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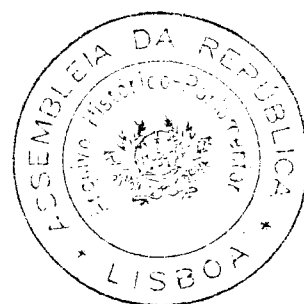
LISBOA 1986

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN SPEAKERS

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES AND ACTION PROGRAMME

OF THE

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION



CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN SPEAKERS

LISBON

6-7 June 1986

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AND ACTION PROGRAMME

OF THE

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Presented under the authority of

the Presidents

of the European Parliament

and

of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

by

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Luxembourg - Strasbourg

28 February 1986

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ACTIVITY REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

A. General remarks

As the activity report submitted to the Conference of Presidents in Copenhagen in June 1984 gave an account of the activities of the Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation's various bodies since the Centre was set up, there is no need today to repeat all this past history; it will suffice to bring the story up to date as regards the Centre's working parties and Correspondents.

A booklet published in September 1985 and enclosed with this report provides a brief description of the Centre which it is unnecessary to reproduce here, especially as the information is familiar to most of those attending the Conference.

The main body of this report accordingly contains the results of the most recent proceedings of the various working parties. The hitherto traditional distinction between the "activity report" part and the "work programme" part has been abandoned in this year's report, because it entails repetition which makes the report unnecessarily long; furthermore, previous discussions have shown that when speakers are talking about one of the Centre's fields of activity they do not themselves make this distinction.

It is to be noted that international organisations are increasingly aware of the Centre's existence and that it is seen as a model of fruitful co-operation between parliaments, even if it still has no constitution of its own or its own budget or establishment.

The Centre's directors had an opportunity to give a talk to the Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, which met in Madrid on 27 and 28 November 1985. The talk was followed by a discussion in depth.

Although administrative control of the Centre's activities remains primarily the responsibility of the Secretaries General of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, all the Secretaries General can exercise control individually at any time, particularly through the Correspondents. It is perhaps helpful to spell out again here the exact function of these Correspondents. They are senior officials in each parliament, appointed by their political and administrative authorities and responsible for co-ordinating the Centre's work. For this purpose they have a special responsibility for overseeing the Centre's work and appointing representatives from their parliaments at meetings of the

various working parties and it is they who distribute the Centre's questionnaires within their own parliaments as they are more familiar than anyone else with the relevant departments and divisions of responsibility and with each parliamentary official's availability.

During the Conference of Speakers in Rome in November 1983 the Secretaries General of the parliaments of the European Community, in conjunction with the Centre, were given specific terms of reference, mainly relating to the problems associated with data processing. The report on the subject was discussed by the Secretaries General at a meeting held in Geneva in April 1984 by the Association of Secretaries General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The terms of reference given to the Secretaries General were confirmed at the Paris Conference in June 1985; the Speakers thus reaffirmed their confidence in their Secretaries General as regards the new technologies applicable to parliamentary needs, to which the members of nearly all parliaments attach increasing importance.

Although the European Centre for Parliamentary Documentation and Research is managed jointly by the Secretariat of the European Parliament and the Office of the Clerk of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, most of the activities are centralised in Luxembourg.

As regards the leadership of the various working parties, it was thought desirable that the membership of the Bureaux should be changed periodically, and agreement to this was eventually secured, albeit not without difficulty.

As far as possible the following simple principles have been applied when making the periodical changes :

- i. involvement of the greatest possible number of senior officials of national parliaments;
- ii. medium-term rotation;
- iii. inclusion of international civil servants to ensure co-ordination of the work of the different working parties (EP-PACE).

(See the table in Appendix I showing the distribution of responsibilities).

The Centre's directors have encountered the same problems as in the past in getting parliaments to house one or other of the Centre's bodies; it can be seen from the table in Appendix II, however, that a major effort has been made by the two member states which have just joined the Community and by Switzerland.

B. Publications

Directory

The Centre has made it possible to set up a network of parliamentary officials responsible for the same work sectors and who consequently feel the need to keep themselves continually informed of

work being done in other parliaments. The Directory which has accordingly been published and is revised annually is a kind of telephone directory. With its highly practical information, such as internal telephone extension numbers and languages spoken -together, of course, with the particular responsibilities of the officials concerned - it has helped to improve and step up rapid, direct links so as to provide a better level of service to all the users in all the departments of Europe's national parliaments, and particularly the research departments.

