



European Public Sector Information Platform

Topic Report No. 2011 / 8

State of Play: Re-use of Parliamentary Data

Author: Daniel Dietrich
Published: October 2011

Keywords

Parliament, Legislation, PSI, Public Sector Information, Parliamentary Monitoring, Parliamentary Informatics, Open Government Data, Open Government, Transparency, Accountability, Participation, Citizen Engagement, Democracy

Abstract

The findings of the topic report indicate that the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to the documentation of legislative processes has become a growing trend in parliamentary monitoring over the last decade. Different actors such as Governments, Civil Society Organisations, citizens and companies have begun to assess and monitor the functioning of parliaments as well as their individual members.

This has led to the creation of hundreds of new, innovative and informative websites, tools and services that make use of parliamentary data in order to better explain, analyse, contextualise and visualise how parliaments actually work. The main objectives for these evolving projects can be summarised in the categories:

- ▲ overall accountability of parliaments and of the individual members of parliament (MPs) to the electorate,
- ▲ increased citizens' engagement in the legislative process, and
- ▲ increased transparency by improved access to information about parliaments and their work.

Although the objectives of these projects might vary, there is evidence that there is a growing demand for more parliamentary data to be made available in a structured way, in machine-processable formats and openly licensed allowing for re-use and re-distribution of the data. The parliaments themselves and open-data activist individuals and groups, in spite of occasional tactical differences mostly share the same strategic goal of increased access and democratic participation. While the new approaches have opened up a vast range of possibilities for citizens' and parliamentarians' interaction, these still remain somewhat under-utilised.

1 Introduction

What issues are debated in your parliament this week? Did the political party you have given your voice play an active role in the legislative debate of a topic that really matters to you? How did an individual Member of Parliament (MP) vote on an issue that really matters to you?

In order to be able to answer these questions we need information produced by parliaments, MPs and those following developments - be it the media, analysts, academics, think-tanks or lobbyists. While this has traditionally been the purview of a 'middleman-class' which relays the information between the electorate and the elected, new information technology makes it possible for all - the electorate, the elected and the middlemen to access far more information, to process it and analyse it in ways which were previously not possible. As this brief survey shows, the possibilities have been taken up

enthusiastically across the EU and globally by parliaments, governments, civic activists and the media. Challenges, however, remain.

2 Parliamentary Data

Similar to other Public Sector Bodies (PSBs) Parliaments produce large volumes of data such as transcripts of parliamentary debates, legislative texts, attendance and voting records, as well as information about individual Members of Parliament (MPs), working groups and parties. This data is considered to be Public Sector Information (PSI) and in many countries it is public by law. In European Union member states this data falls under the provisions of the European Commission Directive on the re-use of Public Sector Information, Directive 2003/98/EC¹ and its implementation into national law of the Member States. Other laws regulating the right to access parliamentary information include the “Freedom of Information” or “Right to Access Information” legislation.

Most parliaments pro-actively publish some information about parliamentary processes either as printed material and/or online. In some cases, however, parliaments do not present substantive information about their work. In other cases, the published information is difficult to find and access by the general public. If parliaments do not publish substantive information its a political problem which should be addressed by legislation while the problem of discoverability and accessibility of Parliamentary Data is more of a technical problem.

But even if substantive information is discoverable and accessible for citizens to read, there are other barriers that might limit or hinder the re-use and re-distribution of the data by its actual and potential re-users.

3 Barriers for re-use

The barriers to the re-use of parliamentary Information can be threefold:

- ⤴ Limited Access: Information is not published at all or in a limited fashion
- ⤴ Technical: Information is published in a form not amenable to processing by machines.
- ⤴ Legal: Information is published under copyright or other terms of use that inhibit or forbid the re-use and re-distribution.

3.1 Limited Access

Key Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Human Rights Organisations working on access to information assert that a lot of parliamentary data is not being published pro-actively. Some CSOs use Freedom of Information Legislation to enforce their right to access information. Though in some cases this might be the only way to access parliamentary data, it is not very efficient, requiring resources such as money and time on both sides.

1 http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/docs/pdfs/directive/psi_directive_en.pdf

3.2 Formats

Access and re-use of parliamentary data might be inhibited technically because it is published in formats that are not processable by machines. Humans might be able to read a PDF Document or the information displayed in an unstructured way on a website, but in order to automatically process this information for analysis or visualisation it has to be structured and published in machine processable formats such as XML, CSV, JASON or RDF.

3.3 Licenses

Access and re-use of parliamentary data might be inhibited legally because it is published under Copyright expressed in licenses or terms of use regulating the conditions under which it can or can not be re-used and re-distributed. For data to be re-used as open data it must be made available under a license that explicitly allows anybody to re-use, re-mix and re-distribute the data free of charge for any purposes, including commercial use.

In some countries legislative texts and other information about parliamentary and lawmaking processes are in the public domain by law and so not subject to any Intellectual Property (IP) Legislation. In other countries however this parliamentary data is subject of IP law and thus might be subject to copyrights.

4 Re-Users of Parliamentary Data

There is a growing spectrum of actual and potential re-users of parliamentary data such as Members of Parliament themselves, Public Sector Bodies, journalists, researchers, citizens, CSOs and private companies. Cases of re-use include analysis, web and mobile applications, visualisations and other services both for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

4.1 Governments

Because of the importance of Parliaments in lawmaking and conducting executive oversight for the functioning of democratic governments, potentially the main re-users of parliamentary data would be Members of the Parliament themselves (MPs) alongside with other Public Sector Bodies. Some governments have understood that Public Sector Bodies themselves are the biggest beneficiaries of making data available for re-use.

Following the vision of an open and transparent government that functions in an accountable and efficient way while enabling citizen participation, some governments have taken up the initiative in making PSI available for re-use to the general public. The US Government under President Obama's Open Government Directive² is a leading example. Also, the UK Government has shown leadership in opening up PSI into Open Government Data.

An example of a government making parliamentary data available for re-use is the platform [Legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)² which makes the great majority, but not all, types of legislative texts and

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

their accompanying explanatory documents in machine processable formats. Everyone can re-use the data free of charge under the terms of the Open Government Licence#. The platform is remarkable because it allows the data to be explored via a user-friendly and interactive interface and to be queried using Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). It also offers the raw data for download.



UK Public General Acts

Your search for **UK Public General Acts** has returned more than 200 results.

Partial dataset 1801 - 1987 Complete dataset 1988 - Present Results grouped by 10 year periods

Year	Count
1800	38
1810	35
1820	45
1830	25
1840	44
1850	45
1860	38
1870	24
1880	55
1890	31
1900	33
1910	27
1920	41
1930	16
1940	
1950	
1960	
1970	
1980	
1990	
2000	45
2010	41
2011	16

Legislation By Type	Title	Years and Numbers	Legislation type
UK Public General Acts (3921)	Energy Act 2011	2011 c. 16	UK Public General Acts
	Sovereign Grant Act 2011	2011 c. 15	UK Public General Acts
	Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011	2011 c. 14	UK Public General Acts
	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011	2011 c. 13	UK Public General Acts
	European Union Act 2011	2011 c. 12	UK Public General Acts
	Finance Act 2011	2011 c. 11	UK Public General Acts
	Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2011	2011 c. 10	UK Public General Acts
	Police (Detention and Bail) Act 2011	2011 c. 9	UK Public General Acts

An other example for a government using state of the art information technology is the official site of the Swedish parliament³ (Riksdagen) providing over 180,000 documents, such as parliamentary decisions, bills, motions and minutes of the Parliament. The service is based on the content downloaded from standard web pages of the parliament. The content is marked up as XML and available as RSS HTML and JSON feeds.

