E-Parliament, legislative tracking system and increasing transparency with ICT

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Transparency

Social value with ethical commitments that we all have to comply with.

Institutionally, transparency is the main pivot of a Government & Public Administration

Real Transparency is like a 3-Dimensional prism
The three dimensions of Transparency

- **Political**: Guaranteeing Citizen’s right of access to public information
- **Communicative**: Main focus on Citizen’s perception
- **Administrative**: Pragmatic implementation of transparency
Political dimension

Package of measures towards transparency

Parliaments should approve and adopt measures to increase transparency.

In 2015, H.E. Mr. Kadri Veseli President of the Parliament of Kosovo and the presidency of the Parliament adopted The Declaration on Parliamentary Openness which came into force in 2016, allowing the Parliament to further develop regulations and other acts, respecting the principles of parliamentary and administrative autonomy.
Improving the perception that citizens have of us

Informing them on the steps that we are taking regarding transparency

Assuring they understand the information that is published, focusing on:

- **Simplicity** (words used, short messages, we are in 170 character era)
- **Multi-Channel** Being present were citizens are

And of course, helping them to find what they are looking for
Active Advertising

It means to get all data out of “hidden places”

\[
\{ \text{unify them, arrange them, classify them} \}
\]

and make them available to citizens, so that they have the same elements of decision as Governments and parliaments.

We are talking about all kind of data: meetings, talks, events and economic data...
And what does this mean?

**Technologically** New concepts: Big data—Open data—Linked data Projects

**Administratively** A culture change. We must teach civil servants and the staff in the public service how to stop “holding the information” (quoting Tim Bernes-Lee).

Texts, documents, reports, minutes, emails... must be written knowing that everyone has the right to access, read or share them.

EVERYONE, including handicapped people (Training our teams in accessibility shall be mandatory and every project should consider accessibility in its scope)

**Politically** It basically means two things: commitment & budget
e-Parliament

Transparency

Participation

Collaboration

Mobility
When it comes to governance, technology provides opportunities for citizen discussion and public engagement; it strengthens accountability; ultimately, it will help democracies be more democratic.

According to World e-Parliament Report, e-Parliament can be defined as a legislature that is empowered to be more transparent, accessible and accountable through ICT.

It empowers people, in all their diversity, to be more engaged in public life by providing higher quality information and greater access to its parliamentary documents and activities.

It is an organization where connected stakeholders use information and communication technologies to support its primary functions of representation, law-making and oversight more effectively.

Through the application of modern technology and standards and the adoption of supportive policies, it fosters the development of an equitable and inclusive information society.
## Technology

**Collaboration:** Microsoft Office SharePoint Server, web Parts

**Decisions and workflow:** SharePoint WebPart with presentations and Web Parts

**Productivity applications:**
- Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Office Outlook

**e-mail client:**
- Windows Server Standard dhe Enterprise Edition

**OS:**
- Microsoft Active Directory

**Active Directory:**
- Microsoft SQL Server

**Database:**
- Microsoft Exchange Server, Windows Server, SMTP S

**Mail server:**
- Microsoft ISA Server

**Firewall and Proxy:**
- Microsoft ASP.NET
- Microsoft .NET Framework
- Microsoft Internet Information Services
- Microsoft .NET Enterprise Services/Component Services
- Microsoft Message Queuing Services
- Microsoft Certificate Services (PKI)
- Microsoft Clustering Services
- Microsoft Network Load Balancing
- Microsoft Reporting Services
- ATLAS/AJAX
- XML, XSD, XSLT, SOAP, WSE
There are many reasons why a Parliament should consider harnessing ICT in their everyday operations:

• to be more representative,
• to be more transparent,
• to be more accessible,
• to be more accountable
• to be more effective in their many functions.
Strategic Approach

The implementation of the e-Parliament system should be accepted as a common goal and thus should be supported by the position and opposition within the Assembly, since the system will be beneficial to both of them. The MPs as one of the users of the system whose manner of work will be mostly impacted, should also be involved in this process.
Engage all major stakeholders – both internal and external

Advocate collaboration at all levels

Invest in staff

Promote strong management

e-Parliament Key to success

Develop a strategic planning process
Specifics of e-Parliament

- MP - Parliamentary desktop

Diagram:

- Committees
- Parliamentary Questions
- Draft Laws, Amendments
- Key Performance Indicators
- Research
- Constituents
- Plenary Sessions
- Parliamentary Groups
- Scrutiny
Preparation and holding of sessions

Plenary, working body and committee sessions

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<th>Service of the Assembly</th>
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Before meeting

- Update status of materials
- Notify the MP's

After session

- Digital signing
- Send

- Notify the President of the Assembly

- Legislation Update
- Notify the MP's
- Send to Official Gazette

- Creating a list of present MP's
- Minutes of meeting
- Creating conclusions/reports
- Adoption of conclusions
- Digital signing
- Send
Web Portal of the Parliament

The principles of e-democracy and e-inclusion suggest a larger and more active inclusion of the citizens, which has been enabled with the functionalities that can be found on the Parliament web portal, such as: ask the President of the Parliament, ask the MP, send a suggestion, Internet TV channel, public discussions, etc.

Publishing of this information on the public portal of the Parliament will enable greater level of transparency, which ensures more prominent inclusion of the citizens in the work of the Parliament.
Social Networking

The following list is only a suggestion which new media features could be enabled:

- Public debates like forums/blogs
- Contact your MP/Parliamentary group
- Surveys / Polls
- Public hearings / debates
- Possibilities for connection with Social Network web sites like MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, Twitter and Wikis
Parliament Web TV

Web based multimedia is being consistently mentioned as part of the eDemocracy. The European Union's eTEN programme and i2010 objectives encourage public bodies to implement and benefit from a full range of eParticipation tools to broaden the participation of citizens in the democratic process.

