



EPRI Knowledge

**IST for Parliamentarians
Nr. 511694**

D101: Study 1
**“Parliamentarians & ICTs:
Awareness, understanding and activity levels of European
Parliamentarians”**

Prepared by:

EPRI Knowledge project
www.epri.org

Partners:

Polpit Ltd.
Rue du Trône 190
Brussels B-1050
Belgium

Teleport Sachsen-Anhalt GmbH
Steinfeldstr. 3
D-39179 Barleben
Germany

January 2005

ABOUT EPRI-Knowledge: Information Society Technologies for Parliamentarians

“EPRI Knowledge” is a 36 month-project funded under the European Commission’s Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme. It is a successor of the first ‘European Parliaments’ Research Initiative’ project dating back to 1999. It aims at raising awareness of, and supporting decision making on IST subjects, among parliamentarians across the EU, at European, national and regional levels.

The main activities of the project are Studies, Workshops, Conferences and Website and Newsletter. EPRI Knowledge participants are parliamentarians from European, national and regional levels, already involved or interested in Information Society Technologies and IST related themes.

This report constitutes the results of the first study of the EPRI Knowledge project. As such, it aims to provide an overall indication of where Europe’s parliamentarians are in terms of their use of and attitudes towards ICTs. Future studies will build on this picture, and take a more in-depth look at specific issues of interest and relevance to the parliamentary community.

Acknowledgements

The research team involved in undertaking this study were:
Itir Akdogan, Benedikte Buhl, Rosarie McCarthy and Bridie Nathanson.

January 2005

Contents

EPRI Knowledge.....	1
Contents.....	3
Executive Summary.....	5
Introduction	7
Part 1: Literature Review: Parliamentarians, Democracy & ICTs.....	9
1.1 Introduction.....	9
1.2 Parliamentarians and ICT	10
1.3 Political parties and ICT	13
1.4 Better governance.....	16
PART 2: EPRI Survey: Parliamentarians & ICTs.....	19
2.1 Introduction.....	19
2.2 Parliaments & Parliamentarians Use of ICTs	20
2.3 Attitudes towards ICT and its impacts.....	27
2.3.1 The Representative.....	28
2.3.2 The Party Actor.....	33
2.3.3 The Legislator.....	40
Part 3: Conclusions & Recommendations	45
3.1 Conclusions: The mobile Parliamentarian.....	45
3.2 Recommendations	48
Appendix A: Country Abbreviations	53
Appendix B: Methodology	54
Appendix C: Questionnaires	57
Appendix D: Bibliography.....	65

Executive Summary

Europe's early (ICT) adopter parliamentarians are:

- **Mobile parliamentarians** who use most ICTs themselves, using email and SMS daily and generally answer directly their own email correspondence
- **Representatives** have more overall contact with their citizens and parties through the use of ICTs but are not necessarily reaching new citizens or groups
- Through using ICTs, they feel closer to their citizens, although they don't feel they understand their citizens' needs or interests any better.
- While citizens are engaging more online with their Representatives, they are not necessarily saying very much
- The main positives for Representatives are faster dissemination of information about their views and activities and, easier and broader contact with their citizens.
- ...but they would still like to enhance their consultation and dialogue capabilities
- The principle negatives of using ICTs is the information overload, too much spam, and higher public expectations of faster, direct and personal responses from their politicians.
- As **Party Actors**, our parliamentarians are wired mainly in terms of party and campaign organisation, and information and message dissemination.
- While parties are using ICTs to better inform and coordinate, some Parliamentarians are concerned that their parties are not taking advantage of the opportunities provided by ICTs for greater bottom-up inputs and internal democracy.
- Some parties have experienced an increase in membership, but the new breed of virtual members want a looser and less active association with the party
- On balance, the Party Actor is satisfied with the organisational benefits afforded by the new technologies, as well as the opportunities for more 'bottom-up' inputs within the party decision making, (although this time, they are confronting the 'communication' overload).
- The **Legislators** work in a fairly wired environment, able to conduct much of their preparatory work electronically but still (in most cases) having to meet physically for committee and plenary sessions.
- Some feel that through ICT more people (citizens and organisations) are able to, and do, input into parliamentary decision making processes, some, but not all. of which takes the form of spam petitions.
- The Legislator is would like to see more technical innovations in their parliaments, including better remote working and wireless capability, improved information management and formal consultation technologies.

