.06)	Recommended Starting Pay*
▪ Undertake research from readily available sources	£13,216 to	£13,216 (provinces) to
▪ Analyse, interpret and present the results eg for parliamentary questions, briefing notes for committees, articles or press releases	£31,840	£18,022 (London)

- Deal with routine constituency correspondence independently

In addition they might also:

- Deal with a range of visitors
- Progress casework by forwarding to other agencies
- Undertake some administrative tasks

*Starting pay outside London is likely to vary considerably with local employment market conditions

UNITED KINGDOM

HOUSE OF LORDS

The status of MPs' assistants is governed by set of **internal regulations of parliamentary administration**.

Members of the House of Lords do not receive a salary. They may claim daily subsistence and travel allowances of £64 and also **Office Costs** of £53.50 for each day of attendance, which **includes costs of research assistance**. Daily allowances are set by the House.

One MP may employ **four** assistants.

If Member so wishes, he/she is assisted by unpaid (**voluntary**) assistants.

Assistants **may not represent** a Member before any authorities, in contacts with NGOs, in contacts with constituents, **nor may they participate in meetings of parliamentary committees**.

They have a document approving their status and permanent passes into Parliament's buildings.

There is a **register** of MPs' assistants. It is not public.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose their professional/business activities** (functions, posts, offices) to appropriate parliamentary services.

MPs' assistants are **not obliged to declare/disclose various kinds of their income** to appropriate parliamentary services.

Passes are issued to research assistants by the Parliamentary Security Authorities, but only after each applicant completes a detailed **security questionnaire** which is subject to detailed checks. Research assistants are issued with a particular category of pass which imposes certain limitations on them.