



## Parliament and the Budgetary Process, Including from a Gender Perspective

*Le Parlement et le processus budgétaire, notamment dans la perspective de l'équité entre hommes et femmes*

GENEVA, CICG, 19-21 SEPTEMBRE 2007/ GENÈVE, CICG, 19-21 SEPTEMBRE 2007

# PARLIAMENT AND THE BUDGETARY PROCESS, INCLUDING FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Geneva, 19-21 September 2007

## INFORMATION DOCUMENT

### 1. OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

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The seminar is the sixth in a series of regional meetings for parliaments which aim to strengthen parliaments' capacity to contribute effectively to the budgetary process, with a specific focus on gender. The previous regional seminars took place in Kenya (2000), Mali (2001), the Philippines (2002), Sri Lanka (2003), Lebanon (2004), and El Salvador (2005).

The overall objective of the seminar is to contribute to a better functioning of parliaments in the European and Central Asian region so that these parliaments can in turn participate more effectively in the improvement of democracy and good governance as the foundations for development.

The seminar will provide an opportunity for members of parliament and for parliamentary staff to exchange views and experiences, among themselves and competent authorities and experts, to better understand the national budget and how to ensure effective parliamentary oversight of the budget: how it is prepared, how it operates, how to secure proper parliamentary reading and analysis, how the national audit functions. Furthermore, it has been argued that a gender-blind approach to the national budget generates an incomplete picture of its impact on all sections of the population and therefore may disadvantage women and hinder the efficiency of policies. The seminar proceedings will therefore aim at including a gender perspective throughout the three-day debates and will also aim at taking stock of country initiatives taken in this field.

### 2. PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

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The provisional programme of the Seminar is as attached.

### 3. RESOURCE PERSONS

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The IPU, with partner organizations, will identify resource persons, including from the European and Central Asia regions, who will make presentations and lead discussions on the various themes of the seminar.

### 4. PARTICIPATION

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The seminar is open to members of parliament and parliamentary staff from national parliaments of Europe and Central Asia. Each parliament shall be entitled to send up to 5 participants (MPs and staff). Members of parliament from finance /budget committees and from gender committees are encouraged to attend. In line with the IPU's stated objective to promote partnership between men and women in political life, participating parliaments should aim at including an equal number of men

and women delegates. Delegations should further be representative of the political configuration of the respective parliaments.

## **5. ORGANISATION OF PROCEEDINGS**

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Members of parliament and/or experts and representatives of international organizations will introduce the topics on the agenda. The emphasis will be on discussion, and everything will be done to leave ample time for a free exchange of views.

In accordance with the IPU's practice, all participants will have equal speaking rights. So that the discussions can be as fruitful and enriching as possible, the following arrangements have been foreseen so far:

- (a) There will be no list of speakers on any agenda item. After an agenda item has been introduced by the resource persons, participants wishing to take the floor on the subject will be asked to notify the Chair in writing of the specific matter they wish to address so that they may be given the floor in an order that is both logical and likely to promote a real exchange of opinions.
- (b) Experience has shown that this kind of meeting is not suitable for pre-prepared statements to be read out. Subject to arrangements which the Chair may make to suit the circumstances, oral statements may not exceed three minutes. Participants may, however, speak several times on each item, particularly to respond to other statements.
- (c) A General Rapporteur will be called upon in the afternoon of 21 September to sum up the work of the Seminar at its concluding session.
- (d) The Secretariat of the Union will prepare a publication on the proceedings of the Seminar, for distribution to the participating parliaments, the IPU governing bodies and interested organisations.

## **6. LANGUAGES**

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The debates will take place in English and French. Delegations who wish to have interpretation into their own language are kindly requested to inform the IPU Secretariat, which will arrange for interpretation booths and necessary equipment. The delegations concerned will be responsible for recruiting and covering the expenses of their interpreters.

## **7. DOCUMENTS**

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Written texts of the presentations by the resource persons will be distributed to participants as they become available.

To the extent possible and for the information of participants, IPU's Secretariat will make available background documentation relevant to the issues under discussion.

Participants wishing to distribute to their colleagues relevant documentation will be required to provide it in sufficient quantities and put it on a table set aside for that purpose.

## **8. VENUE AND DATES**

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The Seminar will be held from 19 to 21 September 2007 at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG), in Geneva.

## 9. REGISTRATION OF DELEGATES

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The parliaments participating in the Seminar **are kindly requested to make known the composition of their delegations before 31 August 2007 on the attached Seminar registration form.**

This information should be sent to the following address:

Inter-Parliamentary Union	Telephone:	+ 41 22 - 919 41 50
Chemin du Pommier, N° 5	Fax:	+ 41 22 - 919 41 60
Case postale 330	E-mail:	postbox@mail.ipu.org
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex / Geneva		
Switzerland		

## 10. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

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Delegates will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements.

## 11. VISAS

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Strict provisions are in force regarding entry into Switzerland and entry is refused to any person who does not hold the required visa. Delegates requiring an entry visa must obtain one from the Swiss consulate or diplomatic mission responsible for the necessary arrangements in their country of residence.

Moreover, Geneva Airport is located on the Swiss-French border and also has a French entry point. Some flights coming from Paris or other French airports to Geneva are considered as internal flights. Therefore, delegates may wish to check if a French visa is required for certain nationalities when passing through a French airport en route to Geneva.

## 12. HOTEL RESERVATIONS

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Matters concerning hotel accommodations are to be handled by the participants, **either through their country's mission in Geneva, through their preferred tourist operator or through the Geneva Tourist Office.** Should delegations wish to use the services offered by the Geneva Tourist Office, they are kindly requested to use the attached hotel reservation form. However, attention is drawn to the fact that, in keeping with the practice of all hotels in Geneva, only reservation forms accompanied by details of a credit card as a guarantee will be confirmed. The hotel reservation form should be returned directly to the Geneva Tourist Office by no later than **14 August 2007**, with copy to the IPU Secretariat.

## 13. TRANSPORTATION IN GENEVA

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No transportation services will be provided by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.