Library and Research Services for Parliaments

Innovation and inspiration during a global pandemic

Welcome! We will be starting shortly!

IFLA Section
Library and Research Services for Parliaments

December 2, 2020
13h00 UTC
Library and Research Services for Parliaments

Innovation and inspiration during a global pandemic

December 2 & 9, 2020

IFLA Section
Library and Research Services for Parliaments
Portions of this event will be recorded, including Q&A. Recording will be posted on IFLAPARL's publications page.

Microphones have been muted for this event.

Questions or comments?
Please type into the Q&A box. Chat has been disabled. If you cannot use the Q&A box, please raise your hand.

The talk is GDPR-compliant
IFLA and ZOOM privacy policies:
https://www.ifla.org/data-protection-policy
https://zoom.us/privacy

Questions regarding privacy
professionalsupport@ifla.org
1. Select “View Stream on Custom Live Streaming Service”. This will open a browser window with text.

2. Click on the Settings button to select a different language (choose from Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Dutch, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Tamil.

3. Arrange the windows so you have the webinar and the translation side by side.
Technical lead: Ellie Valentine, IFLAPARL Information Coordinator

Chat / Q&A moderator: Ellie Valentine

Slides: Karin Zaal, SC Member and Julie Anderson, SC Member

On-screen host & moderator: Sonia Bebbington, IFLAPARL Secretary

Support: Iain Watt, IFLAPARL Chair; Karin Finer and Janice Silveira, SC Members
2 December, 2020  13h00 UTC

- Sonia Bebbington  Introduction and administrative details
- Iain Watt  Overview of IFLAPARL survey on COVID-19
- Allan Campbell  Scottish Parliament Information Centre
- Janice Silveira  Brazilian Chamber of Deputies Library
- Q&A
- Mary Mazanec  Congressional Research Service, USA
- Edward Wood  House of Commons Library, United Kingdom
- Ahmed Moufid  Parliamentary Center for Research and Studies, Morocco
- Isela Mo Amavet  Library of Congress, Argentina
- Q&A
- Carolina Alonso Peñafiel  Mexican Chamber of Deputies
- Carrie Hull  Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Canada
- Antti Virrankoski  Library of Parliament, Finland
- Q&A
Overview of IFLAPARL survey on COVID-19

Iain Watt, Information@Work
IFLAPARL Chair
Overview of the IFLAPARL survey
Iain Watt, ‘Information@Work’, Chair of IFLAPARL

Background
• The survey was open May-August 2020.
• 30 responses
  • Europe 16
  • Americas 6
  • Asia-Pacific 6
  • Africa 2
• Respondents were assured of anonymity
• The report summarises, it does not analyse or make conclusions

opportunity to make vital strategic changes.

Specific challenges

1. Services were needed to inform parliament and support scrutiny in the crisis. No option to suspend services.

2. Effective service normally depends on personal contact with people and processes in the parliament.

3. Translation of on-site, ‘artisanal’/’boutique’, services to remote service model.

4. Running integrated teams and service production processes with all or most team members at home.

5. Unique collections/expertise normally accessible only in-person.

6. Very short notice to adapt to the new environment
Key issue – Digital services and technology

• Service environment
• How far were digital services developed already?
• How much did the service depend on paper-based and/or onsite resources and facilities?
• Staff skills & experience with IT tools; job design
• Client awareness and capacity to use digital services

• Was the technology already in place for effective home-working and remote service delivery? If not, did the service have the resources to adapt quickly?
• Creativity and innovation in translating or adapting in-person/on-site services to the new environment
Key issue – Working from home

- Online connections and equipment
- Home office facilities
- Working hours
- Domestic arrangements in a lockdown
- Psychological aspects

- Team communications
- Management & coordination
- Past experience of home-working
- Job design, staff skills
- Scope for limited onsite working
Key issue – Innovation

• Many individual stories of efforts to create and adapt services

• New topics and new emphases in research interest – services responded, including by building partnerships e.g. to strengthen scientific information

• New emphasis on sharing high-quality information with citizens

• New ways of working
Key issue – Business continuity planning

• Only one service had a business continuity plan which they actually used and found useful
• Some others had plans but did not use them and/or did not find them relevant
• Several services without plans reported that a week or two of notice allowed them to make adequate arrangements