The Directory's format is currently being improved, mainly by harmonising the various headings and including new ones which do not yet appear systematically - such as Archives, Terminology and Translation; experience shows that the needs of outside users such as universities and European Studies centres like the Bruges College will no doubt make it necessary to expand the Directory, particularly if the idea is adopted of automatically sending Community publications to all copyright libraries.

Changes in the organisational structure of the administrative services of national and international parliaments between two editions of the Directory are brought to the notice of readers through the Newsletter.

Newsletter

The Newsletter is likewise produced and distributed by the Secretariat of the European Parliament; there are 4-6 issues a year, in the Centre's three working languages - French (250 copies), English (220 copies), and German (160 copies).

The Newsletter is traditionally in four parts :

Part I. Activities of the Centre and its various bodies, including announcement of Conferences of Speakers, meetings of Secretaries General etc. and the conclusions of these.

Part II. Publications of national parliaments and the European Assemblies.

Part III. Research studies and documentation, listed using the classification and descriptors of the EUROVOC Thesaurus.

Part IV. Miscellaneous : publications and announcements of events of possible interest to readers.

Part III is always the longest - 150 studies are listed under this heading in each issue of 50 pages.

The table below shows that by the time No. 38 appeared, 2,650 studies hasds already been listed. These studies come from a very wide variety of sources, with a major contribution being made by the parliaments of the major states and the European Assemblies. The variety may explained by a number of things, possibly to do with the internal organisation of the different parliaments and their practice regarding publication of their proceedings (embargos, absolute

confidentiality, etc). This part of the Newsletter nonetheless deserves to be developed further and enhanced with more substantial contributions from a wider geographical spread of sources; it should be remembered that such studies have to be selected at source, ie by the parliaments producing them and that the Centre cannot reproduce them in the Newsletter unless it is in actual possession of them. The Centre cannot undertake either to translate or to reproduce or distribute such studies, and enquirers must approach the source direct. Since 1983 these studies have been put into a data bank at the European Parliament, called "ETUDES" and attached to the Documentation Service in Luxembourg. This data base can also be consulted in the European Parliament's Library in Brussels and, during Parliament sessions in Strasbourg. These technological developments make it unnecessary in future to list all the studies published to date, as was done in No. 25, especially as the topical nature of most of the studies means that they become less useful to consult after a while.

STUDIES PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSLETTER

Review of Nos. 1 to 38

<u>ORIGIN OF STUDIES</u>	<u>1-38</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>35</u>
European Parliament	1.025	59	57	120	68
Council of Europe	229	7	--	12	12
Bundestag/Bundesrat	449	28	--	18	11
House of Commons/Lords	343	8	10	14	15
National Assembly/Senate/France	268	21	13	1	17
Camera dei Deputati/Senato/Italy	110	--	--	1	--
Others : WEU					

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Other Publications

- a. An 8-page booklet describing the Centre and summarising its activities has been published in the Centre's three languages.
- b. In March 1983 the Centre published a "Survey of Parliamentary Libraries, Documentation and Information Services". This 70-page document was warmly received and is not yet out of date; it should be noted that similar work has been undertaken on a world scale by the "Parliamentary Libraries" Section of the International Federation of Library Associations, but with a smaller content for the time being, which means that our booklet remains as useful as ever for European users. The Centre still has a small stock of this document.
- c. The Working Party on Terminology has drawn up a complete list of the names of parliamentary committees in the Community countries and of those of the three European Assemblies; given the limited use of this type of document, it is published only internally, but is available to anyone interested.

C. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES

1. WORKING PARTY ON DATA PROCESSING AND OFFICE AUTOMATION

Since the meeting of the Conference of the Presidents of the Parliaments of the Member States of the Community and the President of the European Parliament in Paris on 7 and 8 June 1985 the working party has had a meeting in Rome from 29 to 31 October 1985. It was a direct sequel to the meeting held in London from 28 to 30 October the previous year, at which six rapporteurs had been appointed for special topics. This working method bore fruit : it was possible to study the subject in greater depth, and in preparing their reports the rapporteurs needed to keep in closer touch with each other by letter or by telephone, thus stepping up direct co-operation between Assemblies.

The six reports were as follows :

- i. Exchange of officials in the field of data processing (French National Assembly).
- ii. Standardised search manual (European Parliament).
- iii. Videotex (French Senate).
- iv. Office automation (Italian Senate).
- v. Access to government data bases (Swiss Federal Assembly).
- vi. Advice and information on data processing (Swiss Federal Assembly).