- One of the main concerns expressed by those surveyed as Legislators, is, once again, the information overload problem, with the vast new opportunities to access relevant information and expertise in their legislative work, which ICTs afford them.
- On the whole, the Parliamentarians surveyed feel that the existence and use of ICT has had a positive impact, which has been most evident in their role as Legislators
- They do feel however, that ICTs have the most potential to transform and enhance their work, in their role as Representative.

How is all this transforming political life?

- Representatives are beginning to have more 'continuing conversations' with their citizens, perhaps a start to bridging the much discussed gap between elected and electors – but at least making them feel slightly closer to their citizens.
- The Party Actors are able to be more 'on message' than ever with better and tighter central coordination - but now have a significant opportunity for more independence from their parties, and greater customisation in their (unmediated) self-presentation, and campaigning.
- Legislators are rightly concerned by the perceived speeding of the legislative process – with the possible negative consequences for the quality and 'shelf-life' of the legislation they produce.
- The key problem to be tackled, is that of information and communications overload: This includes the great wealth of information and expertise they now have access to, at the click of the mouse – and the excessive amount of inbound communications from their constituents, citizens, organisations, parties, parliamentary colleagues and spam.

What are the next steps?

- In order to use ICTs to further their role as **Representatives**, parliamentarians need to work on managing public expectations, strive for a better organisation and management of their online relationships, create more transparency in the representation process and help to re-invigorate the 'culture of representation'.
- **Party Actors** could, with a little effort, better present, explain, broadcast and narrowcast their views, policies, activities and results to the members and beyond – using ICTs. Moreover, they could work harder to consult, engage and support participation from among and beyond their members, and stimulate the internal debate within their parties.
- **Legislators** need to address their problems of information overload, without striking out important information inputs from their legislative. This calls for a thorough evaluation of the various information inputs, the impact on output, and the link between them. Building on this, developing official consultation channels and practices will help to organise and manage inbound information, and improved transparency will build trust and encourage participation from the appropriate expertise.
- The key challenges for **Parliaments** are: to support their members in become truly mobile workers; tackle problems of spam and email overload; deal with the problem of information overload through a 'less cars, not more motorways' approach; improve the transparency and accessibility of external (i.e. public) information provision; establish formal (e-) consultation practices and capability; and explore the 'wider' training requirements of parliamentarians needing to evolve in, rather than adapt to, an ICT-enabled environment.

Introduction

The EPRI network of ICT-interested parliamentarians has been meeting for several years, to exchange and discuss their views and experiences of ICTs. A regular comment in this forum has been that Parliamentarians are interested to know what each other have been doing with ICTs in their work – beyond the showcases presented at the EPRI conferences, and the anecdotes cited during the discussion.

Some of the 'early adopter' Parliamentarians have been using ICTs for around a decade, while the main body of parliamentarians have taken up using ICTs in the last five years. Institutions on the other hand, while they have been using computer based information and data systems for much longer, have only really adopted ICTs for direct use by parliamentarians and their staff within the same time period. Given the relative infancy of the provision and use of ICTs in parliaments and by parliamentarians, it is unsurprising that the quantity of research undertaken and circulating amongst parliamentarians is not vast.

This study, designed as the first of a sequence, was therefore intended to plug this perceived gap, and provide members of Europe's parliaments with the general picture they have asked for, in order to push for developments in their offices, parties and institutions. In addition, in setting out this groundwork, this study will provide a basis for the subsequent EPRI studies to delve further into specific subject areas.

In terms of the field of research, Parliamentarians and ICT, there is already an existing body of work on the subject, both normative and empirical, covering a wide variety of aspects relating to Parliamentarians, parliaments and ICTs. While this work has not been commissioned by, or produced in response to a demand from, elected Parliamentarians themselves, many of the research findings and theoretical frameworks developed, are of relevance and likely interest to the parliamentary community. It is also likely that much of this research, published in academic journals, or a sets of post-conference documents, will go unnoticed, or at least, unread by many of the Parliamentarians they refer to.

In order to bring some awareness of this existing literature, and an indication of current debates and issues under discussion, it was decided that this study should include a critical overview of the most relevant and significant areas of the existing body of literature. Therefore, this study is composed of two parts - a 'literature review' of the existing research and body of academic and non-academic material, and original research: a survey of parliamentarians across Europe, on their awareness, use and attitudes towards ICTs.

The literature review was developed on the basis of a preliminary research and selection of over 100 papers, articles and reports, on subjects ranging from ICTs and parliamentarians, parliamentary institutions, political parties, elections to e-democracy, e-government, e-campaigning, e-voting, e-participation, e-society and e-europe. With this wide remit, this study takes a 'cluster' approach for both the literature review and the primary research. The main clusters of subjects could approximately be described as parliamentary representatives, parliamentary parties and governance. In grouping the body of work in the literature review in such a way, we have been able to provide some complementarity with the primary research, which has examined parliamentarian and ICTs in the context of their key roles: representative, party actor, and legislator.