Seamless transmission of meetings/events/briefings makes the Parliament more accessible and transparent to its citizens. Kosovo Parliament TV shall encourage eParticipation by giving citizens access to core legislation process without the intermediary of Parliament minutes or media coverage.
**MP questions**

- E-Parliament system includes a subsystem of MP questions. The aim of this sub-system is to enable each MP to pose a question to the representatives of the Government with reference to their work. With the use of the system and electronic posing of questions a lot of time and paper shall be saved.

- The sub-system enables posing questions during sessions and between sessions. The system shall keep a list of all questions, answers as well as the questions that remained without an answer. The government reps can answer the questions electronically via the system and to send the responses to the MP that posed the question. If any of the questions is verbally answered during the sessions, the professional services of the Parliament enter the answer in the system.
Key Performance Indicators

This subsystem presents graphics of the key performance indicators for the work in the Parliament.

The system automatically and in real time updates all data and activities, and reports and statistical indicators for the materials which have entered the legislative procedure, the amendments that follow, the sessions in the Parliament and the working bodies, as well as MP questions.

The key indicators are a very significant part of the system since they enable monitoring of the work of the Parliament and effectiveness of the work processes.
Common functions

- Remote access
- Digital signatures of every action
- System generated documents and letters in every step in the process based on templates
- Collaboration (instant messaging, wikis, blogs, email integration)
- Notifications for deadlines, new sessions, new acts in process
- Mobile view
- Single sign-on
- Document versions
- Information targeting
**PKI**

- Public key infrastructure (PKI) refers to the integration of technology, infrastructure, and practices that enables organizations and parliaments to secure their communications and business transactions.

- PKI combines digital certificates, public key cryptography, and certificate authorities into network security architecture.

- PKI is comprised of digital certificates, CAs, and other registration authorities that verify and authenticate the validity of each party involved in an electronic transaction.

- PKI should consist of at least two certificate servers responsible for issuing certificates and creating Certificate revocation lists, Active Directory as a repository for issued certificates and certificate templates and for authenticating users that are logging on to the eParliament system with digital certificates on their smart cards, web servers where certificate revocation lists are published.
PKI components and usage
Standards applied

Å **XML**

A key goal for the e-Parliament is to extend XML to the desktop. With the Microsoft Office System, which offers enhanced XML support in many of the Microsoft Office Professional applications, e-Parliament will make XML play a critical role in empowering end users and enabling Parliament to capture the full value of their collective knowledge.

Å **SGML** - separates meaning from typography;

Å **Semantic Web approach** - which distinguishes between data (actual text of the document as provided by the author), metadata (additional information on the content and on the document, generated manually or automatically by an editor) and ontology (conceptual model expressing the meaning of the content).
Standards applied II

• CEN Standards
  The CEN Workshop on an Open XML Interchange Format for Legal and Legislative Resources (MetaLex), declares, by way of its title, an interest in legal and legislative resources. CEN MetaLex aims to standardize the way in which sources of law and references to sources of law are to be represented in XML.

• CEN MetaLex is an interchange format, a lowest common denominator for other standards, intended not to replace jurisdiction-specific standards and vendor-specific formats in the publications process but to impose a standardized view on legal documents for the purposes of information exchange and interoperability in the context of software development.

• To meet these requirements, MetaLex defines a mechanism for schema extension, adding metadata, cross referencing, constructing compound documents and a basic naming convention.

• CEN/WS MLX – Open XML interchange format for legal documents –
Other standards

AKOMA NTOSO 1.0 Schema
AKOMA NTOSO 1.0 is an XML-based document format for legislative documents in African countries that has been developed by the Africa Parliament Action Plan, an initiative of UN/DESA based in Nairobi.
http://www.akomantoso.org/release-notes/latest-schema-release

United Kingdom: Crown XML Schema for Legislation
Crown XML Schema for Legislation -
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/schema/schema.zip

United States: Legislative Documents in XML at the United States House of Representatives
Amendment Schema - http://xml.house.gov/amend.xsd
Benefits

Â Improves Parliament effectiveness
  ▪ Increased transparency in the operation and accessibility of the decisions to the public

Â Saves time and money in Parliament operations
  ▪ Saves money by eliminating paper in the process of preparation and execution of plenary and working body sessions
  ▪ Simple and flexible communication Parliament-Government and Parliament-Official Gazette
  ▪ Measuring of the efficiency of the work

Â Improve access to and the quality of services
  ▪ Active participation for every user from anywhere and at anytime
  ▪ More mobile teleworking solution for the Members
  ▪ Spread of Wireless solutions within the Buildings of the Parliament
  ▪ Enabling transformation of the internal data sources into information available for the citizens
Conclusion

ICT is essential in supporting the work of legislative bodies. As these technologies have matured and grown in sophistication, they have acquired the necessary flexibility and capabilities to assist legislatures in their most important responsibilities: making the laws that guide the nation; conducting oversight of the executive; and communicating with the citizens. In today’s wired world, parliaments must capitalize on the benefits of ICT to function effectively, to interact with the public, and to collaborate with other Parliaments around the world.


ICT alone, however, do not make a legislature stronger or more efficient. ICT need to be integrated with parliamentary processes and not adopted in isolation from efforts to improve the capacities of the parliaments to legislate, to hold governments to account, to achieve greater independence, and to enable members to be more effective and more responsive. This process of innovation requires vision, sound governance, and strategic planning.

The realization of an e-parliament also needs a coherent change management strategy, mutual understanding between the political and technical worlds, and a pool of ICT staff that understands the parliamentary culture and its processes.

(World e-Parliament Conference 2009 - Report)
Thank you!

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