



IPEX Guidelines
as approved by the meeting
of the Secretaries General

Rome, 13 March 2015

Guidelines for IPEX

Preamble

- 1) IPEX, the InterParliamentary EU information eXchange, was created following recommendations and agreements by the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments in Rome in 2000¹ and in The Hague in 2004².
- 2) The objective of IPEX is to support interparliamentary cooperation in the European Union by providing a platform for the electronic exchange of EU-related information between Parliaments in the Union. In particular, the IPEX web site contains a database for the exchange of information about parliamentary scrutiny in EU affairs including aspects of subsidiarity, as well as a calendar of interparliamentary meetings, forums for the exchange of views, a news section and the web site of the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments as well as web sites of other EU Interparliamentary conferences.
- 3) IPEX is open to national Parliaments/Chambers in the member states and candidate countries of the European Union and to the European Parliament.

Article 1

(Objectives of IPEX)

The Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments lays down the objectives of IPEX.

Article 2

(Role of the Secretaries General)

The Secretaries General³ of the Europe–an Union Parliaments:

- a. oversee IPEX and adopt conclusions relating to it;
- b. agree on the guidelines and on major developments of IPEX;
- c. appoint the IPEX Board;
- d. appoint the Chair of the IPEX Board from among the Secretaries General of the Parliaments/Chambers represented on the IPEX Board according to the procedures in Articles 4 and 5 of these Guidelines;
- e. approve the Board’s proposal for the legal and functional framework for hiring and daily administration of the IPEX Information Officer.

¹ In a memorandum adopted by the Conference in Rome on 22-24 September 2000, the Speakers proposed measures to promote cooperation and the exchange of information between institutions and Parliaments in the Union. The Speakers requested that the administrations of the respective Parliaments should look into the matter in more detail.

² Guidelines for Interparliamentary Cooperation in the EU as agreed upon by the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments.

³ Whenever “Secretary General” is mentioned in this text, this shall include any “other equivalent senior official appointed by the Speaker to represent the Parliament/Chamber in meetings of the Secretaries General”.

Article 3
(The IPEX Board)

1. The IPEX Board and its Chair are appointed for a one-year period, running from the end of one annual Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments to the end of the next.
2. The Board:
 - a. ensures the ongoing and effective management and maintenance of IPEX;
 - b. is responsible for monitoring the IPEX website as well as for its technical and editorial changes and developments;
 - c. meets once a year with the IPEX Correspondents in collaboration with a national Parliament/Chamber;
 - d. is responsible for relations with the EU institutions and bodies outside the European Union;
 - e. submits draft conclusions on IPEX to the Secretaries General and implements their decisions relating to IPEX.

Article 4
(Composition of the Board)

1. The Board consists of members representing:
 - a. the national Parliaments holding the previous, current and upcoming Presidency of the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments;
 - b. the national Parliament of the member state holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first semester of the year in which the Board takes office;
 - c. other national Parliaments that wish to participate and commit to contributing to working groups set up by the Board;
 - d. the European Parliament.
2. COSAC, the ECPRD, the European Commission and the Council participate in and contribute to Board meetings.
3. The Chair may invite other relevant organizations or individuals to Board meetings.

Article 5
(Chair of the Board)

1. The Chairmanship of the Board falls to the Parliament which chaired the annual meeting of the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments.
2. A bi-cameral Parliament may propose that only one of its Chambers chairs the IPEX Board.
3. The Secretaries General choose the Chair of the Board in situations where the relevant Parliament is unable to assume the Chairmanship of the IPEX Board according to the above procedure.
4. In order to ensure the continuity and efficiency of the work of the IPEX Board, its Chair coordinates and cooperates with Parliaments chairing the previous and upcoming IPEX Boards.