The primary research was conducted using both written surveys and individual in-depth interviews (see Methodology for more details). This report contains the full literature review, followed by an overview of the complete findings of the primary research. This research is designed for both institutional ICT policy decision makers, parliamentarians and their staff, and the academic, consulting and technology development communities, as well as others involved or interested in the field. This complete report may be followed by successive articles or papers customised and designed to communicate directly to the specific audiences.

Part 1: Literature Review: Parliamentarians, Democracy & ICTs

1.1 Introduction

There exists an enormous body of literature relevant to elected parliamentarians and their use of ICT. In order to gain an awareness of current debates and the types of topics being discussed, we looked at over 120 articles that we considered to be of particular relevance and were published in the last six years. The articles cover a very large number of topics, ranging from, for example, internet and democracy, participation and representation, political campaigning and elections, to more theoretical articles on how technology impacts on institutions and the implications of technology for social capital. While many authors generate interesting insights on a wide range of topics, we were selective as we focused on articles of direct relevance to parliamentarians and their use of ICT. To set the scene, it is important to note at the outset that the study of the use of ICT by MPs is relatively recent and emerging debates in academic circles are still at an early stage. As noted by Hoff *et al.* (2004:4), 'Little research has been carried out in this field, and not much is known about the changes that the different uses of ICT have brought about in the work routines, roles, political agenda setting and decision-making processes in which MPs are involved'.

Our preparatory research revealed that research on parliamentarians and ICT incorporates both normative and theoretical approaches alongside a burgeoning number of studies based on empirical research carried out in different countries and continents. This concurs with Chen (2002a:2) who claims that the current debate over the impact of computer-mediated communication takes two basic forms: 'normative views about the value of facilitating democracy online and how best to go about implementing the theory in practice and case analysis of examples in practice'. Of the articles that we looked at, some dealt with general themes while others generated survey-based empirical data on specific topics. The more general articles tend to focus on themes such as the current or future implications of ICT for democracy, political participation, bureaucracy and institutions. These articles tend to appear in European and American political science journals and authorship is broad. Moreover, some of the early articles written on these topics were written over eight years, prior to the emergence of a second wave of more empirical-based studies of parliamentarians and ICT. Thus, while the study of the internet is not in itself a recent phenomenon, studies of ICT and parliamentarians are. Studies of the internet have been carried out by a number of American scholars, many focusing on the U.S. political system. For example, Wellman *et al.* (2001) adopt a theoretical approach in seeking to understand how the internet affects social capital while Weber, Loukakis and Bergman (2003) find a positive correlation between engagement on the internet and civic and political participation. While these are very interesting issues in their own right, our focus here on parliamentarians and ICTs is narrower which guides us in the direction of survey-based empirical studies.

Empirical studies focus on themes such as assessing and explaining the types of technology used by parliamentarians, websites of parliamentarians and political parties and the use of the internet by special interest organisations. Here, a number of authors stand out in the sense of having produced several articles on these topics and moreover, several of the authors seem to be engaging in discussion and debate with each other about their findings. These include Peter Chen, Rachel Gibson, Wainer Lusoli and Stephen Ward and Jens Hoff among others. One of the early large-scale empirical studies looking at the use of technology by parliamentarians was carried out by Caldow in 1999 which focused on the digital role of the legislator. After this, a number of studies began to emerge on the same topic, some focusing on different parameters of ICT usage by parliamentarians. The studies that generate the most interesting insights about parliamentarians and ICT are those that focus on a number of European countries and Australia. They provide an important overview of what's happening in different countries and they also contribute, in

varying degrees, to mobilising data goes somewhere towards answering the more theoretical questions of other authors.