• Issues with business continuity plans seem to have been:
  • Too general for the specific conditions and/or specific services
  • Prepared for the wrong kind of crisis
  • Not practiced in advance
• Lack of awareness of business continuity planning
Concerns for the future

• Exceptional effort – expectations now too high
• Lack of investment and resources – especially if the pandemic leads to financial crisis
• Threat to onsite facilities
• The social capital, knowledge and skills built up in teams will deplete with isolation and turnover
• Mismatch of staff & management profiles with the new work environment
• Clients may not have the skills, knowledge or desire to adapt to a new service model
Allan Campbell
Head of Research and Financial Scrutiny
Scottish Parliament Information Centre
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies Documentation and Information Center and the pandemic of Sars-Cov-2

Janice Silveira

Janice Silveira
Library Director
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies Library
Brazilian Chamber of Deputies Documentation and Information Center and the pandemic of Sars-Cov-2

Janice Silveira
janice.silveira@camara.leg.br
How the Chamber of Deputies and the Documentation and Information Center responded to the present restrictions

- Using proper technological capabilities
- Adopting a virtual plenary
- Allowing the majority of the staff of the Chamber and MPs to work remotely
- Closing library facilities
- Redesigning of work processes to adapt to remote working
How we managed to keep services running and products active

• Creating and providing new online products and services
• Increasing portfolio of online training about using our databases and repositories
• Improving existing communication channels with users and creating new ones
• Improving internal and external relationships
How we managed remote working

- Adopting various communication tools – WhatsApp, zoom meetings, emails;
- Accessing work desktop remotely – mirroring its contents;
- Accessing internal network remotely;
- Accessing via desktop or mobile our internal management tool - kd>
Improved Social Media Interaction
We elaborated a Biosafety plan with guidelines to be implemented when resuming *in loco* working.

In the meantime the guidelines are being used to safeguard those performing specific internal activities.
Please use the Q&A function to ask questions. Please direct your question to a specific speaker, or speaker(s). Questions will be answered verbally.

Q&A is moderated and limited by time – we apologize if we do not ask your question of the presenters.

Please use the IFLAPARL COVID-19 Forum to continue to conversation: to register, please contact Ellie Valentine at infoiflaparl@gmail.com.
Mary Mazanec
Director of the Congressional Research Service
Library of Congress
USA
SERVING CONGRESS DURING A PANDEMIC: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Mary B. Mazanec
Director, CRS

December 2, 2020
### CRS Pandemic Response Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>Remote work exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Start of enhanced telework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>Start of Restoration of Onsite Operations Phase 1, Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 14</td>
<td>Start of Restoration of Onsite Operations Phase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>CRS reading room reopens for appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Majority of CRS staff continue to work remotely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges

• Ensure a safe, engaged and motivated workforce
• Continue high level of support to Congress
• Enable technology to support remote work
Supporting the Workforce

- Robust safety protocols
- Workplace flexibilities
  - Enhanced Telework
  - Paid Administrative Leave for Caregiving
  - Distant Teleworking
- Communications and employee engagement
  - All-staff virtual meetings
  - Daily emails and updates from senior leaders
  - Employee resource page
Providing Quality Research Support to Congress

- Continuation of regular activities
- Writing research products
- Consultative support
- Programs and trainings
- COVID-19 support

https://crsreports.congress.gov/resources/covid19/
Enhancing Technology

- Able to perform all critical functions remotely
- All CRS staff issued laptops instead of desktops
- CRS leveraged virtual collaboration software
Edward Wood
Director of Research
House of Commons Library
United Kingdom
The UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) has created a database of experts on all aspects of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- In the Pandemic there is more need for expert advice than ever
- Database created in March 2020
- More than 5,500 experts on subjects relevant to the pandemic asked to be included
How POST used the Database
1) Horizon Scanning

- Survey sent to all experts on the database
- Questions about the short, medium and long term impacts of COVID-19
- 1,100 experts replied
- Findings published as 15 horizon scanning reports
- Also a report identifying what data on COVID-19 the experts wanted the UK Government to publish
2) Evidence for Committees

