



Summary of Results of the IFLAPARL Survey on Guidelines, Best Practices & Standards

September 2016

Introduction

In July 2016, the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments began a survey to obtain feedback on the guidelines that have been authored or published by the Section, in collaboration with partners. In addition, members were asked for ideas on what new guidelines or standards they would find useful to their work. 43 people responded to the survey, at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J5ZPDD5>. This is a summary of the survey results.

1. Use of IFLAPARL Guidelines

When asked if they have used any of the IFLAPARL guidelines,

- **74%** (32 out of the 43 respondents) said they have used the [Guidelines for Parliamentary Research Services \(2015\)](#),
- **35%** (15 of 43) have used the [Guidelines for Legislative Libraries\(2009\)](#) , and
- **23%** (10 of 43) said they have used [Social Media Guidelines for Parliaments \(2013\)](#).

Six respondents (14%) said that they have not used any of the guidelines listed. In addition to the above guidelines, one respondent mentioned that their library has used *Guidelines for Government Libraries* while another said they have used the manual/handbook *Information and Communication Technologies in Parliamentary Libraries*. One respondent said that they use their own, “tailor-made guidelines and standards, to suit the needs and functions of our small library unit.”

2. Usefulness of the *Guidelines for Parliamentary Research Services (2015)*

34 respondents rated the usefulness of the Guidelines for Parliamentary Research Services.

Very Useful	41%
Useful	50%
Not Useful	00%
Not Relevant	09%

Respondents provided additional, noteworthy comments (edited slightly for grammar and confidentiality) as follows:

- This document was used to prepare presentations of our own service. It serves as a benchmark to compare our service to others. We adopted the structure of the document to describe and compare our research service.
- I have used this publication in projects to help with establishing research services.
- We refer to the guidelines for parliamentary research services in order to review our service and find some points to be considered for the enhancement of the service in the future.
- Helped in proposing policy imperatives of the draft research policy in our parliament
- While our library is not responsible for research services for committees, etc., we do conduct research. These guidelines highlight a number of standards that all researchers should abide by.
- Helpful in our research papers preparation, and in organizing our research work as well.
- We are in process of planning a research service and structure. The guidelines are useful in this process.
- Offer useful qualitative measures of the value of (legal and documentary) research products.
- We consider these guidelines essential and good examples of experience sharing and best practices in parliamentary research circle. As a separate and independent research unit this is a very important document for us.
- Contains up-to-date, robust advice and best practice examples. Attractive layout, comprehensible language. Covers multiple areas.
- Gives a good insight of the topics you have to think about concerning research services.
- It's very useful for many things, for example, to compare with the best practice of work, latest changes, kind of information products, resources and so on.
- They are the first comprehensive guidelines for parliamentary research services. They provide not only support for beginners (how to do?) but also a measurement (how we do?) and example (how others do?) for operating research services. They were useful for me .
- Useful for inspiration, because we are at the start of the process of developing a research service.
- I have this as a key reference document for developing a teaching module for training parliaments on how to develop a parliamentary research service.
- Useful insights on governance and on balancing content.
- In working with parliaments where legislative research services are just developing or gaining new prominence, the guidelines are especially useful for the MPs in library or administrative committees, with secretaries general, or those who may not be aware of the potential, and for the library and research staff to better understand their role in the legislature.

Respondents who rated that the *Guidelines for Parliamentary Research Services* was not relevant noted that they do not provide research services to their clients.

3. Usefulness of the *Guidelines for Legislative Libraries (2009)*

23 respondents rated the usefulness of the *Guidelines for Legislative Libraries*.

Very Useful	35%
Useful	43%
Not Useful	00%
Not Relevant	22%

Respondents provided additional, noteworthy comments (edited slightly for grammar) as follows:

- After analyzing this document we made a number of detailed comparisons of our procedures and IFLAPARL recommendations. We introduced several new solutions, particularly in the area of connection and selection of materials, as well as marketing of our services.
- The guidelines for legislative libraries, updated in 2009, has been used in our library to get suggestions for improving services offered to MPs and to share good practice from other libraries. It could also be helpful to bring forward good arguments concerning the importance and benefits of a parliamentary library to our superiors, the management of the Parliament and the MPs themselves. It is a great challenge and a hard work to draft such guidelines, but it could be helpful to publish an update, because there have been a lot of changes during the last years within libraries.
- I was looking for reassurance that I moving in a direction that was aligned with other parliamentary libraries.
- The guidelines have been quite useful as we are developing the Library from the very start.
- As a result we made some changes concerning our collection and did a survey on services. It was also helpful to use the guidelines when I presented to the Director (Head of Administration) that we would like to do innovative services.
- They provided comprehensive and really useful and practical guidelines for parliamentary libraries for a long time. Also it was the first source for parliamentary research services in theoretical approach, in that it included parliamentary research as an integrated part of library services. However, it needs a "facelift" and would be worthwhile to be updated.
- I read it to give me insight on how parliamentary libraries should operate compared to other government libraries.
- I used it to develop the activities of our legislative library
- In working with parliaments where legislative libraries are just developing or gaining new prominence, the guidelines are especially useful for the MPs in Library or Administrative committees, with secretaries general, or who may not be aware of the potential, and for the library staff to better understand their role in the legislature.

4. Usefulness of the *Social Media Guidelines for Parliaments (2013)*

20 respondents rated the usefulness of the *Social Media Guidelines for Parliaments*.

Very Useful	30%
Useful	35%
Not Useful	00%
Not Relevant	35%

Respondents provided additional, noteworthy comments (edited slightly for grammar and confidentiality) as follows:

- Useful for developing effective products for MPs and conducting their evaluations.
- I have shared with our communications department which is responsible for our social media presence.
- Quite useful. We created our social platform presence in May 2014 and the guidelines have given us hints on what to include, how to raise awareness of our presence and many other tips.
- The Research Center has been conducting a project on “Social Media and Parliament”. In terms of this project the “Social Media Guidelines for Parliaments” is very useful and reference document for our study.
- The guide helped define a common institutional language for all social media channels of the parliament.
- It's very useful to get a feel for how other Parliaments are tackling this emerging issue for our service.
- As specialist of social medias for development, the guideline help me to know the best approach for legislative use of this tools, to assist MPs on their social medias activities and practices.
- I have shared the guidelines with both MPs and staff to help them to establish their policies and practices for using social media in parliament.

Respondents who rated the Guidelines as not relevant stated that they or their parliaments do not use social media.

5. Other guidelines, best practices or standards that would be useful to parliamentary libraries or research services

27 respondents provided comments and suggestions on other guidelines, best practices or standards that would be useful for their work.

New Guidelines:

- I would really like to see a publication which was focused on setting up research services. The countries where this will be most useful are developing countries so I would like to see it

focused on countries with limited resources, including limited availability of people with suitable experience in public policy analysis.

- Guidelines for developing effective products for MPs and conducting their evaluation.
- Core competencies for legislative/parliamentary library staff.
- Standard measures/metrics to demonstrate the value of legislative/parliamentary libraries.
- Standard guidelines for nonpartisanship or objective responses to partisan requests.
- Best practices for monitoring/archiving (or not) social media sites of Members.
- Guidelines on legislation drafting would be helpful for a continental (regional and other group parliaments) Parliament.
- Guidelines for parliamentary records management and archives.
- Guidelines or best practices for digital libraries or digital repositories.
- Best practices in communication, e.g. How to produce well organized and attractive fact sheets or legislation files
- Information about government data bases (legal, economic, others)
- Code of ethics for parliamentary research
- New guideline(s) or any other work(s) on Parliamentary Researcher's Guideline (on professional skills and abilities etc.), and "Procedures for Hiring and Evaluation of Parliamentary Researchers".
- Useful Guidelines for Parliamentary Library and Information Services: Innovative Online-Services or Digital Library and Digital Services Standards or best practices on quality control and user orientation (e.g. how to ask users what they need)
- More practical and detailed manuals in any field or parliamentary research with examples of best practices would be useful for parliamentary research services.
- How to create good infographics, sources for statistics and opinion polls per country.
- Guidelines and best practices for conducting a needs assessment of parliamentarians and their need for research and information services.
- Digital Library Guidelines for Parliaments
- Long term digital preservation guidelines for parliaments
- Knowledge management or big data in legislative libraries
- Guidelines for cataloging and classification of library resources.

Update Existing Guidelines

- Keeping the existing guidelines updated is more important than creating the new ones.
- Use of ICT in parliamentary libraries and research services - online, frequent updates with new ICT developments and trends
- New guidelines on parliamentary libraries, with emphasis on the use of digital information, technology, open data, etc.