

# **The role of the International Parliamentary Scholarship of the German Bundestag in building relations between Germany and its international partners**

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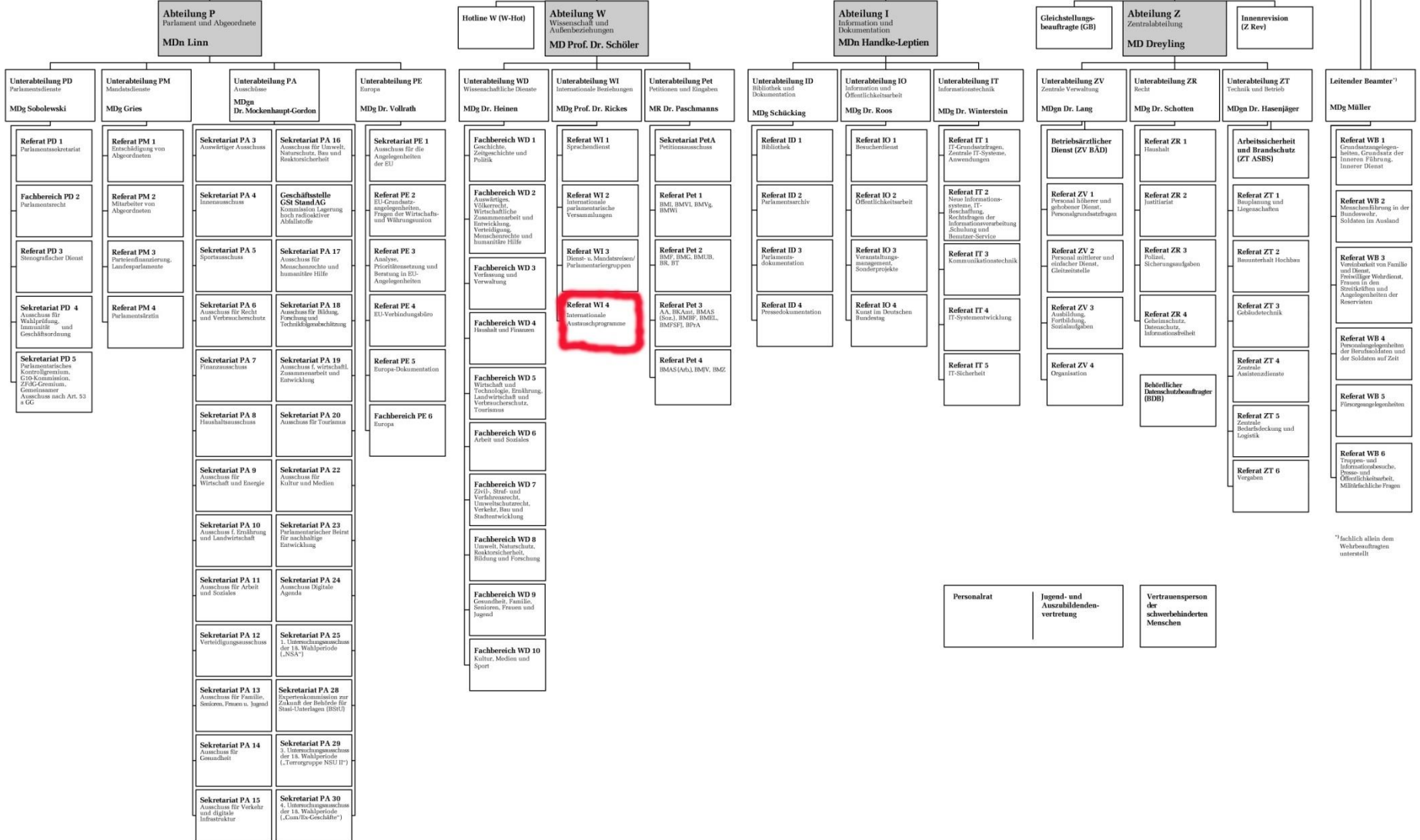
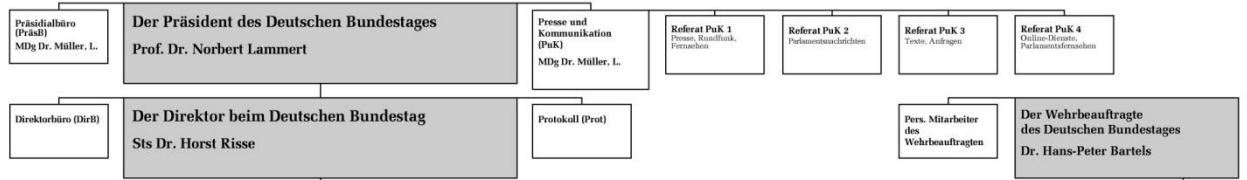
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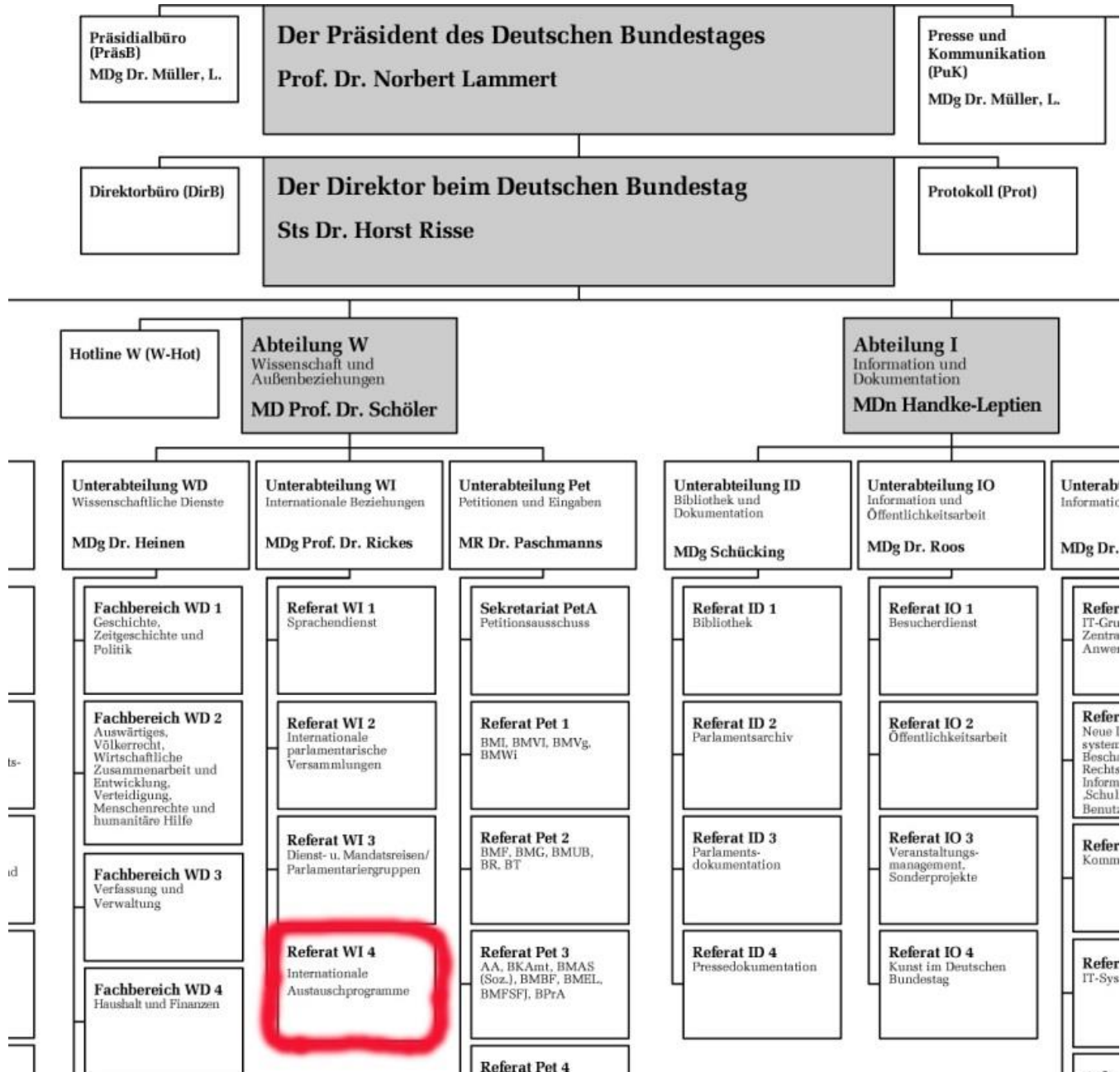
Cambridge University