An other interesting example to look at is the mobile iPhone application of the German Parliament. The Bundestag-App⁴ was developed by a company on behalf of the German parliament. It offers information about plenary sessions, committees and individual MPs alongside with news items about public debate. It is considered to be one of the first parliament mobile Applications developed on behalf of a parliament itself. However the Application does not show voting results of MPs or link to original texts of legislation. It is remarkable that the German Parliament is financing the development of an iPhone-App while most of the parliamentary data is still not available for re-use openly licensed and in

3 <http://data.riksdagen.se/>

4 <http://itunes.apple.com/de/app/deutscher-bundestag/id387688942?mt=8>

machine-processable formats. In contrast to the two examples above where parliamentary data has been made available for re-use openly licensed and in machine-processable formats.



[In iTunes ansehen](#)

Kostenlos

Kategorie: [Nachrichten](#)
 Aktualisiert: 22.04.2011
 Version: 2.0
 Größe: 10.6 MB
 Sprache: Deutsch
 Entwickler: Babel GmbH
 © 2011 Deutscher Bundestag
 Kennzeichnung: 4+

Voraussetzungen: Kompatibel mit iPhone, iPod touch und iPad. Erfordert iOS 3.0 oder neuer.

Kundenbewertungen

Aktuelle Version: ★★★★★ 91 Bewertungen
 Alle Versionen: ★★★★★ 1416 Bewertungen

Beschreibung

Direkt aus dem Parlament: Diese App liefert laufend aktualisierte Informationen über Themen, Abgeordnete und Ausschüsse des Deutschen Bundestages ergänzt durch die Besuchsangebote.

[Deutscher Bundestag Support](#)

[...Mehr](#)

Neue Funktionen von Version 2.0

Der Bundestag ist auch ein Besuchermagnet: Darum hat die Version 2 der Bundestag-App nun einen Bereich für Besucher: Hier finden Sie alle Informationen zur Teilnahme an Plenarsitzungen auf der Besuchertribüne, zu Vorträgen im Plenarsaal, Führungen durch die Gebäude mit Schwerpunkten auf Politik, Geschichte, Kunst oder

[...Mehr](#)

iPhone Screenshots



4.2 Commercial Re-Use

An example for commercial re-use of parliamentary data is the website “Parliamentary Monitor”⁵ jointly developed by the Netherlands National News Agency (ANP) and the Company Parliamentary Documentary Centre (PDC). The Parliamentary Monitor is a knowledge management tool allowing the registered user to follow and analyse the developments in and around the Dutch Parliament. The service caters to PR companies and news agencies. Registered users can create search profiles on subjects, parties or MPs and will receive e-mail alerts with updates from various sources about the issue. There is no information on turnover or client base, but PDC itself considers the tool as having been highly successful after the service was purchased by over 20 clients within the first few months.

5 <http://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/>

Although there are more examples for commercial re-use of parliamentary data, the findings of this report indicate that the potential for profitable business cases in this area of PSI is not as great as in other PSI areas such as Geodata or Meteorological Data.

4.3 Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations

Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations (PMOs) have been monitoring parliamentary processes and MPs performance for many years. PMOs range in size and profile from traditional and well-established Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) over small grassroots initiatives with low or almost no-budget to individuals inspired by the rise of the Open Government and Open Data movement which we have seen over the last few years. PMOs are beginning to play an important role in supporting parliamentary transparency and accountability. Parliamentary monitoring can have strongly positive effects on parliamentary performance and effectiveness.

In September 2011 the National Democratic Institute and World Bank Institute published the results of a Global Survey of Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations⁶. The findings are:

- ⤴ Over 191 PMOs monitor more than 80 national parliaments worldwide. These organizations are scattered throughout the world, but most are found in Latin America (42) and Central and Eastern Europe (28). According to project survey results, most PMOs (94 percent) monitor national parliaments, while 24 percent monitor sub-national legislatures. Many of these PMOs focus on monitoring the activities and performance of individual MPs, although many also monitor parliaments as institutions, or the components of the parliamentary institution, such as parliamentary party groups or parliamentary committees.
- ⤴ While a wealth of good practice information exists, the overall quality of PMO methodologies and interventions remains mixed, and sharing good practices among PMOs is limited.
- ⤴ Major challenges facing PMOs include limited access to information, insufficient financial support from local and international sources, and parliamentary resistance to their activities.
- ⤴ The application of information and communications technologies (ICTs) to parliamentary work, known as “parliamentary informatics,” is a rapidly growing trend in parliamentary monitoring.
- ⤴ The impact of some PMOs has been limited by a lack of capacity to translate monitoring into greater public awareness or advocacy.
- ⤴ PMOs vary in their approaches to parliamentary monitoring, with some taking more adversarial stances toward parliaments and others choosing a more collaborative course.

4.4 Civic Hackers

⁶ <http://www.ndi.org/parliamentary-monitoring-organization-survey>

Its worth mentioning that most of the new re-users that have created hundreds of websites, tools and services around parliamentary data would not consider themselves as PMOs. Some of the most impressive and most influential projects have actually been developed by individuals. In the context of a study on Collaborative Production in eGovernment Services⁷ for the European Commission, presented at the ePractice Workshop⁸ on 27th October in Brussels, a survey⁹ was conducted to find out more about these Civic Hackers and their motivations. The results are:

- ⤴ 82% of civic hackers do it voluntarily, without financial rewards or funding. Only one receives government funding. However this is possible because their costs are in 80% of the cases below 1000 Euros per year.
- ⤴ In terms of drivers, 90% are motivated by identifying a need not yet covered, and 80% by the desire to make a difference, and 40% for visibility. Money plays a minor role.
- ⤴ 60% say that the main obstacle is non-availability of public data. Costs and business models instead are mentioned by a minority (18% and 29%). About one-third mentions lack of interest by the public as a problem.

5 Parliamentary Monitoring

Limited access to parliamentary data seems to be the most significant driver for a wide spectrum of organisations and initiatives all over the world to develop and run websites, tools and services that help to increase the discoverability, accessibility and re-useability of parliamentary data in order to help make parliamentary processes more transparent and to track the activity of individual Members of Parliament (MP) in order to increase accountability.

6 Parliamentary informatics

The application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to the documentation of legislative activity is called Parliamentary Informatics. The principal areas of concern are the provision, in a form conveniently readable to humans or machines, of information and statistics about:

- ⤴ individual Members of Parliament and their activity
- ⤴ legislative proposals
- ⤴ votes on legislative proposals

7 <http://ourservices.eu>

8 <http://www.epractice.eu/en/events/2011-collaborative-production-egovernment-services>

9 <http://bit.ly/sYxqHL>

^ text of legislation

Parliamentary informatics is a growing trend in Parliamentary Monitoring and is carried out by both Public Sector Bodies as well as private non-for-profit and for-profit actors. The motivations of these actors range from increasing transparency in lawmaking processes, increasing the efficiency of parliamentary administration, tracking and disclosure of lobbying and corruption as well as facilitating democratic discourses and citizens' participation.

In result the websites, tools and services developed in Parliamentary informatics show a great variety in terms of focus and functionality. Some tools automatically aggregate and organize information from parliamentary websites and contextualise it with other information sources. Some other tools generate visualizations or interactive applications that help users to better understand complex issues in lawmaking processes and other government functions. Other platforms allow citizens to interact directly with MPs or participate in parliamentary monitoring and policy analysis.

