INFORMATION AS THE FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL SOLIDARITY
THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES AND RESEARCH SERVICES
Information on legislative process on the Sejm and Senate websites

NGOs opinions and expectations
SESSION III Information on legislative process - NGOs opinions and expectations

• INTRODUCTION
• QUESTIONNAIRE
• RESPONDENTS
• RESULTS
• CONCLUSIONS
NGOs in Poland

≈ 100 000 active associations and foundations

access to information mainly via chambers’ websites
SESSION III Information on legislative process - NGOs opinions and expectations

QUESTIONNAIRE

• Timespan: 23 June – 19 July 2017
• 7 questions (closed and open)
  o How often do you use different sections on Sejm’s website – 15 sections to rank in 5 point scale plus „other” option?
  o How often do you use different sections on Senate’s website – 12 sections to rank in 5 point scale plus „other” option?
  o How do you use information published on Sejm’s/Senate’s websites (more than one answer possible plus „other” option)?
  o Do you find documentation of legislative process on Sejm’s and Senate’s websites sufficient? If no, what information is missing? (request for justification)?
  o Did you make use of procedure provided for in the act on access to public information?
  o In order to provide comprehensive information on legislative process, Sejm’s and Senate’s websites should include (open question)?
  o Did you make use of Sejm’s or Senate’s archives on the spot? If yes, of which collection?
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RESPONDENTS

55 NGOs with various areas of interest

- NGOs database of Klon/Jawor Association
  - Search in mission statements
  - Search terms: law-making, legislative process, civic participation

- 15 NGOs not included in the search results but active in the area of civic society and quality of law promotion

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RESPONDENTS

- 11 replies
  - Allerhand Institute
  - Association 61
  - Citizens Network Watchdog Poland
  - Civil Development Forum – FOR
  - Foundation Media 3.0
  - Foundation Mondo Cane
  - Foundation Pro Bono Futuro
  - Foundation Ubi Societas, Ibi Ius
  - Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
  - Panoptykon Foundation
  - The Stefan Batory Foundation
RESULTS
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* All documents with assigned paper numer proceeded in the Sejm

- Internet System of Legal Acts (ISAP)
- legislative process database
- submitted bills (without paper no.)
- legally binding consolidated texts (single texts)
- information on the committees work
- legal expert reports and opinions
- transmissions on committee and subcommittee meetings
- archives
- Sejm’s sittings transmissions
- information on petitions
- information on public hearings
- information on citizens initiative
- information on EU activity of the Sejm
- lobbyists list

Frequency of using information from different sections on Sejm website

- never
- rarely
- occasionally
- frequently
- very frequently

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Frequency of using information from different sections on Senate's website

- never
- rarely
- occasionally
- frequently
- very frequently

* All documents with assigned paper number proceeded in the Senate

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How information from Sejm’s and Senate’s websites is used

- to provide information services for citizens within the scope of organization's mission: 82%
- to reach aims of the organization: 73%
- to participate in the legislative process: 73%
- other: 18%

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Is information on Sejm and Senate websites on legislative process sufficient?

- Yes: 45%
- No: 55%
What can be improved?
Suggestions concerning legislative process presentation

• Introducing IT tools facilitating access to information on both websites
  o API interface
  o alerting/subscription tools for individual bills
  o structured text (XML)
• Increasing user-friendliness – transparency and crosslinking
• Introducing exhaustive presentation of legislative process including: all amendments, legal expert reports, opinions from public consultation
• More archival documents
Suggestions concerning other issues

• Publication on the website of comprehensive and clear information on:
  - financial statements of Deputies, travels, reports from activities of Deputies’ offices
  - rules concerning entering Sejm and Senate
Other ways of obtaining information
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**Procedure provided for in the Act on access to public information**
- Yes: 45%
- No: 55%

**Sejm or Senate archives on the spot**
- Yes: 18%
- No: 82%

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CONCLUSIONS

• NGOs **consult** Sejm website mainly:
  o legal acts in force: ISAP and single texts
  o legislative process: database, papers, submitted bills
  o legal expert reports and opinions

• NGOs **consult** on Senate website mainly:
  o information on committees work
  o transmissions of the Senate sittings and committee meetings
  o legal expert reports and opinions

• NGOs **expect**
  • introducing IT tools facilitating access to information
  • increasing user-friendliness of current websites
  • comprehensive presentation of legislative process (amendments, legal expert reports, opinions from public consultation)
  • more archival documents