An interesting point about the empirical studies is that they differ quite significantly in their geographical scope and the levels of participation by parliamentarians. For example, 1,321 elected representatives in one country – Australia - responded to Chen’s (2002b) study about their use of technology while Hoff (2004) draws on survey data from over 750 elected representatives in four European countries in seeking to understand the democratic potentials of ICT. While empirically-based writings on parliamentarians and ICT overlap on many issues, we have grouped them into three key themes for ease of analysis. Each theme comprises a number of sub-themes focussing on different topics that tend to relate to patterns of ICT use by parliamentarians and impacts. The first theme is parliamentarians and ICT. Writings here can be seen to address the following sub-themes: ICT skills of parliamentarians and representation and participation. The second theme is political parties and ICT which looks at the impact of ICT on the functioning of political parties and the wider implications of this. Writings here cover a number of issues including use of ICT by parties, election campaigning, the impact of ICT on party policy-making and operational changes, party-citizens relations and party competition. The third and final theme relates to the implications of ICT for governance. Here, writings relate to the relationship between parliaments and governments, parliamentary strategies and their roles as legislators. It is to an examination of the most interesting and relevant writings produced on each key theme that we now turn.

1.2 Parliamentarians and ICT

ICT skills of parliamentarians

Parliamentarians and ICT is the first theme identified in our review which focuses on two topics: ICT skills of MPs and representation and participation. Regarding ICT skills of MPs, we identified 31 articles that generated both similar and different insights. It is not our intention here to review all the articles in a systematic way but rather to focus on a select number of articles which we believe offer the most interesting insights that are of high relevance to our own study. As mentioned in the introduction, Caldwell’s (1999) study of the use of digital technology by elected officials in fourteen European countries is important because it provides important baseline data against which the data of later studies can be compared. While her survey sample was ‘early adopters’, defined as those with email addresses, her findings are nonetheless applicable to more random samples and indeed, several of her findings have been confirmed and investigated in greater depth in later studies by other authors. Caldwell’s findings can be summarised as follows:

1. The more “wired” the legislator, the more likely he or she is to engage in multiple digital practices at increasingly strategic levels;
2. A ‘digital divide’ separates political candidates and their campaigns
3. A critical mass of legislative web sites have not yet evolved beyond ‘brochure’ content and they lag behind the websites of individual legislators in terms of being digitally interactive.
4. Elected officials at the national level are more ‘digitally advanced’ than their peers at regional and municipal level
5. Legislators demonstrate leadership in web-enabled technologies, despite and era of uncertainty
6. Elected representatives believe information technology will enhance democracy

Chen’s (2002a) later study of the use of the internet by a sample of elected parliamentarians in Australia provides evidence to support Caldwell’s assertion that national elected officials are more advanced than those at the sub-regional level in their use of technology. In addition, his findings reveal the existence of an urban-rural divide in the use of the internet by elected representatives. If an assessment of the internet is studied more closely, he notes differences in usage of the world wide web and email.

Parliamentarians tend to use the web more than councillors, the latter using it not at all or in moderation. There is less of a difference in use of email by elected representatives at different levels however and there is a strong correlation between the level of computer skill of the representation and their use of email. He goes on to add however that 'compared with use of the World Wide Web, there is a tendency for higher use [of email] at lower levels of skill, indicating that representatives find electronic mail simpler to use than the World Wide Web' (Chen 2002a:4).

In their study of the use of ICT by Canada's federal members of parliament, Kernaghan *et al.* (2003) state at the outset that their mission is to provide data to compare against Chen's data from Australia. They contend that while the questions asked in their and Chen's surveys are almost identical, Chen's survey is more inclusive in the sense that it includes a large number of elected representatives at the state and local levels; also Kernaghan *et al.*'s sample size is much smaller at 66 MP respondents compared to the 1,321 surveyed by Chen. Reflecting the findings of both Callow and Chen, Kernaghan *et al.* claim in their survey that higher ICT literacy was strongly and positively correlated with almost every indicator of ICT usage. In relation to the use of ICTs for political campaigning, Kernaghan *et al.* state that their findings about MPs media preferences are similar to Chen whereby MPs prefer personal contact, print media and television advertising ahead of internet tools in campaigning. Interestingly, this contrasts with Caldwell (1999) who foresees a more rapid take up of ICT in political campaigning based on her survey results.

Gender and ICT is a topic addressed in several of the empirical studies. On this, Kernaghan *et al.* state that their findings vary from Chen's with respect to the use of ICT by female parliamentarians (Kernaghan *et al.* 2003:13). In Canada, female parliamentarians do not differ significantly from male parliamentarians in their frequency of use of the World Wide web or email. This contrasts with the Australian case where females demonstrate lower levels of web browsing but use email at comparable frequencies. While Kernaghan *et al.*'s study does provide a number of insights on a urban-rural divide similar to Chen, one particularly interesting observation stands out which claims that rural parliamentarians 'were much more likely than their non-rural counterparts to have a staff member undertake the function on their behalf' (Kernaghan *et al.* 2003:15). This is a very important insight as it suggests that many elected parliamentarians are not direct users of ICT, relying on their staff to do it for them instead. This has, in turn, important implications for the whole debate surrounding the use of ICT by elected parliamentarians. As we see later, while Malloy (2003) does survey parliamentarians' staff as a distinct category in the case of Canada, most other surveys focus exclusively on parliamentarians.