7 Issues

Technical and legal barriers for re-use of parliamentary data an issue of concern in many countries. In a joint report from the National Democratic Institute and World Bank Institute on parliamentary monitoring organizations published in September 2011, the lack of parliamentary data being available as 'open data' is cited as a fundamental issue for further development in the field of parliamentary informatics. The report explains:

"Parliamentary informatics, which are used by approximately 40 percent of PMOs surveyed, are oftentimes delivered through user-friendly and visually attractive websites. While they have proven effective in many instances, the most useful informatics tools require the availability of parliamentary data in machine-readable or 'open data' formats, which remains a challenge in many contexts."

As a result many parliamentary informatics projects use techniques such as screen scraping to access the data as it can be found on parliament or other government websites and publications. While this data is often unstructured it has to be structured and transformed into formats that can be processed by machines. This process is often technically complex and requires skilled personal and a lot of time - resources that are a real challenge for small or medium size PMOs.

8 Approaches

As discussed above, PMOs chose different approaches for their parliamentary informatics projects. Most PMOs focus on monitoring individual MPs while others take a broader approach by also monitoring or assessing the parliament as an institution with its political parties, party groups and committees.

8.1 Monitoring Individual MPs

PMOs have developed a variety of tools and techniques to monitor the activity and performance of individual MPs. Monitoring MPs may include: collecting background information about individual MPs, measuring MPs' parliamentary attendance and participation in parliamentary debates, tracking MPs' voting records or monitor the constituency work of MPs. Some PMOs have added financial disclosures to the information about MPs while others have developed scorecards or indices to summarize the performance of MPs. Another interesting approach is the measurement of the MPs use of oversight tools such as oral and written questions, interpolations, requests to government for action or issuing of investigative reports. The findings of the above mentioned survey by the National Democratic Institute and World Bank Institute on Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations, states (page 27):

“Individual MPs are a primary focus of parliamentary monitoring activities for 86 percent of PMOs surveyed. Many PMOs view individual MP monitoring as a means to develop a ‘culture of accountability’ within parliament. Their tools are generally aimed at helping citizens better understand the work of MPs - both to facilitate their decision making at the polls and to encourage their participation in the political process in-between elections. This type of monitoring also helps MPs recognize that they are subject to public scrutiny as well as conveys the expectation that MPs honorably conduct the duties of their office, although PMOs often seek to balance ‘naming and shaming’ tactics with support for broad-based parliamentary reform. Many PMOs also, somewhat more obliquely, ‘try to establish a link between citizens and elected people’ by building mechanisms to facilitate citizen input to their MPs on legislation or other types of constituent requests, and to expedite MP responsiveness.”

8.2 Monitoring Parliaments

PMOs have developed a variety of tools and techniques to monitor a parliament and its functions. The main theme here is to contextualise and explain how a parliament works. A common approach is to assess and analyse parliamentary activity and functioning. Some PMOs monitor the productivity of a parliament compared to previous legislative sessions or years by counting the number of pieces of legislation passed or the number of amendments incorporated. Others studying voting patterns by parties or coalitions to draw conclusions of how public policies are made. Others have developed indicators to assess the work of parties, party groups or committees. An other approach is the tracking of legislative process and legislative texts over time.

9 Challenges

The use of parliamentary informatics presents numerous challenges. Parliaments that do not publish substantive information about their work on their websites limit the utility of the most effective informatics tools. Information can only be re-used if it is available in machine-readable formats and licensed openly to allow for re-use.

According to the above mentioned survey by the National Democratic Institute and World Bank Institute on Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations, this Chart below lists the most frequently cited challenges facing PMOs:

Difficulty gaining access to desired information	63%
Lack of financial support from local funding sources	62%
Lack of international donor support	54%
Resistance to the activity's goals by MPs, parties and/or parliamentary staff	35%
Lack of interest from local citizens and organizations	27%

10 State of Play

There is evidence that the use of parliamentary informatics in parliamentary monitoring has really become a trend over the last decade that led to the creation of hundreds of new, innovative and informative websites, tools and services that make use of parliamentary data to better explain, analyse, contextualise and visualise how Parliaments actually work. The main objectives for these evolving projects can be summarised in the categories overall accountability of parliaments and the individual MPs to the electorate, citizen engagement in the legislative process and increased transparency by improved access to information about parliaments and their work. To a lesser extent, they have shown the capacity to encourage parliamentary reform.

Although the objectives of these projects might vary, it is clear that there is a demand for more parliamentary data to be made available in a structured way, in machine-processable formats and openly licensed allowing for re-use and re-distribution of the data.

For the scope of this report it is impossible to cover all parliamentary informatics projects re-using parliamentary data at an international level. The development in this field is very dynamic. In the EU member states alone there are more than two dozen of projects.

A structured and comprehensive analysis on parliamentary monitoring organisations and the variety of technology and techniques they develop for efficient parliamentary monitoring can be found in the joint study of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and World Bank Institute (WBI): "Strengthening Parliamentary Accountability, Citizen Engagement and Access to Information: A Global Survey of Parliamentary Monitoring Organizations"¹⁰ published in 2011.

An other analysis to be mentioned here is the Fleishman-Hillard's 2nd European Parliament

10 . <http://www.ndi.org/parliamentary-monitoring-organization-survey>

Digital Trends study¹¹.

10.1 European Level

Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001¹² of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents grants the right of access to documents of the three institutions to any Union citizen and to any natural or legal person residing, or having its registered office, in a Member State. "Document" is defined broadly and it is assumed that all documents, even if classified, may be subject to right of access unless it falls under one of the exceptions. If access is refused, the applicant is allowed a confirmatory request. A complaint against a refusal can be made with the European Ombudsman and/or an appeal can be brought before the European General Court.

It's Your Parliament

The website provides access to information on voting records of the European Parliament from 2009 onwards (2004 to 2009 available through an API). The voting records can be accessed for individual parliamentarians, parliamentary groups, countries or policy areas. The legislative documents concerned are linked with the voting records. The site publishes statistics such as numbers of votes, attendance rate etc. calculated for political groups, member states and policy area.


11 . <http://www.epdigitaltrends.eu/>

12 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/PDF/r1049_en.pdf


Members of Parliament
MEP search...
It's Your Parliament .eu

YOUR PAGE >>
COUNTRIES >>
POLITICAL GROUPS >>
VOTES >>
POLICY AREAS >>

Financial Regulation and Implementing Rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union (repeal. Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002)
A7-0325/2011 - Ingeborg Gräßle et Crescenzo Rivellini - Am 54PC/2

Date: 2011-10-26
Get report from Europarl: A7-0325/2011
Rapporteur:  Crescenzo Rivellini
Attendance: 83 %
Policy area: Budgets
Type of vote: Roll-call vote
EU-Parliament reference: A7-0325/2011
Doc reference: COD/2010/0395
Dossier of committee: BUDG/7/04994
Views: 2
Look up vote of:

Your opinion on Financial Regulation and Implementing Rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union (repeal. Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002)



+ 0 for - 0 against

Your comments on Financial Regulation and Implementing Rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union (repeal. Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002)

There are no comments yet

You have to log in in order to comment

By group | By country

Group	For	Abstain	Against	MEPs
PPE	100%			236
S&D	92%			166
ALDE	93%			73
Verts/ALE	100%			52
ECR	98%			46
GUE/NGL	97%			32
NI	48%	16%	36%	25
EFD	30%		65%	20
Total	61%	16%	23%	650

