Library and Research Services for Parliaments

Innovation and inspiration during a global pandemic

Welcome! We will be starting shortly!
Library and Research Services for Parliaments

Innovation and inspiration during a global pandemic

IFLA Section
Library and Research Services for Parliaments

December 2 & 9, 2020
Portions of this event will be recorded, including Q&A. Recording will be posted on IFLAPARL's publications page, along with the slides.

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:
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Questions regarding privacy
professionalsupport@ifla.org
**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, SC Member and Janice Silveira, SC Member
9 December, 2020
10h00 UTC

- Sonia Bebbington: Introduction and administrative details
- Iain Watt: Overview of IFLAPARL survey on COVID-19
- Muyoyeta Simui: Pan African Parliament
- Jennifer Carmody: Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
- Q&A
- Waleed Al-badi: Director, Majlis Oman Library
- Fotis Fitsilis: Hellenic Parliament
- Anthony Teasdale: Director General, European Parliamentary Research Service
- Heather Lank: Parliamentary Librarian, Canadian Library of Parliament
- Q&A
- Jinhee Yun: Korean National Assembly Library
- Alexandra Holl: House of the National Assembly, Hungary
- Paola Mandillo: Italian Chamber of Deputies
- 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

‘great deal’. Others

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
Library and Research Services during a global pandemic

Muyoyeta Simui

Muyoyeta Simui
Pan African Parliamentary Library
South-Africa
The PAP is a continental Legislative organ of the African Union.
PAP exercises consultative and advisory powers, and makes model laws.
PAP is hosted by the Republic of South Africa in Johannesburg.
The PAP has 270 Members of Parliament from the 54 Member States.
The Members have dual responsibilities in home country and at PAP. The Members reside in their respective countries.
The PAP Sessions are held 4 times a year;
  • Committees meet in March and August, and
  • The Plenary meets in May and October.
The Lockdown Operations

• The AU HQ in Addis Ababa advised all Organs to consider remote based operations. The PAP Secretariat started operating remotely a week before the Republic of South Africa announced the lockdown on 23 March 2020.

• Each staff has a laptop and the office provided data bundles and airtime to facilitate communication, online meetings and internet access.

• The Secretariat adopted technologies such as:
  • Zoom,
  • DocuSign for office letters/memos,
  • WhatsApp messaging,
  • Microsoft Teams for collaboration.
Operations...

• The staff received online training on the adopted remote technologies.
• The flow of letters/memos from one signee to the other became quite efficient.
• The Secretariat facilitated a number of meetings for the Members and remote collaboration with other organizations.
• After the lockdown, only 50% of staff are allowed to be in the office each week
• Staff take shifts to go to the office.
Library Operations

• The Library and Research Service:
  • provided background information as talking points for the Members (sent via email) for the various online meetings.
  • facilitated access to paid for and free online information resources.

• The main challenge had to do with access. Before lockdown the online resources were accessed via IP login.

• Service providers like PressReader gave specific URL keys to each manager and professional staff. Option for individual passwords was not possible.

• The Library is exploring technologies that facilitate access from a single point on the institutional website. For example we are looking at MyLOFT.
Library Operations...

• Lending materials resumed after lockdown to staff.
• Acquisition is targeting more online resources.
• Uploading and indexing of institutional documents most of which are born digital continued.
• We also upload PAP documents onto the AU Commission Africa Knowledge Base (AKB Digital Repository) for wider access.
• The Committee Sittings planned for November was advised against by the host country due to the increasing infection rates.

• Technological challenges (access, network stability, etc) made it difficult for some Members to participate in the various meetings.

• The re-installation of the Symphony and Knowvation (former Archivalware) system upgrades for the Library, which were due this year could not be done because of the COVID-19.
Jennifer Carmody
Assembly Librarian
Office of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
Library Services & Covid-19
A Tale of Transitions

Jennifer Carmody, Assembly Librarian
Office of the Legislative Assembly
9 December 2020
Our Library – Our Clients

• ACT Legislative Assembly has 25 members, is unicameral, and is the only parliament in Australia with responsibility for both state/territory and local government functions.

• The Assembly Library pre-dates self government (1989), originally serving the federal department that was responsible for the administration of the Territory. We retain this responsibility.

