



International Council on Archives
Section of Archives and Archivists of
Parliaments and Political Parties

Conseil international des Archives
Section des archives et archivistes des
Parlements et Partis politiques



ANNUAL REPORT

Section for Archives and Archivists of Parliaments and Political Parties (SPP/ICA) 2009

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0. NAME OF THE SECTION

Section for Archives and Archivists of Parliaments and Political Parties (SPP/ICA)

Authors:

Reinder van der Heide
SPP Secretary
Archivist of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, Het Binnenhof Plein 2 P. O. Box 20018
2500 EA Den Haag The Netherlands

Marietta Minotos
SPP President
Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation , Eleftheriou Venizelou Karaiskaki 6, 15237 Filothei, Athens, Greece Tel.
00302106847990 e-mail: minotos@karamanlis-foundation.gr

Please note that Dr. Marietta Minotos recently was recently elected in the position of the Director General at the General State Archives of Greece. Her contact details changed as follows:

Marietta Minotos; Director General General State Archives 61, Dafnis Str. , Psychico, 15452, Athens, Greece, Tel.
00302106782222, Fax 00302106782215, e-mail director@gak.gr

1. ADMINISTRATION

1.1 *Membership*

Membership of the section has been quite a constant factor over the past four years. As of now, the section has 94 members.

1.2 *Bureau*

The Section's Steering Committee currently has 12 members (plus 1 auditor):

President:	Marietta Minotos
Secretary:	Reinder H. van der Heide
Vice-President:	Günther Schefbeck; Reinhard Schreiner
Treasurer:	Harry Scholz
Members:	France Bélisle; Claus Brüggmann, Emilia Campochiaro, Khayrou Cissé, Vida Kisuniene, Wlodzimierz Kucner, Sara Tedebrand Frant
[Auditor:	Wouter Steenhout]

2. PROGRAM

2.1 Seminars and conferences

Within the framework of its work program, every year (with the exception of Congress years), the SPP is organizing a conference on a subject of particular interest to its members, as a forum for them to present and exchange their experiences and also take an input from experts from the greater archival community invited to participate.

The conference in this year took place in Vienna (Austria) in October 2009. The conference dealt with the subject of “Archives and Democracy” and focused on the issue of how archives would contribute to promoting democracy. The three main sessions of the conference were devoted to three different dimensions of the subject:

- What are the most important archival holdings that might provide inspiration for promoting democracy?
- What means may be used to present these holdings to the general public, as well as to specific dialogue groups?
- What methods and instruments may be used by archives, in cooperation with other institutions, to actively contribute to democracy education?

Within the framework of two workshops, concrete strategies for parliamentary and political party archives to promote democracy were developed. Though, thus, some focus was on the specific options and opportunities of parliamentary and political party archives, the SPP was well aware that the issue was of interest far beyond its own membership. That is why there were leading representatives of other ICA sections among the keynote speakers of the conference, and why participation in the conference was not restricted to SPP members, too. Archivists and experts in political education were attending the conference, thus making it a forum for an open and manifold exchange of experiences in the field.

In 2010 a conference will be held in Dakar (Senegal) on the subject of “Modernization and Sustainability of Law Making Support in the 21st Century”.

The SPP will proceed with its two main current projects: the Twinning Project, focused on furthering bilateral relationships and mutual support between archives in different countries, and on the development of tools, standards and protocols for website archiving. Both projects are of interest for others, besides the SPP membership, and could in long term benefit the ICA community as a whole.

2.2 Publications and communication

Conference proceedings

The section intends to make the proceedings and results of the conferences held in Vienna and in Dakar available, probably in print and digital form. In both cases, publication will be within a publication series of the respective conference host, i.e. the Parliament of Austria in case of the Vienna conference and the Senegalese parliament in case of the Dakar conference.

Website

The section's website, managed by the section's webmaster (Claus Brüggmann), provides information on the section's members and activities and can be seen as a starting point for the exchange of views and experiences on matters of interest to the members. The webmaster is also involved in the integration process of the SPP website into the website of the ICA.

Public relations

The section is continuing its efforts to establish contacts with parliaments, their archivists and information managers, and with political party organisations and their archivists and information managers which are not yet members of SPP. New publicity documents, in the form of 'fact sheets' and general folders about SPP, are being prepared.

2.3 Studies, actions, and projects

Workshop on website-archiving

During the XVIth International Congress on Archives in Kuala Lumpur (2008), the section held a workshop on the subject of "*Archiving websites – a new challenge to archives*". Based upon the results of the conference held in Bonn in November 2006, the workshop was to make aware of the task of website-archiving as a new challenge to archives and archivists, to present guidelines for archiving websites and give practical advice on how to develop one's own strategy in this field. Even more, it may have encouraged the participants to start archiving websites. Since then, further steps in cooperation with SIO, are to be taken towards developing a reference model or a standard for website-archiving.

Directory of parliamentary, political party, and politicians' archives

In order to obtain a world-scale overview of parliamentary, political party, and politicians' archives, a questionnaire has been developed which in a first step has been distributed among the European parliaments. In a further steps, other target groups will be addressed. The directory will be published online on the section's website.

"Twinning / Jumelage"-projects

Within SPP, the idea of initiating "Sister Archives", in analogy to 'twin' cities all over the world, is under discussion (friendship, partnership, jumelage relations between two parliamentary archives, or two political party archives). The idea is of course that for instance two parliaments' archival departments help and inspire each other by tackling the complexities of their parliaments' information management. A possible twinning has been suggested between the parliaments of Senegal and Belgium, and between Burkina Faso and Canada. A third twinning is the combination of the Albanian and Netherlands' parliamentary archives. Thanks to the (financial and organisational) cooperation with the OSCE this last twinning project has reached a viable stage. It has become clear that 'twinning' can only succeed with active stakeholders and it demands a particularly active interest and attitude of the prospective partners.

The further development and stimulation of twinning projects could also be an issue for the archival community at large. Therefore Ms. Du Mei, member of PCOM, has expressed her active interest in counselling and supporting this SPP project. This interest is highly appreciated by the SPP.

2.4 Other activities

The Regulations of the SPP have been proposed to, and approved by the ICA Executive Board in the meeting of the EB held in Algeria in the town of Tamanrasset on May 2009.

3. PLANNED INITIATIVES WHICH DID NOT TAKE PLACE

There is nothing to report on that matter

4. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES

The strength of a professional organisation like SPP/ICA is, of course, in the experience of its membership. It is, therefore, to be a forum for exchange of these experiences, along with providing selective state-of-the-art input from outside. At the same time, it is to focus this experience into formal or informal professional “standards” that the members in their everyday business may refer to.

Exchange of experience currently may take place within personal encounters, ideally within the thematically focussed environment of a conference, or within virtual encounters on a bi- and/or multilateral level, making use of the options of the new communication technologies. Within SPP, activities still centre on the concept of personal encounter: In accordance with this concept, in 2009 a successful conference has been organized, which dealt with a subject of interest to many more people and groups than just our members: Archives and Democracy is a subject that concerns us all. The furthering of democracy with the help of archives and archival science will keep us all occupied for many years to come.

Reinder van der Heide
SPP Secretary

Marietta Minotos
SPP President

The Hague/Athens, Nov 2nd, 2009