The page was set up and is run by Buhl & Rasmussen, a Danish company specialising in opening access to political data without financial support from other sources. The aim is to provide increased public access to the workings of the European Parliament. Information is provided in English. <http://www.itsyourparliament.eu/>

API for European Union legislation

The Application Programming Interface (API) opens up core EU legislative data for further use, such as research on the decision-making time, analysing voting patterns, measuring the activity of Commissioners and visualising the legislative integration process over time. <http://api.epdb.eu/>

Parlorama

The site gathers, analyses and regroups publicly available data from European Assemblies using a methodology developed specifically for the site. Information is provided in English, French and German. <http://www.parlorama.eu/>

Political Memory

The project provides a toolbox to help track voting records of Members of the European Parliament and to reach them. Information is provided in English and French. The project

was launched in 2009 and re-launched in 2011. <http://memopol2.lqdn.fr/>

ParlTrack

The project is based on an initiative by the European parliament and EU to improve the transparency of legislative processes. It provides a database of dossiers, parliamentarians, vote results and committee agendas and allows the tracking of dossiers using email and RSS. Information is provided in English. <http://parltrack.euwiki.org/>

EP Vote

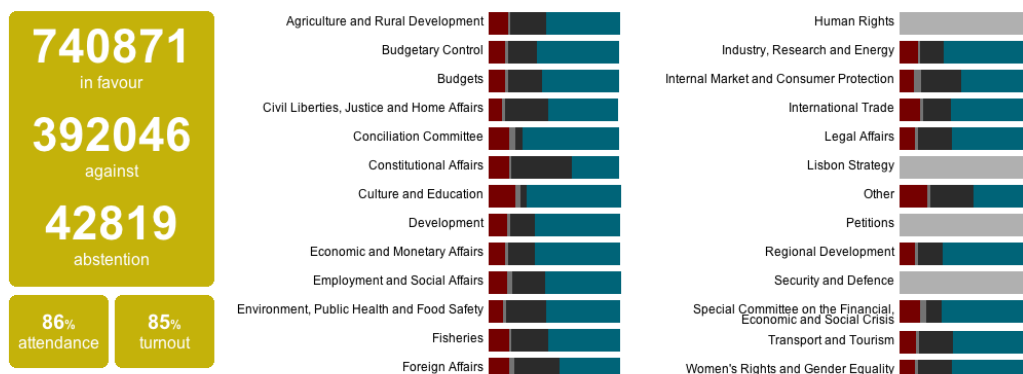
Launched in July 2009, EP Vote aims to track the votes in the European Parliament and visualise them. Users can check the voting records of individual MEPs, this information can be sorted by party / group affiliation and country. Users can also see votes on single legislative texts such as directives, regulations and international treaties linking back to the original source of the legal texts. The collected information on votes resembles Yes / No / Abstain and No Vote (i.e. MEP didn't attend plenary for whatever reason).



- OVERVIEW
 - MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
 - TEXTS
 - MAPS
 - DASHBOARD
 - TRENDS
 - ABOUT
- SIGN IN
 - JOIN

All countries, All political groups, All members

Country	Political Group	Member of European Parliament
All	All	All
Austria	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Andrea Češková
Belgium	Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Elzbieta Katarzyna Lukacijewska
Bulgaria	European Conservatives and Reformists	Csaba Óry
Cyprus	European People's Party	Silvia-Adriana Țicău
Czech Republic	European United Left - Nordic Green Left	Damien Abad
Denmark	Greens/European Free Alliance	János Áder
Estonia	Non-attached	John Stuart Agnew
Finland	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats	Gabriele Albertini



a service by noise.in.the.wires © 2009 - 2011 [contact us](#)

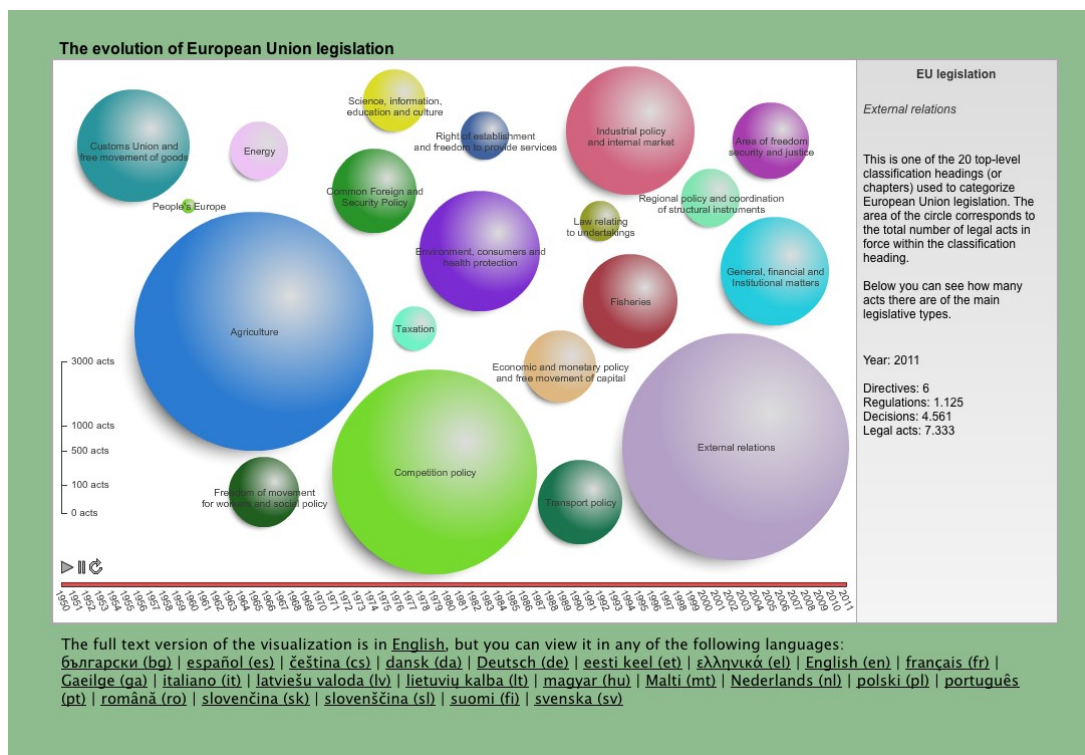
The Website is run by a private person and has no direct affiliation to any political party or group. No information is provided with respect to funding, other financial details and staff. Information is available in English. <http://www.epvote.eu/>

VoteWatch

The website is run by an independent organisation which aims to increase transparency in, public understanding of, and public interest in EU decision-making processes by providing access to and analysis of the work of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers. It uses statistical models developed by the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Université Libre de Bruxelles. The website covers the European Parliament's activities during the entire 2004-2009 term and the 2009-2014 term. VoteWatch exhibits the votes of political parties in the European Parliament and displays attendance and activity records (including Voting and Attendance, Reports, Declarations, Speeches, Motions, Opinions and Questions) of Members of the European Parliament for all of the European Union's 27 member states. Information is updated after each voting session and provided in English, French, German, Polish and Romanian. The project was launched in 2009. <http://www.votewatch.eu/>

The evolution of European Union legislation

The visualisation application by Buhl & Rasmussen graphically demonstrates the quantitative evolution of EU regulations from 1950 to 2011. The site is available in all official EU languages. <http://epdb.eu/eulegislation/>