• The Assembly Library has 3.7 FTE
Services & Support

• We did not change our services – just our workplace and our way of working

• Planning & practice

• Departmental support – delivery of hardware (monitors, chairs, etc)

• Government support – COVID-19 leave for quarantine, parents supporting school-aged children
Challenges

• Not having access to our physical collection / IT issues

• Creating physical space to work at home / working while supporting school-age children

• Managing unique projects while working remotely (staff restructure, recruitment, enhancements to technical systems)

• New workflows – daily & weekly reporting

• Finding our communication stride – email, WebEx, teleconferencing
Transitions & Silver Linings

• Every change is a transition – and transitions take energy

• As a manager I have developed a much deeper understanding of staff work as a result of daily reporting

• We look forward to a future where we can continue to blend work from home with work in the library
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.
HOW PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC RESPONDED TO THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Waleed Al-Badi

Waleed Al-Badi
Director
Majlis Oman Library
Muscat – Oman
w72161643@hotmail.com
Introduction
Building, services and users:

1- Did the libraries close their buildings during COVID – 19 pandemic?

2- Did the libraries shift to online and remote services?

3- Did users respond to the change and accept online and remote services?

4- Do users have access to computers? Are they provided with proper information on how to use the online and remote services?

5- Are there any changes in the clients’ usage patterns in terms of the use of research methods or topics researched during the pandemic?

6- What are the most important aspects of the library's financial response to reduce the impact of the pandemic?
Library Staff

1- Where did the library staff work?

2- Have the library staff been educated about the virus and ways to prevent it?

3- What challenges have the librarian had from working from their home?

The Library and Community

1- How has the library supported the crisis response in the community?
The Pandemic and Future

1- Does the library have any advance crisis management plan?

2- Will this pandemic affect the library’s emergency preparedness in the coming years?

3- Do you think this pandemic has a long-term impact on the library?

4- What are the most important plans and ideas that the library learned from this pandemic?

Conclusion
Dr. Fotis Fitsilis
Head of Scientific Documentation and Supervision
Scientific Service
Hellenic Parliament
Greece
We empower Members through knowledge to carry out their parliamentary work on behalf of citizens and enrich the public debate on European issues.
EPRS events since 2014

— seminars and roundtables on policy issues, as well as book talks
— over 230 events attracting 16,000 participants
— involving partner organisations, such as the OECD, IMF and EUI
— briefing sessions and exchange of best practice with other parliamentary research services in the EU and worldwide
— European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS)
Online book talks, policy roundtables, info-sessions — with more than 1,000 participants

EPRS info-session on Knowledge Sources
EU policy on migration and borders

What will think tanks take away from 2020?

Speakers

- Ewen Maclean: Director of European Studies Projects, King’s College London, London, UK
- Chris Sagan-Edwards: Director of Research, European Centre for Defence Policy, Brussels, Belgium
- Zinoviy Knyazev: Director of the Centre for European Studies, Institute of Contemporary History, Moscow, Russia
- John White: Director of Research, Institute for Strategic Studies, London, UK
- Michael Kaczmarek: Director of the Institute for European Studies, Brussels, Belgium

Thursday, 10 December 2020
17:30 – 19:00 hours
Live event via the WebEx Events platform

CONSEQUENCES OF THE INFODEMIC

- Conspiracy theory believers less likely to follow guidelines and/or accept future vaccination (Univ. of Oxford)
- 800 people have died due to false claims
- 5800 people hospitalised
- (Geo-)politicalisation of vaccine fuelling vaccine scepticism
ECPRD seminar

— with parliamentary research services from 25 countries
— 82 participants

2) New economic studies

• Overview of the measures to mitigate the negative socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19
ESPAS conference
— with almost 1,200 participants
Dr. Heather Lank
Parliamentary Librarian
Mid-March Priorities

Continue to provide excellent products and services consistent with public health guidelines

Safeguard employees’ health
Delivering Existing, Launching New Products and Services
Keys to Success

Committed, adaptable & resilient employees

Collaboration with senate & house of commons partners

Technological capabilities & reliable parliamentary network
Looking Forward

New or enhanced products, services & collections, and other investments

COVID-19–related risk assessments and related measures

stronger internal and external relationships

Improved ability to deliver, consistent with mission, values & priorities
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Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Korean National Assembly Library: Evolving Information and Services

Jinhee Yun
Deputy Director of the Law Library Coordination Division
Korean National Assembly Library
happyone@nanet.go.kr
Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Korean National Assembly Library: Evolving Information and Services

Jinhee YUN

1. Changes in library services
2. Ontact, a rising trend in library work
3. Opportune information services
1. Changes in library services

Access/Facilities use

- Body temperature measurement
- Entry log checking
- Reducing the number of seats in cafeteria/coffee shop
- Expanding work-from-home/flexible working hours

New Coronavirus Cases (Daily) in Korea

Social Distancing step:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4월 18일</th>
<th>5월 7일</th>
<th>6월 7일</th>
<th>7월 27일</th>
<th>9월 15일</th>
<th>11월 4일</th>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
1. Changes in library service