Article 6
(Board meetings)

1. The Board adopts its decisions by consensus.
2. Board meetings are:
 - a. prepared by the Chair;
 - b. held at least twice a year on invitation by the Chair of the Board or on request expressed by one third of the Parliaments represented on it.
3. The draft agenda is:
 - a. prepared by the Chair at least four weeks beforehand, and a final draft along with relevant working papers/documents are forwarded to the Board members at least two weeks before the start of the meeting;
 - b. adopted by the Board at the beginning of each meeting.
4. Draft minutes of Board meetings are sent to the Board members for approval not later than two weeks after the meetings. If the Chair does not receive objections within four weeks of the meeting, the minutes are deemed to have been approved and are subsequently published on IPEX. Otherwise the minutes are approved at the next meeting of the Board.

Article 7
(Working Groups)

1. The Board may set up temporary Working Groups to draw up proposals for any issue related to IPEX. The Board sets out the tasks of each Working Group and a deadline for their completion.
2. The Board appoints the members and the Chair of each Working Group.
3. Working Groups may also meet “virtually” through the exchange of e-mail and/or audio/video conference.
4. Working Groups work under the supervision of the Board and report to it.

Article 8
(Appointment and tasks of the IPEX Correspondents)

1. IPEX Correspondents are appointed by the Secretary General of each national Parliament/Chamber taking part in IPEX. Each Parliament/Chamber may appoint up to two Correspondents.
2. The IPEX Correspondents are responsible for the contributions from their Parliament/Chamber to IPEX. In particular they:
 - a. ensure the maintenance of IPEX through the regular updating of the national pages with general links and information and within the individual IPEX scrutiny pages by indicating the current status of the procedure in the parliamentary Chamber;

- b. upload all relevant documents and comments in real time preferably with an English and/or French translation or summary;
 - c. add any specific contact person for the dossier under scrutiny;
 - d. submit to the IPEX Information Officer news about their national Parliament/Chamber and activities of interest for publication in the news section.
3. In addition, IPEX Correspondents:
- a. function as default contact person for EU matters within their respective Parliament/Chamber;
 - b. explain the parliamentary traditions and procedures/the scrutiny system of their national Parliaments;
 - c. keep the IPEX Information Officer informed about the relevant changes in the management structures of their national Parliament/Chamber;
 - d. participate in the promotion of IPEX, including by introducing it to co-workers and Members of Parliament;
 - e. participate in IPEX training sessions;
 - f. train staff in the national Parliaments and ensure a smooth transfer of know-how within the Parliament;
 - g. play an active part in the Annual IPEX Correspondents' Meetings in order to exchange best practices, discuss the future development of IPEX and give feedback to the IPEX Board.
4. In light of the tasks listed above, it is recommended that the IPEX Correspondent comes from or works closely with a department in the national Parliament/Chamber responsible for European Affairs.
5. As part of their task of enhancing best practices, IPEX Correspondents may participate in "partnership groups".

Article 9

(The IPEX Information Officer)

1. The IPEX Information Officer works under the supervision of the Board and assists the Board in its tasks.
2. The IPEX Information Officer:
 - a. is responsible for the daily maintenance and monitoring of the IPEX web site;
 - b. manages IPEX users;
 - c. is responsible for the implementation of editorial changes and developments as decided by the Board;
 - d. follows up on implementing new features with the technical support of the IT services of the European Parliament;
 - e. regularly submits reports to the Board;
 - f. fulfils other tasks assigned by the Board and its Chair;
 - g. assists IPEX Correspondents by offering technical advice and support;
 - h. participates in Board meetings;
 - i. may be invited by the Board to participate in Working Groups.

Article 10

(Administration of the IPEX Information Officer)

1. The post of the IPEX Information Officer is co-financed by national Parliaments and the costs are shared equally amongst all participating Parliaments.
2. The IPEX Board submits to the Secretaries General for approval a proposal containing the legal and functional framework for hiring and daily administration of the IPEX Information Officer.

Article 11

(Revision of the Guidelines)

The revision of these Guidelines is the responsibility of the Secretaries General of the European Union Parliaments.