10.2 EU Member States

Austria

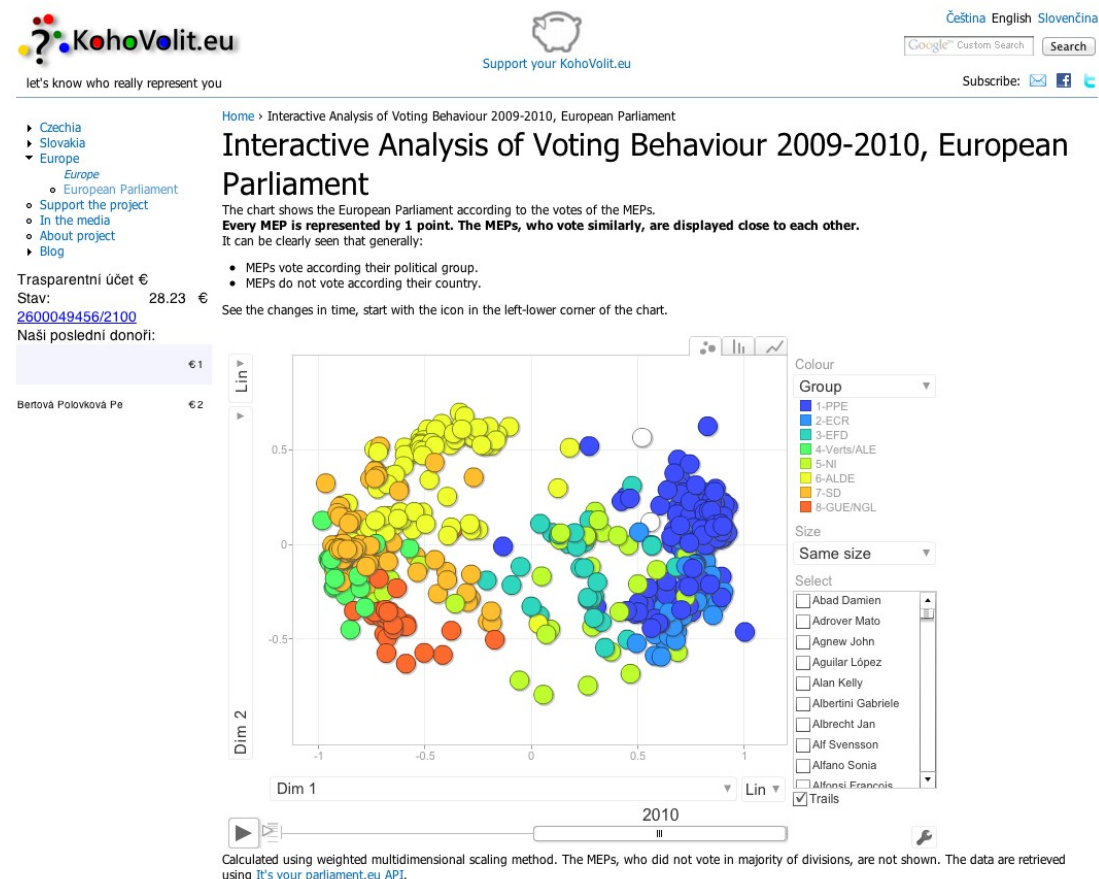
Mein Parlament

The site provides information on the workings of the Austrian parliament and Austrian Members of the European Parliament. It enables the public to engage in discussions with parliamentarians. Information is provided in German and the site is modelled after a similar site in Germany. <http://www.meinparlament.at>

Czech Republic

Koho Volit

Koho Volit is a volunteer-based, joint Czech-Slovak project which provides access to information on Czech Upper and Lower Houses of parliament, the Slovak parliament, municipalities in both countries and the European Parliament. It provides voting records as well as information about other parliamentary motions and activities such as questions, reports, speeches and opinions. Also the site calculates a so-called KohoVolit Index and a bubble-visualisation of voting derivation from political group or country.



The site provides information in Czech, Slovak and English, no information about the launch date is given. <http://kohovolit.eu/>

Denmark

Hvem Stemmer Hvad

The website aims to increase parliamentary transparency in the Folketinget with voting statistics and tracks parliamentary questions, attendance levels and media mentions of Danish politicians. It has also made analyses of municipal elections in Denmark and on voting behavior in the European-Parliament and EU Council. The site offers access to its data through an API. The information is provided in Danish. <http://www.hvemstemmerhvad.dk>

Folkets Ting

The website is a volunteer-run project providing a forum for discussing laws, politicians and political issues. It also offers rss feeds and lets users comment on content. The site is in Danish. <http://folketsting.dk/>

Finland

Kansan Muisti

The website allows users to track parliamentary performance of deputies and comparing these with campaign promises based on comprehensive records of parliamentarians' activities. Planned features will allow users to compare their views with those of parliamentarians as well as of lobby and interest groups. The site is in English and Finnish. <http://www.kansanmuisti.fi>

Nomen Est Omen

The site allows for a comparison of family influence based on a search of public European databases. The number of MP's with the chosen surname is one of the factors to count the "eliteness" of a family name. <http://www.nomenest.info/?hl=en>

France

NosDéputés

The website tracks the activities of members of the French National Assembly, providing information on individual MP's, issues being debated and providing a discussion forum. The site also publishes reports and analyses. Users can access a wide range of documents as well as motions and opinions from MP's on specific issues.



Une initiative de RegardsCitoyens.org

Identifiant: GO Inscription

NOS DÉPUTÉS.FR
OBSERVATOIRE CITOYEN DE L'ACTIVITÉ PARLEMENTAIRE

Les Députés | Les Dossiers | Les Citoyens | FAQ

Rechercher un député, une ville, un mot, ...

Par ordre alphabétique | Par circonscription | Par mots clés | Synthèse | Au hasard

Consultez notre étude 2010 – 2011 sur les sanctions relatives à la présence des députés !

Jean-Pierre Abelin, député NC de la 4ème circonscription de la Vienne

Participation globale au cours des 12 derniers mois (hémicycle et commissions)

Séances par semaine

Nov Déc Jan 11 Fév Mar Avr Mai Juin Jul AoÛt Sept Oct

■ Présences relevées ■ Participations ■ Mots prononcés (x 10 000) ■ Questions orales ■ Vacances parlementaires ■ Explications

Activité (12 derniers mois) : : 23 : 25 : 1 : 15 : 27 : 1 : 0 : 16 : 17 : 4

Informations

Mandat en cours depuis le 20 juin 2007
Groupe politique : Nouveau centre (membre)
Profession : Directeur-adjoint de service à la Banque de France
Fiche sur le site de l'Assemblée nationale
Page sur Wikipédia
Site web

Suivre l'activité du député

par email par RSS

Champ lexical

HLM logement péréquation rénovation urbaine urbaine
Tous ses mots

Productions parlementaires

Ses derniers rapports

The information is provided in French. The Site is run by Regards Citoyen, a non-partisan NGO who also fund it out of their own sources. <http://www.nosdeputes.fr/>

NosSénateurs

The site is a sister project of NosDéputés, but concentrating on the members of the second chamber, the French Sénat. <http://www.nossenateurs.fr/>

Germany

AbgeordnetenWatch

The website aims to increase parliamentary transparency and accountability of parliamentarians by allowing users to debate issues with members of parliament, track voting records, and provides insight into extra earnings of parliamentarians. Information is provided in German. <http://www.abgeordnetenwatch.de/>