- Wearing of face mask required in reading room
- Reducing the number of seats and setting up transparent screen divider
- Provision of hand sanitizer
2. Ontact, a rising trend in library work

Ontact combines the concepts of un-tact and online education to create a new hybrid mode of interaction. Webinars and video conferencing are examples of this trend. Online MOU ceremony is also featured.
3. Opportune information services

Publication of reports related to COVID-19

- Establishment of Reduction Regulations for University Tuition due to COVID-19 / Kim Mini
- COVID-19 and Legislative Cases for Commercial Rental Protection in US, Canada and Australia / Kim Seong-Hun
- U.S. Legislative Case for University Online Learning in the Post-Coronavirus Era / Cho Dong-Kwan

Parliamentary and Legal Information Services related to COVID-19

- COVID-19 Response Support Legislation (Overseas Case)
- Announcement of on-site prevention measures for opening schools in China related to COVID-19
- Prohibition of rental fee increase abroad and implementation of deferred payment option after COVID-19

Foreign Data Translation Services related to COVID-19

- COVID-19 Risks and Impact on Health Care Workers by Race/ Ethnicity / Kaiser Family Foundation
- Digital Authoritarianism, China and COVID / Lowy Institute
- The COVID-19 pandemic: scenarios to understand its international impact / IISS
Continuous innovation as a key to flexible response

Alexandra Holle
Researcher
Information Service for MPs
House of the National Assembly
Hungary
Continuous innovation as a key to flexible response

Holle Alexandra

Background

• Institution: Information Service for MPs (Infoszolg), Hungarian National Assembly
• Numerous individual requests and several proactive background materials in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic in our three analytical product lines

Infobrefings

- January – August 2019: 19
- January – August 2020: 40

Infotableaus

- January – August 2019: 34
- January – August 2020: 58

in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, January – August 2020
The role of innovation

• The activity of Infoszolg is characterized by continuous innovation and product development

• This was a key factor influencing our ability to react to the pandemic quickly

• Current innovations connected to the pandemic fitted organically into previous processes
Our newest product line, the Infotableau

- A two-sided background material, consisting of data visualizations, introduced in 2018
- The development of the new genre was a response to the needs of parliamentary users
- Every colleague creates data visualizations, there is no bottleneck
A subgenre, the Infotableau series

- This subgenre is used to publish data regularly on specific policy areas, applying the same structure.
- It makes it easy to follow the developments in a policy area and easy to decode the data.
- Also, it is a great opportunity to develop the skills needed for data visualisation.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a new Infotableau series was introduced, presenting the most important data on the development of the pandemic twice a week.
Key take-away

Continuous monitoring of users’ needs and our responses given in the past years to these needs (product development) have helped us to react to the challenge posed by the pandemic in a flexible, quick and efficient way.
Paola Mandillo
Parliamentary Officer and Librarian
Italian Chamber of Deputies
The Library

- 1.4 million books
- 1,800 current Italian and foreign periodicals on paper
- 85,000 electronic journals and other digital resources
- 115 databases
- 25 Library Staff, 6 outsourcing personnel

- The Library was founded in 1848
- Since 1988 it has been opened to the General Public
- Since 2007 it is closely integrated with the Library of the Senate
  within the project for the creation of the Italian Joint Parliamentary Library

https://bibliotecaen.camera.it/
The Impact of the Pandemic on the Library

Services and procedures in the Library changed greatly during the Covid-19 crisis depending on the different Emergency Measures adopted by the Italian Government.

This time of crisis for the Library can be divided in three phases:

1. **The First Lockdown** *(7 March-14 June 2020)*
   • the Library was closed to the General Public and all Library Staff worked remotely

2. **The Reopening of the Library on-site Services** *(15 June- 5 November 2020)*
   • new organization of in-person Services
   • 60% of Library Staff worked at the office / 40% worked at home, taking turns

3. **The New Library Closure** *(6 November-until now)*
   • the Library was closed to the General Public and Library Staff worked 50% at office / 50% remotely
The Greatest Challenges for the Library

- Keep the cooperation with the Senate Library in the framework of the Joint Parliamentary Library
- Encourage attendance of External Users
- Managing new procedures to guarantee access to the Library and the reading of Library Collections

**On-site External Users**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Book requests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(August: Library summer closing)
A more effective monitoring of Users information needs

More efficient procedures for book requests and for exceptional Document Delivery service

Implementation of the Library’s Collection of E-Books

Ease of managing by remote working of research product requests from MPs (630) and administration officers
Expected Long Term Changes for the Library

- Implementation of digital resources available on the Chamber of Deputies website and intranet
- More flexibility in the use of remote working for some Services of the Library

Thank you!

mandillo_p@camera.it
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