# Deutscher Bundestag



<sup>1)</sup> fachlich allein dem Wehrbeauftragten unterstellt



# Internationales Parlaments-Stipendium des Deutschen Bundestages

around 120 interns from 41 countries

- started in 1986 as the Bundestag Internship Program: internship for young graduates from the USA. 20 participants between 1986 and 1988;
- exchange between Germany and France started in 1989;
- International Parliamentary Program invited students and graduates from Poland and Hungary in 1990;
- 1990s: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania (1992); Russia, the Czech Republic (1993); Slovakia (1994), Bulgaria (1995), Romania (1996);
- Greece, Cyprus, Israel;
- 2000s: Ukraine (2000); Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia (2001); Georgia, Kazakhstan (2005); Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Belarus (2008); Kosovo and Macedonia (2009)
- after 2011: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Libya, Palestinian territories, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia (23 students participated in 2015)

# International Parliamentary Scholarship (IPS)

internship in the office of a member of the Bundestag; it is organized by the German Bundestag in collaboration with three Berlin universities

- regular work in the office: drafting speeches, articles, and letters, doing preparatory work for plenary sittings, attending committee meetings, doing research for informed decision-making in the office, taking care of visitors
- 5-month (1 March to 31 July) internship; one month (1-30 September) for the Arab countries; ten-month programme for France and USA, but French and American students do internship at the same time with the majority of other interns
- opportunity to do academic courses at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin and Technische Universität Berlin; interns are registered as students at Humboldt University of Berlin
- introduction to the foundations associated with the political parties in the German Bundestag: e.g. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
- visiting the constituency of the MdB

# IPS

## Requirements:

- Citizenship of participant country
- University degree (recent graduate or current postgraduate)
- Very good knowledge of German
- Under the age of 30 (35 for the Arab countries) at the start of the scholarship

## Expectations:

Applicants are expected to know well the German system of government, politics, and especially the organization of the parliamentary system. Interest in politics is prerequisite and contributing to the cooperation between countries would be considered an advantage.

# IPS

## Scholarship:

- 500 euros per month
- Free accommodation
- Insurance and travel expenses
- Universal transit pass

# IPS Application

- Deadlines differ depending on the country; mostly 30 June for the internship which starts in March, whereas interviews take place usually in autumn
- 716 applications for 120 places in 2016 (source: Newsletter of the IPS, October 2015; probably these are only the interviewed applicants)
- Interview after the initial document submission: takes place in the Embassy with Member of the Bundestag, senior representative of one of the three participating Berlin universities, a government official, and sometimes alumni of the IPS



# IPS

## Programme Goals

- build relations between Germany and participating countries
- Strengthen democratic values and tolerance
- Improve understanding of cultural diversity
- Secure peace in the world (from the Website of the German Bundestag)

# Participants

- are highly qualified young people interested in politics and who wish to play an active and responsible role in shaping the democratic future of their country
- come from very different backgrounds: social, political, professional. Some participants are German studies graduates, others have studied law and international relations
- get to know the German parliamentary system and political decision-making processes and gain practical experience of parliamentary work
- learn about the significance of friendly cooperation based on shared political and cultural values

# Universities

- Provide opportunity to take their courses;
- Organize lectures for the interns;
- Provide academic resources (library)
- French interns study for a semester at Humboldt University of Berlin; German interns study for a semester at the Paris Institute of Political Studies

## Political Party Foundations

- Introduce to the political landscape
- Explain their agenda
- Educate students about German history and culture

# Feedback

“Participation in the IPS program broadened my horizons, cultivated my intercultural perception and helped me understand how the society works. It led me to see things in their complexity and in a simple way at the same time . I think, the presence of IPS-fellows in the German Parliament coming from different cultural backgrounds brings in diverse ways and views to the people working there and can be enriching for them.” Bretislav Sevcik, IPS 2011, the Czech Republic

“Wenn man sich mit deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen beschäftigt, ist es natürlich eine tolle Sache, hier fünf Monate zu arbeiten, sein Deutsch zu verbessern und Leute kennenzulernen, die ich sonst nie kennengelernt hätte. [...] Ich hoffe, dass nicht nur wir von dem Programm profitieren, sondern auch die Stadt von uns.” Monika Rozalska, IPS 2011, Poland

