

REPORTING AT THE PARLIAMENT IN RIGA (ESTONIA)

The Stenography Service is part of the Riigikogu Chancellery Documentation and Record Management Department.

13 people are presently employed in the Stenography Service: senior editor fulfilling the responsibilities of the Head of Stenography Service, six editors, two consultants and four operators (stenographers).

The work of the Stenography Service is divided into three parts:

1) The stenographer copies a sound-file of predetermined length from the server to the computer of his or her work station and writes it down verbatim. The written text segments are consolidated by a consultant and an editor starts revising them while the stenography work continues, correcting all hearing and typing errors and removing expletives.

The unedited text of a verbatim record is available on the web page already during the plenary session, following the principle that a speech or a report must be available on the Internet one hour after its end.

The text is also printed on paper and is used to create excerpts which are handed to the speakers at the session for corrections (they should correct obvious writing, factual and stylistic errors). The editor includes the corrections in the edited text of the verbatim record provided these are linguistically correct and do not change the content of the text.

2) The other part of the work of the Stenography Service - editing - mainly involves applying the rules of written text to the verbatim record of oral speech. Orthographical mistakes are corrected, unnecessary repetitions and expletives removed, incorrectly used terms replaced with the correct ones, syntax and morphology are improved, names of persons and topographical names, notions, titles of legal acts and other publications and quotes in the text are checked and clarified.

The electronic version of the edited verbatim records is prepared within two weeks, depending on the duration of the plenary sessions, but is usually ready within a week.

3) The third part of the work of the Stenography Service involves publishing the records as a book of verbatim records, supplied with an index. A register volume has also been published since 1999, to improve orientation in volumes of verbatim records. About 7-8 volumes are published per year, containing 300-500 pages each (the number of the volumes depends on the amount of text, which in its turn depends on the length of the plenary sittings).