# Common Interview Guide – EAC Clerks

## Draft

*The interview guide now comprises a large number of questions – which is why I split the cases off. You may only be able to ask part of these questions in an interview, so please consider beforehand whether that interview is ideal for general questions, one or more case studies etc. and what kind of information we still need/have already obtained. As we still need answers to all of these questions for each of our chambers, it may be worth considering follow-up interviews with certain key interviewees (EAC MPs and clerks).*

***Please note that for Paris the cases are important, but for Maastricht the general questions on administrators are extremely important as well, as they are about reforms in the administration of EU affairs****.*

*🡪 Think of asking for concrete examples when appropriate, clarify the quotation rule*

**Introduction**

* Suggestion: Introduce OPAL, mention the four strands of research and the policy case studies.
* Establish at this point if interviewee can provide information on one or more of our cases.

**Role of Administration:**

1. Have there been reforms within the administration of your parliament with regard to EU affairs after the Lisbon Treaty (or even in anticipation thereof?)
   * Have the number of staff increased?
   * Have new units been created? Which old ones have been strengthened in EU affairs?
   * Has the administration gained new roles and responsibilities?
2. What is your background in EU affairs and did you receive any training in EU affairs?
3. What is the role of the parliamentary administration (clerks of EAC and specialised committees and the general administration) in the scrutiny of EU documents? (please ask this question for both legislative and non-legislative policies)
4. In how far and in what ways do you assist MPs in the scrutiny of EU affairs (including the mandating of the government prior to Council of Ministers meetings or the scrutiny of the government’s report after meetings of the Council of Ministers)?
   * How much time do you spend on controlling the government in EU affairs compared to the scrutiny of EU documents?
5. To what extent do political parties or individual MPs provide guidance and oversight regarding the work of administrators on EU affairs?
   * To what extent is the administrative structure of the parliament hierarchical? To what extent is the work of administrators controlled by other administrators? By whom?

**Interaction with the National Executive**

1. Which role does parliament play towards the government on EU issues?
   * Does it try control it? to influence it? to support it during EU bargains? Why does it act in this way?
2. Concretely, which contacts does the parliament have with the government on EU issues?
   * Are contacts rather formal or informal? Regular or ad-hoc? Why?
   * At which point during EU decision-making processes do they take place? Why at this specific point?
3. Generally speaking, how and why do differences of opinion between parliament and government or between parliamentary groups affect your work?
4. Generally speaking, would you say that opposition parties act differently regarding the government on EU issues than in purely domestic decision-making processes? (If needed: do they tend to be more supportive?) If, yes, what is the reason?
5. Do you feel that the implementation of the treaty of Lisbon has changed the relationship of your parliament with the government on EU issues? In which way and what is the reason?

**Cooperation with NPs/EU institutions**

1. To what extent you interact with the European Commission/ European Parliament/other national parliaments?
   * Provide examples [or refer to our case studies, see below]
   * How do you interact (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)?
   * At what point in time/what stage of legislation?
   * With whom (COSAC, national connections in EP and Commission etc.)?
   * How often/ how established or ad hoc? How does the network look like?
   * For what purpose?
   * Has there been any change with the Lisbon Treaty?
2. For **bicameral parliaments** only: To what extent do you interact with the other chamber? (similar as above – on which level etc.)
3. Should you not co-operate, why not?
4. How do you consider the role of the permanent representation of your parliament at the EP (especially after the introduction of the EWM)?
5. What is the specific role of administrators in the cooperation with European institutions and other national parliaments?
   * Have additional resources been provided to facilitate the interaction between parliaments?
6. What is your personal opinion regarding co-operation with the Commission, the EP, and other NPs?
   * Is it a good thing? Does it have an impact?
   * Do you feel that national parliaments are now better represented at the EU level?
   * Has this mechanism proven helpful to scrutinize your government in EU affairs?
   * In your perception, does the European Commission pay more attention to the principle of the subsidiarity now?