Ireland

Kildare Street

The site provides users with access to information on members of, debates in and answers to parliamentary questions in both houses of the Irish Parliament, the Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. The volunteer-run site was inspired by the UK equivalent, TheyWorkForYou. The information is provided in English. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/>



Italy

OpenParlamento

The OpenParlamento by openpolis allows users to track legislative progress, votes and Parliament members' activities. The page utilises official data from both Chambers of the Italian parliament and lets users comment, vote and amend parliamentary acts. It provides users with the official legislative texts and drafts as well as rss feeds. The portal provides information in Italian. <http://parlamento.openpolis.it/>

Latvia

Gudras Galvas

The site is a social networking platform where users can get in contact with parliamentarians and ministers and discuss political issues in online fora. It provides users with the profiles of members of parliament and ministers, including their statements in the media and election campaign promises. The site provides information in Latvian. <http://gudrasgalvas.lv/>

Lithuania

Atviras Seimas

The site tracks parliamentary activity by providing statistics on attendance levels of MPs, votes, speeches, rebellions, travel maps, popularity ratings based on internet search result counts. It is a volunteer-run website. The information is provided in Lithuanian. <http://atviras-seimas.info/>

Mano Seimas

Mano Seimas publishes voting records for interesting or controversial bills, provides MP's biography and allows to ask questions and receive answers from MPs. Part of the published data is fetched through API provided by Atviras Seimas. Mano Seimas is a part of e-democracy project run by Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University. <http://www.manoseimas.lt/>

Manobalsas

The site is a smart voting tool allowing users to take a compare their political positions with candidates and parties. Information is provided in Lithuanian. <http://manobalsas.lt/index/index.php>

Netherlands

Het Nieuwe Stemmen

The Het Nieuwe Stemmen Foundation runs several projects aiming to increase transparency and accountability. These include:

- ⤴ Wiekiesjij, <http://www.hetnieuwestemmen.nl/wiekiesjij-1/> helps you find the

politician of your choice based on expertise, professional background, age, religious affiliation, and political experience.

- ⤴ Toevalofniet: <http://www.hackdeoverheid.nl/2011/01/toeval-of-niet/> shows influence links between politicians and maps the 'old boys networks'. Project is a collaboration with the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad.
- ⤴ Volgmijnstem: <http://www.hetnieuwestemmen.nl/projecten/volgmijnstem> This website monitors parliamentary activity and presents it as context information on the website nu.nl.
- ⤴ Wettenstrijd: <http://www.hetnieuwestemmen.nl/projecten/wettenstrijd/> is a game that simulates how parliaments work. Uses actual proceedings from the EU and Dutch parliament.
- ⤴ Maildepolitiek: <http://www.hetnieuwestemmen.nl/projecten/maildepolitiek/> allows citizens to request an answer by e-mail from multiple MP's on a specific subject. Conversation is being published on the site.
- ⤴ Politix <http://www.politix.nl/> tracks voting behaviour of Dutch political parties.

<http://www.hetnieuwestemmen.nl>

Politwoops

The site publishes deleted tweets of politicians in the Dutch Parliament. Information is provided in Dutch. <http://politwoops.nl/>

Stemmentracker

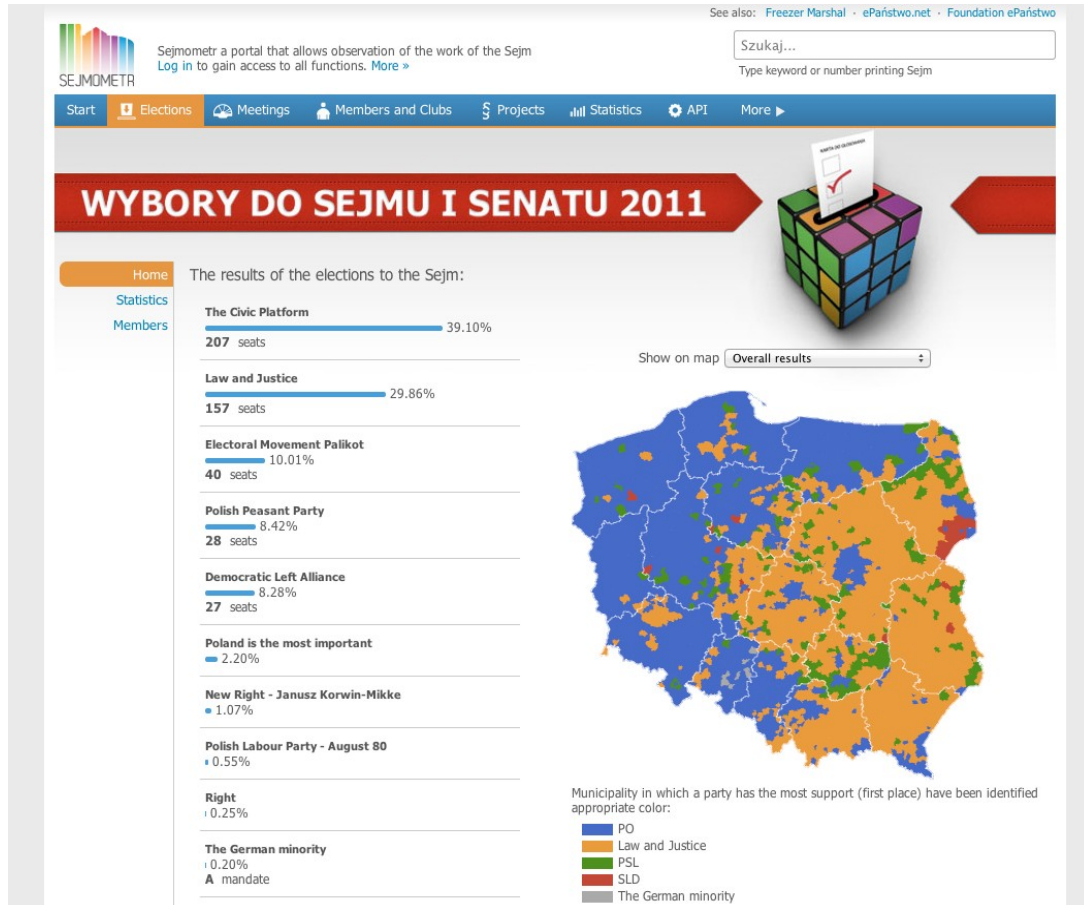
The site allows users to vote on current issues debated in parliament and compare these with actual voting behaviour of parties. Background information is provided for crucial votes. The site is maintained by the nonpartisan, non-profit Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek (IPP). Information is provided in Dutch. <http://www.stemmentracker.nl>

Poland

Sejmometr

The site monitors both houses of the Polish parliament (Sejm and Senate), providing information on election results, voting records and individual parliamentarians and parties. The site also provides an API (the data from the site is available under an open license and machine readable in JSON-Format).

Users can see which debates their MP of interest joined and what he or she said. Recent 'projects' to change a law or craft a new one are bundled together in a dossier. People can view the timeline ('The draft has reached the Sejm now') and can read reports and relevant debates.