Hoff (2004) picks up on the issue of gender based on a survey of the attitudes of elected representatives in Denmark, Norway, Austria and Portugal about the democratic potentials of information technology. His research work was conducted in the framework of the COST A14 project on *Government and Democracy in the Information Age* carried out on behalf of the European Commission. Rather than looking at gender differences in ICT use, Hoff is concerned with differences in male/female towards the democratic potential of ICT. Based on survey data, he concludes that female parliamentarians have a much stronger belief than their male counterparts, particularly those aged fifty and more.

In seeking to understand what influences elected representatives attitudes, Hoff (2004) looks at seven influencing factors: current use of ICT; competence; experience; gender; age; party affiliation (left-right, big-small). It is worth noting here that other authors focus on other explanatory factors. In the case of South Africa for example, Kingham (2003) concludes that levels of education and income are considered the main determinants of parliamentarians ICT skills. Hoff's examination of his seven influencing factors led to mixed results and as one would expect, differences across the four countries. While the seven factors have varying degrees explanatory power across countries, 'one tendency overshadowed all other; namely the fact that, generally speaking, the degree of involvement with ICT (use of, competence in and experience with) was of greater importance for the evaluation of the democratic potential of ICT than the other, more 'traditional' background factors' (Hoff 2004:23). This reflects a similar finding by the authors of the surveys mentioned earlier which would seem to suggest broad agreement on the main casual factor in the uptake of ICT by parliamentarians. If this is indeed the

case and despite Caldwell's (1999) more optimistic stance, one would not be very optimistic about parliamentarians developing a clear strategy for using ICT to increase their interaction with the public which is a point taken up by Hoff (Hoff 2004). Even though the parliamentarians investigated in his survey study were considered to be frequent users to ICT, and 'even though they are aware of the ways in which ICT can be used to strengthen their autonomy, few have concrete strategies for their personal use of ICT' (Hoff 2003:8). Many seem to be caught between either using ICT as a tool for top-down dissemination of information or using ICT as a tool for a more deliberative two-way communication (Hoff 2003:5-6). Cardosa *et al.* (2004) put forward a similar finding based on a survey conducted in six European countries and Scotland, also in the framework of COST A14. They contend that parliamentarians are more interested in increased effectiveness, meaning improved internal communication or increased internet use in electoral campaigns, than in a general increase in political communication between political elites and their public. While the use of intranets by parliamentarians is high, the use of ICTs with citizens is very low. Another explanation is that the political system shapes the behaviour of parliamentarians with respect to ICT. According to Zittel (2004), the greater development of personal home pages by US Congress men mirrors a difference between parliamentary systems and presidential systems. He claims that parliamentary systems do not provide sufficient incentives for the legislators to focus on their constituents and to structure a formative participatory representational process. This point is also taken up by Hoff (2003:8) who claims that 'the actual information and communication flows to and from MPs seems determined very much by the institutional setting in which MPs find him/herself. For example, the degree to which homepages and direct email communication with voters/constituency is used, seem to depend on whether the election system builds on personal voting or party voting, and the content and character of electronic communication is different for MPs placed in different chambers in parliament'. In short, institutions matter in shaping parliamentarians reaction to and usage of ICT.

Representation and participation

All studies looked at so far seem to agree on the fact that while parliamentarians are increasingly using ICT to carry out tasks that increase efficiency, there is still a low level of use for enhancing their representative function vis-à-vis the public, especially through online consultation. Even with respect to email, considered one of the most basic forms of ICT usage, it cannot be assumed that parliamentarians are fans of some of the new ICT tools (Clift 2004). This, according to Clift, is due to the fact that huge volumes of email from the public can lead to overload and some parliamentarians prefer personal contact than virtual connection.