After hearing how the rapporteurs were progressing with their conclusions on the various topics, the working party went on to consider other matters mentioned in previous meetings and new topics of possible interest to the various Assemblies.

These included development of the CELEX system (Community legislation), the INSIS project (inter-institutional information system), progress with the integrated base being set up at the European Parliament and access to econometric models. As the latter item required special qualifications, it was decided to set up a sub-group to survey the present situation regarding the use of econometric models in parliaments and look into the possibility of calling on the services of experts where parliaments did not have any. The sub-group will submit its findings to the next meeting.

Lastly, the working party noted the interest shown by certain delegations in the possibilities of using data processing to facilitate codification of law and decided to put this question on the agenda for its next meeting.

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Given that the working party has concentrated mainly on preparing the draft report to be submitted by the Secretary General to the Conference of Speakers and that that report is being issued separately, it has not been thought necessary - either in order to fulfill the terms of reference or for practical reasons of presentation - to reproduce here the working party's conclusions, and readers are referred to the aforementioned report.

2. WORKING PARTY ON LIBRARIES

The working party's fifth meeting was held in Lisbon on 2 and 3 April 1985; it brought together 17 delegates representing 10 countries' parliaments and 3 international organisations.

The working party discussed inter alia, in the light of measures taken by the Folketing and the British Parliament when Denmark and the United Kingdom joined the European Community, the similar problems now facing Spain and Portugal.

The problems associated with the training of parliamentary library staff will have to be discussed very thoroughly; exchanges of librarians between the various parliaments ought to be stepped up.

The question of using computers in parliamentary libraries was looked at and should be followed up by comparing experiments already under way.

For the future, thought should be given to the following proposals:

- i. what is the best means of finding the domestic laws of other member states (perhaps by publishing up-to-date lists of unofficial series of volumes of statutes) ?
- ii. how can national laws be most cheaply translated into other languages, notably the main Community languages ?
- iii. how can space be gained in libraries by the systematic use of microfiches, exchangeable free of charge between parliaments ?
- iv. how can experiments in computerised cataloguing of libraries' holdings be compared ?

The next meeting will be held in Copenhagen in October 1986.

3. "THESAURUS" WORKING PARTY

After its inaugural meeting in Copenhagen on 3 May 1979, the "Thesaurus" Working Party held a second meeting, six years later, in Berne on 1 and 2 July 1985, by which time the EUROVOC Thesaurus, which had been produced on the basis of a European Parliament project, had been translated into the Community languages;.

The results of the meeting were as follows :

- i. it made it possible to present the EUROVOC Thesaurus in detail and

to report on progress with adaptations by national parliaments, by the European Assemblies and by other Community institutions which had begun to use it. Using EUROVOC will greatly facilitate access to information and to the documentation services of the Community and national parliaments.

ii. It is on offer mainly to parliaments anxious to automate and harmonise their various documentation systems. It is quite understandable, however, that parliamentary libraries with very large holdings should experience some difficulty in retrospectively organising their whole cataloguing system.

iii. EUROVOC - which is not perfect and will have to be further improved - is a particularly useful instrument for future documentation, making possible the harmonisation of multilingual classifications and thus facilitating mutual access to documents in different countries.

Against this general background the next meeting will take place in Oslo in the autumn of 1986 with an even larger number of participants.

4. WORKING PARTY ON TERMINOLOGY

The Terminology Working Party, which began its work in Luxembourg in September 1982, continued it by correspondence in order to draw up multilingual lists of parliamentary terms. A further meeting proved necessary nearly three years later, and it was held in Bonn on 19 April 1985.

The outcome of the meeting was as follows :

- i. working out of a survey to promote information exchanges;
- ii. continuation of specific terminology projects; and
- iii. inclusions in the Newsletter of a special column on terminology.

All those attending the Bonn meeting expressed the opinion that the terminological work done so far had been useful and even essential in the present framework of intensified international relations but that some means

should be found of distributing the workload more satisfactorily and identifying immediate needs, which were not necessarily the same for all the parliaments concerned. To this end, a questionnaire drawn up in Bonn has

been circulated. A meeting some time in 1986 must be envisaged in order to analyse the results of the survey with a view to considering improved exchanges of information on translation and terminology as well as the possibilities of co-operation with EURODICAUTOM (Community terminology data bank).

During the meeting of Correspondents in Madrid special mention was made of the problems of translating national legislation and of co-operation between the Terminology Working Party and the Thesaurus Working Party.