In the 'statystyki' information is collated regarding the number of votes, social structure of the parliament etc. Sejmometr is maintained by the ePaństwo Foundation, with help from the Open Society Institute, mysociety.org and the Fundacja Batorego. Information is provided in Polish. <http://sejmometr.pl/>

Portugal

Demo.cratica

The site monitors the activities of the Portuguese parliament, providing information on individual parliamentarians since 1976 and parliamentary sessions from 2009 onwards. The site is on Portuguese. <https://demo.cratica.org/>

Romania

Aleșii Votază

The site run by the Institutul pentru Politici Publice tracks parliamentary activity including voting patterns of parties and parliamentarians, legislative acts discussed, and the work of committees in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Information is provided in Romanian. <http://www.alesiivoteaza.ro/>

Slovakia



Koho Volit

Please see Koho Volit project above under the section Czech Republic, as the site covers the parliaments of both the Czech Republic and Slovakia: <http://kohovolit.eu/>

Sweden

Kalla fakta om de folkvalda

The site, run by the TV4, provides information on parliamentarians, including attendance records and incomes. The information is provided in Swedish parliament members compiled by Swedish TV4. http://www.tv4.se/kalla_fakta/riksdb/riksdagsledarmoten.action

OpenGov

The site promotes access to publicly available governmental data sources and documents, including legislative processes. The site is in English and Swedish. <http://www.opengov.se/>

Skuggrix

The site allows users to vote on the same issues as parliament and compare their preferences with actual voting behaviour. <http://skuggrix.se/>

Riksdagskollen DN

The site run by the newspaper Dagens Nyheter allows users to track bills proposed by parliament members and contact parliamentarians with questions. The site is in Swedish. <http://riksdagskollen.dn.se/>

Valpejl

The service provided by Swedish Radio SR and Swedish Television SVT allows users to search for information on deputies in the national, county and municipal parliaments, including information on income and real estate property owned. The service also allows users to compare their views with those of the deputies. The site is in Swedish. <http://valpejl.se/>

Min Ledamot

The site allows users to search for their parliament members and respective attendance records based on the postal code. The site is in Swedish. <http://minledamot.se/>

eDemokrat.se

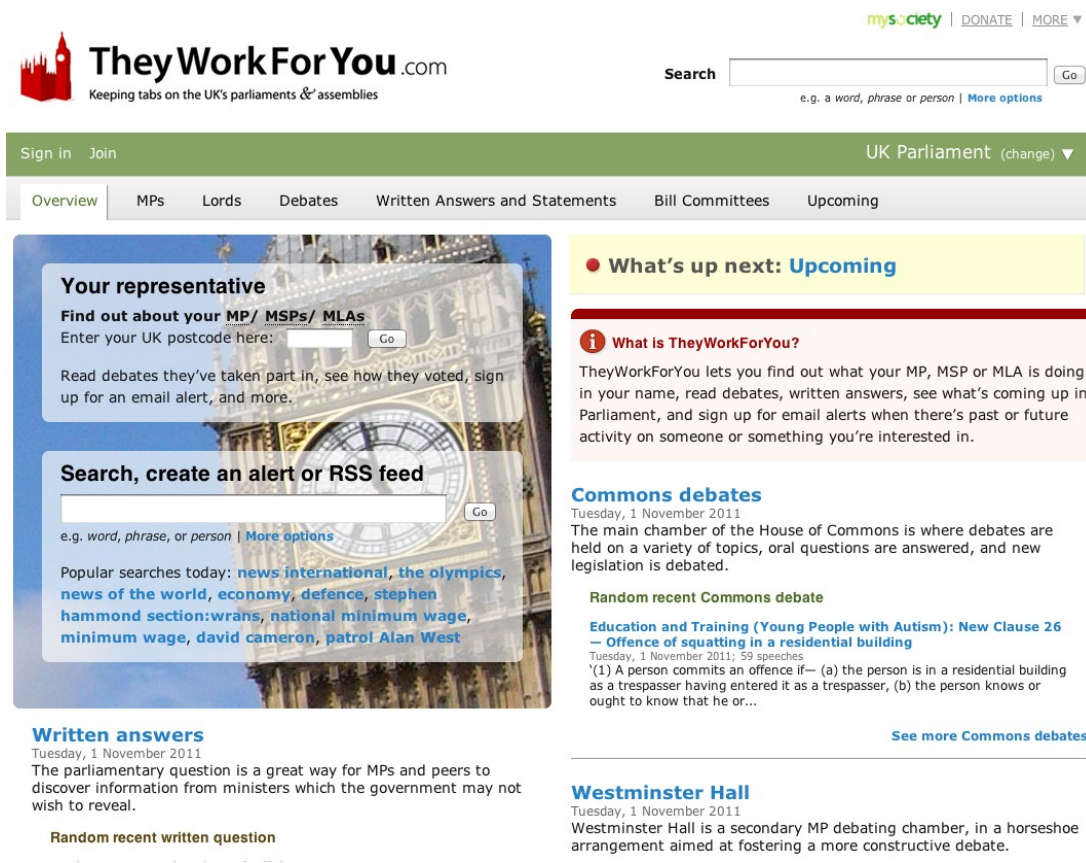
The site allows users to track legislative documents from the Riksdag. The site is in Swedish. <http://edemokrat.se/>

United Kingdom

TheyWorkForYou

They Work For You is the biggest, most comprehensive Parliamentary Monitoring System, originally started by volunteers (more information see below). It provides users with access

to information to both Houses of the UK Parliament and to the regional assemblies (Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh assemblies). It has put parliamentary archives online, debates can be read at full length with citation of each single speech. Speeches can also be deep-linked and annotated.



TheyWorkForYou.com
Keeping tabs on the UK's parliaments & assemblies

mySociety | DONATE | MORE ▾

Search Go
e.g. a word, phrase or person | More options

Sign in Join UK Parliament (change) ▾

Overview | **MPs** | Lords | Debates | Written Answers and Statements | Bill Committees | Upcoming

Your representative
Find out about your MP/ MSPs/ MLAs
Enter your UK postcode here: Go
Read debates they've taken part in, see how they voted, sign up for an email alert, and more.

Search, create an alert or RSS feed
 Go
e.g. word, phrase, or person | More options
Popular searches today: [news international](#), [the olympics](#), [news of the world](#), [economy](#), [defence](#), [stephen hammond](#) section: [wrans](#), [national minimum wage](#), [minimum wage](#), [david cameron](#), [patrol Alan West](#)

Written answers
Tuesday, 1 November 2011
The parliamentary question is a great way for MPs and peers to discover information from ministers which the government may not wish to reveal.
[Random recent written question](#)

What's up next: Upcoming

What is TheyWorkForYou?
TheyWorkForYou lets you find out what your MP, MSP or MLA is doing in your name, read debates, written answers, see what's coming up in Parliament, and sign up for email alerts when there's past or future activity on someone or something you're interested in.

Commons debates
Tuesday, 1 November 2011
The main chamber of the House of Commons is where debates are held on a variety of topics, oral questions are answered, and new legislation is debated.
[Random recent Commons debate](#)
Education and Training (Young People with Autism): New Clause 26 - Offence of squatting in a residential building
Tuesday, 1 November 2011; 59 speeches
*(1) A person commits an offence if- (a) the person is in a residential building as a trespasser having entered it as a trespasser, (b) the person knows or ought to know that he or...

[See more Commons debates](#)

Westminster Hall
Tuesday, 1 November 2011
Westminster Hall is a secondary MP debating chamber, in a horseshoe arrangement aimed at fostering a more constructive debate.

Users can find detailed information about the members of parliament (Lords as well as MP's), including a 'soft ranking' on activities (speeches, questions and motions are ranked from well above average to well under average of other members of both houses). Written Answers and Statements are also up for reading and annotation, the upcoming section provides people with information about the future agenda in the different bodies of parliament.

