

Christopher Piening

Chris Piening is a European Union civil servant specializing in foreign policy in the European Parliament (EP). He has held his current position -- head of the Parliament's interparliamentary relations division for countries outside Europe -- for the past five years. The division provides political and administrative support to parliamentarians involved in the EP's extensive institutionalized relationships with other legislatures around the world -- including the United States Congress. As part of his job, Mr Piening has travelled widely throughout the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and Africa with parliamentary delegations and has served as an accredited election observer in several countries, including Russia and South Africa.

While the major part of his 20 years in the European Parliament has been in the field of foreign relations, he has also worked for briefer periods in other areas, including the Institutional Affairs Committee (where he was chief of staff), the Education and Culture Committee, the Press and Information service and as a linguist. He spent a year (1986-87) as adviser to the then Speaker of the European Parliament, former French Prime Minister Pierre Pflimlin. Before joining the EP, Mr Piening had been a journalist based in Germany working for the *Financial Times* and *Der Spiegel*.

Mr Piening studied political science at the University of Essex, Chinese politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London) and European Community politics at the University of Kent at Canterbury, all in the UK. He holds a Bachelor's degree in political science and a Master's in European Studies. He was elected a life Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS) in 1983. He has been the guest of the Japanese and United States governments on their respective international visitors programs, and has participated in numerous international seminars (including at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC). He speaks a number of European languages.

A British citizen, Chris Piening was born four days too late to celebrate VE Day. The father of two college-age children, he lives in Brussels.

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