• The Database was used to put over 20 committees in touch with experts
• This increased the diversity of academics the committees have worked with
• Another survey was used to generate evidence for a House of Lords (Upper House) Committee on “Life beyond COVID”
• Responses were analysed and grouped into 10 themes, including
  • Work and employment
  • Health and social care
  • Research and development
  • Society and community
  • Education
  • Arts, culture and sport
3) Areas of Research Interest (ARIs)

- ARIs are lists of policy issues published by Government
- They help direct academic research to where it is needed for policy making
- The UK government started publishing ARIs after a review of research funding bodies in 2015
- Now they are also used by other public and third sector bodies
- POST used input from over 1,000 experts on the database to produce COVID-19 ARIs for Parliament
COVID-19 ARIs for Parliament

• Parliamentary research staff ranked the initial ARIs to focus on what was most interesting to Committees
• Final list includes
  • Economic recovery and growth
  • Surveillance and data collection
  • Long-term mental health effects
  • Education
  • Vaccine development
  • The National Health Service
On the role of the Center during the Pandemic Context

Ahmed Moufid

Dr. Ahmed Moufid  
Director, Parliamentary Centre for Research and Studies  
House of Representatives  
Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco
On the role of the Center during the Pandemic Context

Dr. Ahmed Moufid
Director of the Parliamentary Center for Research and Studies
• The **House of Representatives** is a constitutional institution forming the Moroccan Parliament besides to the House of Councilors (Bicameral system – According to **Art. 60** of the 2011 Constitution)

• Its core competencies are clearly defined in the Constitution of 2011, namely; Legislation; Control of Government Action and Evaluation of Public Policies alongside with Parliamentary diplomacy.

• More information is available in its official website, in **5 languages** (Arabic, Amazigh, French, English and Spanish) : www.chambredesrepresentants.ma
• The **Parliamentary Center for Research and Studies** has been established in September 2019 to respond to the Moroccan Parliament needs in terms of addressing its own duties in political, economic, social areas in appliance with its roles defined by the 2011 Constitution;

• Namely: Legislation; Control of Government Action and Evaluation of Public Policies alongside with Parliamentary diplomacy.
• Drawing on this fact, the Parliament needs Research not only for its scientific methods and its relevance, but to answer social concerns that are to be addressed from its own position.

• It’s an institutional Research Center aiming to provide relevant analysis of the Parliamentary work and to provide Research for the House of Representatives to enhance its quality-driven outcomes.

• To reach this aim, the Center is organized in **3 Research Units:**
  1. Unit of Research in Constitutional, Legal and Political Studies;
  2. Diplomatic and Security Studies;
Pandemic context: innovation and sustainability

• **During the Pandemic**, the House of Representatives has ensured the continuity of its function; accordingly, the Center has been actively committed in this perspective.

• The **Center** is mainly focusing on providing Research papers, reports, guides, studies, and policy papers either on demand from the House of Representatives or by its own initiative in relevant areas.

• As we have been involved in many publications during this context, we would like to share our experience in terms of innovation and sustainability to address and monitor the Roles of the Moroccan Parliament during the **Emergency state linked to Covid-19**.
Pandemic context: innovation and sustainability

• A report on “Monitoring and Analysis of House of Representatives role during the State of Health Emergency” which sheds light on the House’s decisions and sustainability of its roles (in terms of: Legislative action, Control of Government action, and Evaluation of Public policies)

• published in July 2020, 137 pages.

• Other Policy Papers and Reports and Guides, were edited and still ongoing during this period.

Isela Mo Amavet

Prof. Isela Mo Amavet,
Research Department Head
Library of Congress
Argentina
Please use the Q&A function to ask questions. Please direct your question to a specific speaker, or speaker(s). Questions will be answered verbally.

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INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

Customer satisfaction measurement

Inf. requests to MPs & committees

Reference & REDIPAL services
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARCH 23RD – NOVEMBER 18TH</th>
<th>REACH</th>
<th>REGISTERED AUDIENCE</th>
<th>PAGE VIEWS</th>
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<td>+250 live broadcasts</td>
<td>585,067</td>
<td>61,079</td>
<td>183,881</td>
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<td>-book presentations</td>
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@Biblioteca Legislativa - Cámara de Diputados / @BibliotecaGeneral.Cam.Dip
Objectives during pandemic times


   An academic program was opened. It was a training program on museum environment for museum professionals, students and open public interested in this field.