More generally, there is agreement on the internet's civic potential (Blumler and Coleman 2001, Kreuger 2002, Murray and Harrison 2002) even if it has not been realised yet. Indeed, to date while there has not been an explosion of public dialogue using ICTs, only 'engineered' ones seems to have been successful (Blumler and Coleman 2001). A number of studies look at online consultation experiments as a possible indicator of the future take up of this form of virtual public engagement (Louv in and Alderdice 2001, Coleman 2004, Macintosh *et al.* 2003). These articles represent a shift in focus away from studies of parliamentarians direct engagement with the public on a one-to-one basis to a more institutional focus, that is to say parliaments' direct engagement with the public via simulated consultations. While parliamentary consultation of course continues to involve interaction between parliamentarians and the public, it is less personal in the sense of being a group exercise debating a particular issue. Coleman (2004b) looks at ten online consultations run on behalf of the UK parliament between 1998 and 2002. The aim was to recruit participants with expertise in specific policy issues rather than random members of the public. While there were many positive outputs, for example networking between public participants and a generally good quality of debate, it did not lead to increased trust between participants and parliamentarians. The issue of trust between parliamentarians and those they engage with as a result of ICT is interesting one and thus far, has not been dealt with in any great depth in empirical studies which is probably due to the lack of longitudinal data and the relative newness of online communication. While it is difficult to measure from a methodological point of view, we hope that future studies will tackle this subject. Compared to other authors, Chadwick

(2003) is more optimistic about the overall impact of public engagement via the internet. He contends (Chadwick 2003:450) that 'if government departments continue to establish their own online discussion forums, parliaments will find themselves increasingly marginalised'. A 1998 OECD report is equally upbeat on this point in claiming that ICT is making plebiscitary democracy more feasible which in turn puts pressure on representative democracy. However, from our sample of articles, none provided evidence of an undermining of representative democracy as a direct result of ICT.

1.3 Political parties and ICT

ICT use and impact

On the theme of political parties and ICT, we looked at 15 articles that we considered to be the most interesting in terms of insights generated for our study. Once again, the key articles draw on survey data from Europe and Australia. It is worth noting however that studies of Europe looking at political parties and ICT are more geographically inclusive than studies of parliamentarians and ICT discussed in the last section. As we also saw in the last section, parliamentarians can use ICT tools to engage directly with the public or they can use their parliaments website to engage, particularly via online consultations. In this section, the focus is on political parties from the perspective of how parties use ICT and to what ends and second, the impact of ICT on the parties themselves. Clearly, party websites are a further means available to parliamentarians to engage with their public. As noted by Norris (2003), debates about the political impact of the internet have experienced several waves. Many authors in the early 1990s 'believed that the creation of effective well-designed and innovative websites would allow political organizations to meet strategic objectives; for example by increasing the efficiency of public service delivery for local authorities, reinforcing support for political parties, widening the readership for newspapers, facilitating mobilization by transnational policy networks and improving the transparency and accountability of government departments' (Norris 2003:23). However, by the end of the 1990s, she concludes that opinion became more sceptical, largely as a result of the role of the internet in American elections.

Both Norris and a study carried out for the STOA committee of the European Parliament (Treschel *et al.* 2003) look at the contents of websites of political parties in Europe. Norris examines the public's use of political party websites while Treschel *et al.* also look at parliamentary websites. Both studies include the fifteen member states of the European Union prior to its enlargement in 2004. Treschel *et al.* also include the ten accession states with the result that a total of 144 political parties' websites and 38 legislatures were analysed. Their aim was to count the features and assess the quality of websites as well as an evaluation of their interactivity. Overall, they conclude that the existing 15 member states tend to have more developed websites than the 10 accession states and that moreover, the quality, according to their criteria, of parliamentary websites was slightly superior to that of party websites (Treschel *et al.* 2003:5). One particularly interesting finding is that 'familiarity and use of ICT – as well as higher levels of wealth – do not inexorably lead to better website development' (Treschel *et al.* 2003:5). This is striking given that in the previous section, we noted general agreement between authors referred to on the positive correlation between ICT use by parliamentarians and their levels of ICT skills. With regard to interactivity, Treschel *et al.* claim, based on case studies and country reports, that e-access is by far the most dominant e-technique being used and e-consultation and e-forums 'are noticeably lagging' (Treschel *et al.* 2003:5). This leads them to conclude that websites relationship with democracy is unclear as it is still emerging.

Before presenting her research findings based on a screening of the websites of 134 political parties, Norris (2003:25) adopts an optimistic tone in stating that 'the development of party websites will generate more egalitarian patterns of party competition and more opportunities for citizens representation in party politics'. Like Treschel *et al.* (2003), she concludes that party websites vary greatly in their contents and quality. As

regards their communication interactivity, her study suggests the 'party websites are likely to have greater impact on communication pluralism than by widening direct participation among disaffected groups, because these resources mainly research citizens who are already most likely to be politically active, interested and engaged'. (Norris 2003:43). Moreover, it is the websites of minor and fringe parties, contrary to American studies, that facilitate 'bottom-up' communication in Europe from citizens to parties and elected officials (Norris 2003:43).