D. OTHER WORK

It was agreed at the Correspondents' meeting in Madrid that the Working Party on Research should not be revived, as that field had been transferred to the Correspondents themselves.

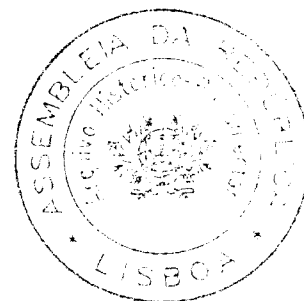
Under their direction two studies should be undertaken on, firstly, the code of practice to apply in the matter of embargoes on, and the confidentiality of, research carried out and, secondly, on the responsibilities of research workers associated with the secretaries of parliamentary committees or political groups, due regard being had to the organisational differences in the assemblies of different member states.

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The Working Party on Microforms has completed its work and has therefore been wound up; matters relating to office automation and new technologies have been entrusted to the Working Party on Data Processing. But it would still be useful to step up exchanges of microfilmed parliamentary documents between the various participants; and, more generally, the problem of parliamentary archives should be looked at, more particularly in the light of the Florence project.



APPENDIX I

ORGANISATION OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

MANAGEMENT

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CO-DIRECTORS

Mr Klaus POEHLE

Mr Georges CHARITONS

SECRETARIES

Mr Gérard KIEFFER

Mr Erik LEIJON

WORKING PARTIES

Working Party on DATA PROCESSING

Chairman : Mr Rodolfo PAGANO (Camera dei Deputati)
Vice-Chairmen : Dr Hans SCHEPERS (Bundestag)
Mr Francis ROY (European Parliament)

Working Party on LIBRARIES

Chairman : Mr Kristian HVIDT (Folketing)
Vice-Chairman : Mrs Alda CABRAL (Assemblea da Republica)

THESAURUS Working Party

Chairman : Dr Ezio CATTANEO (Swiss Federal Assembly)
Vice-Chairman :

Working Party on TERMINOLOGY

Chairman : Mr Albert ROHAERT (European Parliament)
Vice-Chairman : Mr Mariano DARANAS (Congreso de los Diputados)

N.B. 1 : In accordance with the decision taken by the Correspondents in Madrid, the bureaux of the working parties might be supplemented at future meetings.

N.B. 2 : The Working Party on DATA PROCESSING has also appointed six of its members from several Assemblies as rapporteurs.

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF MEETINGS OF ECPRD WORKING PARTIES,
CORRESPONDENTS AND WORKING-PARTY CHAIRMAN

<u>HOST COUNTRY</u>	<u>TYPE OF MEETING</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
BELGIUM	Libraries	Brussels	27-28/5/82
DENMARK	Thesaurus	Copenhagen	3/5/79
F.R.G.	Data processing	Bonn	23-24/11/78
	Microforms	Munich	17-19/9/79
	Correspondents	Bonn	25-26/2/80
	Data processing	Bonn	27-28/2/84
	Terminology	Bonn	19/4/85
SPAIN	Correspondents	Madrid	25-26/11/85
FRANCE	Research	Paris	11/1/79
	Microforms	Paris	23/2/79
	Data processing	Paris	4-5/2/80
	Correspondents	Paris	24-25/3/83
ITALY	Data processing	Rome	19-20/5/81
	Correspondents	Rome	16-17/10/81
	Data processing	Rome	29-30/10/85
NETHERLANDS	Libraries	The Hague	27-28/10/83
PORTUGAL	Libraries	Lisbon	2-3/4/85
UNITED KINGDOM	Libraries	London	2/2/79
	Data processing	London	29-31/10/84
SWEDEN	Libraries	Stockholm	25-26/1/80
SWITZERLAND	Thesaurus	Bern	1-2/7/85

MEETINGS HELD IN STRASBOURG AND LUXEMBOURG

<u>TYPE OF MEETING</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Working Party on Research	Strasbourg	21/9/79
Working Party on Microforms	Strasbourg	8-9/5/81
Working Party on Terminology	Luxembourg	24/9/82
Working Party on data processing	Luxembourg	21-23/3/83
Correspondents	Luxembourg	14-15/5/79
Correspondents	Luxembourg	21-22/6/84
Correspondents	Madrid	26-27/11/85
Chairmen of Working Parties	Strasbourg	17/10/80
	Strasbourg	15/10/82
	Strasbourg	20/1/84
	Strasbourg	17/1/86

