



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Information Note

The Seminar is intended to offer IPU Group Secretaries or other persons whose work is directly related to the IPU an opportunity to acquire a more in-depth knowledge of the working of the IPU, so that they may more effectively assist their parliament and its members, particularly during IPU meetings.

It specifically targets Secretaries of recently affiliated Members that are seeking to build a solid base of dialogue and interaction with the IPU, as well as newly appointed Secretaries wishing to familiarize themselves with the structure and functioning of the IPU.

It also allows the IPU Secretariat to become better acquainted with the characteristics, functioning and possible needs of the different Members and to envisage, through active dialogue with the participants, ways to better meet Members' expectations.

Working language

The 2018 Seminar will be conducted in French. It is a highly interactive event, which means that participants must be able to express themselves fluently in French.

Number of participants and registration

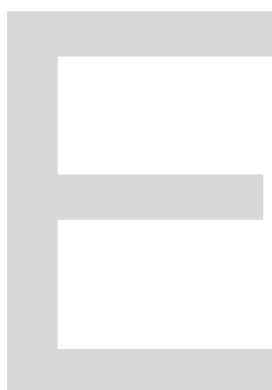
Member Parliaments may register one person only. Depending on the candidatures received, priority will be given to recently affiliated Members and to newly appointed Secretaries of delegations. Parliaments are requested to inform the IPU Secretariat in Geneva of their interest in participating as soon as possible so that a place may be reserved for them.

Requests for registration should be accompanied by a brief curriculum vitae (maximum one page) of the person concerned, specifying the functions s/he performs in the service of the Member Parliament and providing evidence of fluency in French.

Conditions for participation

Member Parliaments are responsible for covering the travel, accommodation and living expenses of their participants. For information, the official daily subsistence allowance (DSA, including accommodation) determined by the United Nations for Geneva was US\$ 392 (CHF 400) on 1 January 2018.

The IPU Secretariat has pre-booked a limited number of rooms at two hotels in Geneva, the Ibis Budget Genève – 2-star (from CHF 137.50 per night including breakfast) and the Ibis Genève Centre Nations – 3-star (CHF 186 per night including breakfast). Please contact the Secretariat (Ms. Tara Staub – ts@ipu.org) if you would like to reserve one of these rooms. June is a very busy month in Geneva and the booking conditions are very strict. Participants are therefore advised to reserve rooms as soon as possible and before the deadlines stated in the respective booking forms. After these dates, the preferential negotiated rates will no longer be available and the rooms will be released.



Visas

Switzerland is an Associate Member of the Schengen Agreement and part of the Schengen area. The Visa Information System (VIS) was introduced in the Schengen area in October 2011, which stores biometric data (fingerprints and facial image) of the Schengen visa applicant. All Swiss embassies and consulates are connected to the VIS system.

All visa applicants are required to make an appointment with the Swiss embassy/consulate responsible for their place of residence or with an external visa service provider in order to submit their visa application and register their biometric data in person. This data remains valid in the VIS system for a period of five years.

The Swiss embassy/consulate responsible for the visa applicant's place of residence can be found in: <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/representations-and-travel-advice.html>. Applicants should contact immediately the Swiss embassy/consulate or external visa provider for the list of documents to be submitted when applying for a visa. The application form for a type C Schengen visa (short stay) is available at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html>.

The time needed to obtain a visa depends greatly on local circumstances. In addition, Switzerland has signed agreements with certain countries where it is not represented by a diplomatic or consular entity. Under certain conditions these agreements allow for the issuing of visas by a Schengen State in a country where Switzerland is not represented. It is therefore highly recommended that applicants enquire directly with the Swiss embassy/consulate responsible for their place or to consult the appropriate website. Appointments for submitting and registering biometric data must therefore be taken well in advance, according to the information provided by the Swiss authorities. The waiting time for an appointment varies depending on local circumstances and can sometimes take several weeks. Following Switzerland's entry into the Schengen area, visas are no longer issued upon arrival at Geneva International Airport.

Additional useful information on visas is available from the website of the State Secretariat for Migration at: <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise.html>.

Welcome of participants

Participants who have announced their travel details (date, arrival time, flight/train number, etc.) will be met on arrival at Geneva international airport by the IPU Secretariat. Participants who have made their own arrangements with their Consulates/Missions or friends to be met on their arrival in Geneva are kindly requested to inform the IPU Secretariat.

Further information

For further information, please contact Ms. Sally-Anne Sader in the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations at: + 41 22 919 41 14 or sas@ipu.org.