Gibson and Ward (2002) provide evidence from Australia on the use of websites by political parties at the national level¹. The set of measures they use to assess the quality of websites relate to the number and type of links on a party website. In general, almost all Australian parties have a web presence but most use it for dissemination rather than for more innovative means. One interesting point is their claim that there is a divide, in terms of web presence, between those parties with parliamentary representation and those without from the point of view of the quality and visibility of their web site. As regards differences between large and small parties, they conclude that while the most connected sites belong to minor parties such as the Greens and the Communists, 'no stark divide has emerged between the major and minor parties' sites [and] this is largely due to the low levels of activity on both sides' (Gibson and Ward 2002:122). Their findings about top-down rather than interactive communication reflect, in their opinion, the findings from studies from five years earlier conducted in New Zealand, North American and the United Kingdom. While several possible reasons can be identified to explain the limited interactivity of political party websites, the main one is that parties do not see a demand for it. In other words, 'aside from academic and media interest, only the most activist-minded individuals are realistically seen as making a bee-line for the party sites' (Gibson and Ward 2002:123).

Based on research on party websites in Eastern and Central Europe, Rommele (2003) reflects the view of other authors in this section in concluding that most of the political party websites aim at opinion formation for all electors and they tend not to solicit communication from citizens. Similar to Gibson and Ward's findings in the case of Australian parties, Rommele (2003) underlines the more interactive websites of the Greens in the United Kingdom and the Reform Party in the USA which may be due to the fact that 'these being newer formations that have based themselves around a more participatory ethos for intra-party democracy' (Rommele 2003:15). In the same vein as Gibson and Ward, Rommele notes that whether a political party is in power or not seems to have an effect on the quality of their websites which is a similar finding by Semetko and Krasnoboka (2003:91) in their study of the websites of political parties in Russia and the Ukraine. Furthermore, they found that major parties are more prominent online which they claim, corresponds with the findings of Margolis *et al.* (1997,1999) in a study of the online presence of American political parties. Using standard quality measurement indicators, they claim that the 'new' political parties often have a great prominence online and better quality websites.

Party political campaigning and ICT

Given that the general conclusion emerging from the literature reviewed by us is that the websites of political parties are characterised by interactive inertia, one must ask if this also holds true during election time. In other words, can it be said that political parties use their web sites more frequently and in a more interactive during election campaigns in order to enhance their chances of (re-)election? This issue is addressed by a number of authors, especially Gibson and Ward and Lusoli who look at the use of the internet by political parties in the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. A 2002 study by Ward and Gibson (2003) assesses the use of the internet by political parties during the 2001 general elections in the United Kingdom. They look at database material and candidates' and local constituency parties' on-line activity in three areas: first, the extent

¹ It is worth mentioning here an article published in 2000 by Gibson and Ward which attempts to develop a coding system for measuring, in a standardised and comparative way, the websites of political parties.

of Internet use by candidates and local parties—who and how many candidates had live websites for the election; second, the pattern of on-line activity at the local level—where were parties/candidates on-line; and third, what were candidates doing on-line—did candidates experiment with interactivity, or use the new media as another top-down communication tool? Reflecting less than optimistic observations by several authors about political parties use of the internet in different political systems outlined earlier, Ward and Gibson come up with similar results. In their view, 'the use of the internet was patchy and websites often acted as little more than static on-line leaflets. Moreover, the overall impact of the internet on electoral outcomes was minimal and the use of technology by itself is unlikely to herald the coming of e-democracy' (Ward and Gibson 2002b:188). The reasons for this include the limited scope the internet in terms of its 'catch-all' potential vis-à-vis the electorate as many do not have access to the internet and among those that do, only a limited number are politically engaged. Others reasons identified include the lack of a fast broadband connection and parliamentarians general reluctance to launch themselves in cyberspace due to the fear of negative press. By way of recommendation, Ward and Gibson suggest the use of the internet in political campaigning should be part of an overall strategy employing various tools.