TheyWorkForYou began mostly as a volunteer effort and is now supported by the not-for-profit CSO mySociety and donations. Although there now is a payed admin for the site, new TheyWorkForYou-features are still developed mostly by volunteers. <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

Openly Local

The initiative seeks to make as much local government data available as possible, including council meetings, council spending and councillors. <http://openlylocal.com/>

10.3 International

UNdemocracy

The website UNdemocracy gives hyperlinked access to transcripts of the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations, with parsed voting records. The aim of the site is to make decisions of the five main bodies of the UN system more accessible to citizens. It is maintained by a citizens' organisation independent of the UN system and is also hyperlinked to pages providing information on the United Nations. The site is in English. <http://www.undemocracy.com/>

AGORA, the Portal for Parliamentary Development

The site aims to be a “one-stop reference centre and hub for knowledge sharing on parliamentary development” globally. AGORA consists of an implementing board drawing on the United Nations Development Programme; the World Bank Institute; the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI); the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA); and the European Commission. It was established after a series of donor meetings in 2007 and 2008 on parliamentary development, motivated by the increasing importance of the issue to donors.



The screenshot shows the AGORA website homepage. At the top left, there are language options for 'Français' and 'Русский'. In the center, there are social media icons for Facebook and YouTube, followed by 'Login to Agora | Links | Site map | Contact us | Search' and a search bar. The main header features the 'agora-parl.org' logo on the left and the site's title in three languages: 'Portal for Parliamentary Development', 'Portail pour le Développement Parlementaire', and 'Портал парламентского развития'. Below the header is a navigation menu with 'Home', 'About', 'Library', and 'Calendar' on the left, and 'Areas of Expertise' and 'Enter Trusted Area' on the right. The main content area is divided into three sections. The first section, titled 'Standards for Democratic Parliaments', includes a photograph of a parliament session and a text block explaining that major interparliamentary organizations are working to develop standards and assessment frameworks for democratic parliaments. The second section, 'Call to MPs and Parliamentary Staff', invites users to share their experiences in an online discussion about parliamentary-citizen interaction. The third section, 'Quick facts', contains two short news items: one about the Annual Conference of the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank in Brussels and another about increasing female representation in parliament. A globe icon is located at the bottom right of the page.

The site is accessible in English, French and Russian, with plans to provide Arabic and

Spanish services in the near future. It has a searchable database of over 900 documents on parliamentary development worldwide and a calendar of events related to the issue. Access is restricted to approved members. <http://www.agora-parl.org/>

USA

Open Congress

The non-profit, non-partisan public resource website combines official government data with news coverage, blog posts and public comments on the US Congress.



The screenshot shows the OpenCongress website interface. At the top, it identifies itself as a project of the Participatory Politics Foundation and the Sunlight Foundation. The main header includes the OpenCongress logo, a search bar, and navigation links for 'Login with OC', 'Register', and 'Login with Facebook'. Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: Bills, Senators, Representatives, Votes, Issues, Committees, The Money Trail, Blog, Groups, and Resources. A prominent red banner across the middle contains the text 'The easiest way to email your members of Congress' and a 'DONATE NOW' button. The main content area features a blog post titled 'Supercommittee Eyes Social Security Cuts' by Donny Shaw, dated November 1, 2011. The article text discusses the Byrd-Rule restrictions and their impact on Social Security. To the right of the article is a sidebar with 'Announcing OpenCongress v.3' and two 'NEW FEATURE' buttons: 'Contact Congress' (with a sub-description: 'Write a letter to your two U.S. senators and one U.S. representative from one page, immediately.') and 'OpenCongress Groups' (with a sub-description: 'Now with a free "MyOC" account, you join two Groups - for your state and Congressional District to find other constituents.'). At the bottom of the sidebar, there is a 'Today in Congress' section for November 02, 2011, showing 'House: Not In Session' and 'Senate: In Session'.

The website is maintained by the Participatory Politics Foundation, a non-profit organization with a mission to encourage civic engagement, and funded by the Sunlight Foundation. It provides information on bills, parliamentarians, votes, issues, and campaign financing. The information is available in English. It aims to increase public awareness, transparency and access to information regarding the workings of the US Congress. <http://www.opencongress.org/>

Canada

Open Parliament

The volunteer effort-based website aims to provide information on the workings of the Canadian parliament to the public. It provides access to information on parliamentarians, bills and parliamentary debates. Information is provided in English. The site was inspired in part by the UK website They Work For You. <http://openparliament.ca/>

Australia

OpenAustralia

The website is run by Open Australia Foundation with support from volunteers. It provides access to information on parliamentarians, parliamentary debates and legislation. The site was launched in 2007. Information is provided in English. The site was inspired by the UK website They Work For You. <http://www.openaustralia.org/>

Pan Africa

Africa i-Parliaments

Africa i-Parliaments is a regional portal launched in 2005 aimed at strengthening the role of African Parliaments in fostering democracy and good governance by developing common information services and tools, and building information management capabilities as well as public access to information. <http://www.parliaments.info/>

11 Conclusions

As this survey shows, the past years have seen a blossoming of re-use of parliamentary data, both at the global level and, perhaps even more so, in EU member countries. While commercial re-use of parliamentary data does not seem to be as interesting as other, more “classical” re-use of PSI (e.g. geo-data), it does attract a different category of social entrepreneurs who are motivated more by civic ideals than economic profit.

As the examples show, there are few limits to the creativity of the re-users in terms of shedding light on the workings of parliamentary processes, increasing transparency and accountability, but also enabling a more effective and fruitful dialogue between lawmakers and the electorate. Though an increasing number of parliaments are making data publicly available, challenges remain. Key barriers to re-using parliamentary data are:

- ⤴ Limited Access: Information is not published at all or in a limited fashion.
- ⤴ Technical: Information is published in a form not amenable to processing by machines.
- ⤴ Legal: Information is published under copyright or other terms of use that inhibit or forbid the re-use and re-distribution.

Ideally, the parliaments and PSI activists share common goals in this respect and will seek to work to overcome these problems. A further challenge, however, remains in activating the broader public in participating actively in democratic processes, be it through the traditional means or through the new possibilities opened through PSI access technologies.

About the Author

Daniel Dietrich, born 1973 in Frankfurt, Germany. His academic work surrounds political science, computer science and communication science in Frankfurt and Berlin. He works as Research Associate at Technical University Berlin, Department of Internet and Society. He is working part-time for the Open Knowledge Foundation (OKF), since 2009. He is the official representative and the Chairman of the German Chapter of the Open Knowledge Foundation. He is the Project Coordinator for the OKF Project Open Definition as well as the Coordinator of the Working Group on Open Government Data and the Working Group on Open Data in the EU. He is also co-founder and Chairman of the Open Data Network, a non-profit advocacy organisation to promote the Open Data, Open Government and Transparency in Germany and beyond. In 2011 he became Editor of the ePSIplatform.

Copyright information

© 2011 European PSI Platform - This document and all material therein has been compiled with great care. However, the author, editor and/or publisher and/or any party within the European PSI Platform or its predecessor projects the ePSIplus Network project or ePSINet consortium cannot be held liable in any way for the consequences of using the content of this document and/or any material referenced therein. This report has been published under the auspices of the European Public Sector Information Platform.



The report may be reproduced providing acknowledgement is made to the European Public Sector Information (PSI) Platform. The [European Public Sector Information \(PSI\) Platform](#) is funded under the European Commission [eContentplus programme](#).