2. Cineteca San Lázaro: capacity building workshops for students and general public

   @MuseoLegislativo
WHAT WE LEARNED?

During a CONTINGENCY, information is an URGENCY.

Formal but friendly work interrelations between peers and towards users.

Staff conectivity

24/7
THANK YOU

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT OUR SERVICES:

INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS
Documents (English abstracts) 1,000+
http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sedia/sia.htm

LIBRARIES
Poetry, theater, books, writing workshops and more
http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sedia/biblio.htm

MUSEUM
http://museolegislativo.diputados.gob.mx
Pandemic Innovations & Challenges

Carrie Hull
Manager, Legislative Library & Legislative Research
Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Canada
Pandemic Innovations & Challenges
Carrie Hull

Legislative Library & Legislative Research
Legislative Assembly of Ontario

December 2, 2020

chull@ola.org

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Overview

COVID-19 Publication Series
Current Awareness Service
Virtual Committees
Publication Series

Legislative Library & Legislative Research, Legislative Assembly of Ontario, November 2020.
Legislative Library, Information Update, April 8, 2020.

Virtual Committees: COVID-19 Hearings

• 200 hours of hearings
• 500 witnesses
• 180 written submissions
• 7 public reports
• 13 researchers

Legislative Assembly of Ontario webcast August 2020, Photo by Susan Viets.
Library and information services in Finland
Year of Pandemic 2020

Antti Virrankoski
Director for the Library
On 16 March 2020: state of emergency in Finland

• the Government announced the State of Emergency, in cooperation with the President
• a variety of measures were taken in accordance with the Emergency Powers Act and on the Communicable Diseases Act
  – functioning of healthcare and social welfare units
  – restriction of sale of medicines, goods and services used in healthcare services
  – obligation to work (on certain professions)
  – derogations to the terms and conditions of employment relationships and dismissals
  – closure of schools and other educational institutions

• The Government also restricted movement of people between the Uusimaa region and other parts of the country between 28 March and 15 April 2020

• Restaurants, cafés and bars were also closed until 31 May, (only take-away and delivery)

• The government has made other decisions and recommendations concerning, for example, social distancing, restrictions on cross-border traffic and travel abroad, closure of sports facilities and cultural venues, bans on public gatherings of more than ten people and on mass events, prohibition of visits to care homes for the elderly, and self-quarantine-like conditions for persons over 70 years of age
Spring 2020

- State of emergency 16.3.2020
- Library space closed for public 13.3.2020 - 17.5.2020
- All except vital service staff shifted to distance work (happened overnight...)
- Online services
  - Contact via e-mail and phone
  - Library and archive information service, ILL-service, acquisition, registry’s office mon-fri 9-15
  - All due dates postponed
- The Parliament Research Service functions normally
- Web content production went on
  - Legislative follow-up information packages: e.g. application of the emergency powers act
Limited library services, may-nov 2020

Current situation

- Pick up library opened 18.5.2020
  - Open mon-fri 12-15 (normally 9-18)
  - Pre-ordered loans and returns
  - One customer at a time
  - No access to collection or other facilities
    - Exception: 10 selected university researchers, since 1.8.2020
  - Volumes:
    - 15-20 pre orders / day
    - 10-15 customers / day
    - Amount of e-mails and phone calls exceeded heavily

- Online services remained
- Distance work remained (about 75% of staff)

- Update: closed for public 26.11. until further notice

- About the openness:
  - Parliament library the only access to parliament (the main parliament building open only for media)
  - Helsinki city and university libraries currently open (update: plans to close down later this week)
### Observations so far

#### Challenges

- HR challenges: contact to staff limited, work load uneven
- Workshops and informal innovation contacts very limited
- All online –life
- Less customer contact
- The unexpected and the uncertainty seems endless

#### Plus side

- Library staff (and job descriptions) very flexible
- Digital leap happened overnight
- Amount of sick leave days dropped considerably
- IL-teaching in YouTube very popular
- Implementation of NLS (Alma) was a success
- Respect for library services even stronger in the society
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