# Prospects for students

- Political engagement can depend on the respective country: some governments engage the students after their internship in the Bundestag (e.g. Macedonia invites them to their Parliament (Assembly) to meet the Assembly Departments and the members of the Staff of the Cabinet of the President of the Assembly)
- In other cases, students can feel disenfranchised from their country politics because of corruption but will still engage in some form of political activism with local NGOs and other institutions
- Some students choose to stay in the German-speaking countries and work or study there
- Some students find jobs in political and cultural institutions where they can put to use their language skills and international experience
- Students excel in international relations, law and cultural affairs



## EVENTS

Thursday, 16 February 2012

### YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE DRIVING FORCE OF THE IPS PROJECT



The Vice President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Ms. Svetlana Jakimovska, today met the students from the International Parliamentary Scholarships (IPS) Project of the German Bundestag.

H.E. Ms. Gudrun Steinacker - Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Antonijo Milošoski - Chairman of the Parliamentary Group of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia for Cooperation with the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, and

the scholarship students of the IPS Project: Ms. Katerina Bakalova, Mr. Sašo Andreevski and Ms. Violeta Risteska, attended the meeting.

Vice President Jakimovska expressed appreciation to Ambassador Gudrun Steinacker for her efforts for continuation of the IPS Project.

She encouraged the students to learn as much as they can about the work of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and of the Bundestag, and after they complete their 5-month stay in Germany, to come back in the Assembly and share their experiences and impressions about the work of the Bundestag. Ms. Jakimovska gave the students promotional material about the Republic of Macedonia.

May 2016

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**Agenda**

There no Sessions or Meetings scheduled for today.

#### FOLLOW US ON:



# Networking and collaboration are key benefits

- Networking is the key benefit for both the students and German Bundestag
- There are now national alumni organizations in most countries which unite German-speaking individuals who often meet and can participate in the activities of the German Embassies in their respective countries
- over 1500 IPS alumni from 41 countries
- there is a general IPS conference in Berlin where the alumni come to discuss relevant issues
- regional conferences are now regularly organized by the alumni associations to discuss social and political issues; these conferences attract the attention of state governments and serve as a platform for discussing international relations;
- during the internship there is constant interaction between 120 young people, which can create strong networks

# IPS Alumni Association in Kosovo

- 16 IPS alumni since 2007
- Registered as an NGO in the Kosovo Parliament in 2014; this status allows the alumni to observe the work of the Kosovo Parliament and its committees
- Working on establishing an internet portal similar to [abgeordnetenwatch.de](http://abgeordnetenwatch.de) in order to increase the transparency and responsibility of the government
- Supports regular contact with the German Embassy in Kosovo



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> Internationales Parlaments-Stipendium (IPS)

## IPS-Alumni-Regionalkonferenz 2013 in Skopje, Mazedonien



Empfang in der Residenz der deutschen Botschafterin in Mazedonien, Gudrun Steinacker (weinroter Blazer) © DBT/WI4

"Das IPS-Erbe im Fokus: durch IPS-Alumni-Aktivismus zur intensiveren Teilnahme am politischen und gesellschaftlichen Leben im Heimatland"

Von 11.-13. April 2013 fand in Skopje die dritte IPS-Alumni-Regionalkonferenz zum Thema "Das

# Other possible benefits

- German government bodies and Members of the Bundestag learn about the political situation in the participating countries from the interns
- Interns can be efficient and contribute much to the daily work of the MdB's office

# General observations

- With the rising isolationism in Europe, such programs could become difficult to support; that is why I thought it is important to outline how the IPS contributes to international collaboration
- Sometimes students can be working for the party whose political platform they do not support
- Cultural life in Berlin is amazing!

# Discretion

- “Ich verpflichte mich zum Stillschweigen über die Tätigkeit in meinem Abgeordnetenbüro und alle anderen Programmbestandteile. Öffentliche Äußerungen, z.B. gegenüber der Presse oder in sozialen Netzwerken, sind nur in Abstimmung mit dem betreuenden Abgeordnetenbüro bzw. der Bundestagsverwaltung zulässig.” (IPS Code of Conduct)

Thank you!