In a comparative study of electioneering in the United Kingdom with the United States, Gibson, Margolis *et al.* (2003) conclude that a similar pattern is emerging in the use of the internet by political parties in political campaigning. For political parties in both systems 'information provision and resource generation are consistently emphasised [by parliamentarians surveyed] while promoting participation and establishing electronic networks, both within and outside the party, are less of a priority. Web-based communication is largely a party-led and top down phenomenon rather than a two-way dialogue' (Gibson, Margolis *et al.* 2003:66). Results from Australia are even less encouraging as the use of the internet by political parties for web campaigning does not, it seems, depart much from the general pattern of in Europe and the United States (Gibson and Ward 2002). As regards differences in the use of the internet for campaigning, Bentivegna (2002) concludes in her study of the 2001 Italian political campaign that there was a large use of ICT by political parties to reach the electorate but the 'best sites [using information, mobilization, community and services as the measurement dimensions] were those for the candidates of major parties, those with a longest tradition, or with a strongest characterization with the voters' (Bentivegna 2002:16). To summary up, it be concluded from studies we looked at that while the use of the internet by political parties will necessarily demonstrate differences across countries, it's general take-up, even during election times, remains limited. As summed up by Lusoli and Ward (2004b:466) 'the extent to which parties adapt to ICTs for participatory (and, indeed other) purposes is largely dependent on their own strategies and resources. Rather than parties being swept aside by a technological revolution, they are likely to adapt and incorporate technologies to reflect their pre-existing characteristics and goals'.

Another related issue in the articles we reviewed is the impact of ICT for the political organisation of parties. While in-depth empirical cross-country studies focusing exclusively on this issue are currently sparse, several of the authors mentioned do look at this issue as part of their overall study of the use of websites by political parties. For example, Lusoli and Ward (2004b:467) argue that the role of new media technologies will, in all likelihood, 'underscore and in some cases accelerate pre-existing trends in internal party organisation'. This, they claim, will manifest itself in two ways. First, the internet and email will increasingly link members to the national party directly and second, a further deepening of participatory activities among activists may occur. Ultimately, this may give rise to a 'looser kind' of relationship between citizens and parties as people begin to 'associate themselves with, and support, parties online without having to invest large amounts of time internal party life' (Lusoli and Ward 2004a: 467). This is a very interesting prediction as if this trend does emerge, party membership will be re-defined which is not necessarily negative as, according to Lusoli and Ward, it may also help parties stem the tide of declining party membership without actually having to reinvigorate local grass-roots democracy. Clearly, this would have very important impacts for the whole question of democratic participation in political parties and the formulation of party policy.

Finally, Rommele (2003) and Gibson and Ward (2002) underscore the impact of ICT on party organisation in terms of cost savings. Rommele claims that while ICT has helped to

improve processes and coordination in parties, it is particularly valuable for new parties as it allows them to avoid the cost usually associated with setting up a party (e.g. headquarters etc.). Taking this line of argument further, it may well lead to the emergence of cyber parties as a phenomenon in the political landscape. However, only in-depth empirical studies, ideally country comparative, will reveal whether this is indeed a new phenomenon or just a sporadic phenomenon in countries where political parties tend to have a strong online presence.

1.4 Better governance

In seeking to assess governance impacts, our focus in reviewing our sample of articles was to look for insights about whether ICT has enhanced the legislative function of parliamentarians. The studies we mentioned earlier on assessing the use of ICT by parliamentarians all seem to arrive at the same conclusion that in general, parliamentarians in all political systems studied are using ICT – albeit in varying degree in terms of sophistication – at increasing levels and this, as pointed out by Hoff (2003), this has had implications for their daily work routine and time allocation. Another point emerging from our sample is that ICT has increased the work efficiency of parliamentarians and the range of information resources available to them as a result of ICT (e.g. databases, information online) means that they are more informed than previously. Moreover, new ICT tools have led to increased communication flows with the public, in some countries more than others, even if this runs the risk of information overload in many cases (Hansard 2002, Clift 2004). Against this background, can it be concluded that ICT has improved the role of parliamentarians legislators? In other words, has more information and public opinion available to them as a result of ICT tools, improved the quality of their work and their own perception of better quality input by them into the legislative process?

Before seeking to ascertain what insights our sample of articles can provide us with on this topic, it is important to point out that parliamentarians' contribution to the legislative process can occur at various levels. In the first instance, it can occur in parliament at the national level but it can also occur in governing structures at the sub-national level and indeed, parliamentarians in some countries can hold elected office at more than one level. Equally, and perhaps less transparent than the formal legislative governing structures which parliamentarians are members of, parliamentarians can contribute to the legislative process through interaction with policy-making officials. The latter tends to be a more informal process and perhaps more difficult to gain an understanding of from the perspective of assessing the impact of ICT. Similar to cross-country differences in the use of ICT by parliamentarians in the survey-based studies mentioned earlier, one would also assume that there would also be variations in the use of ICT tools employed by parliamentarian and policy-makers to interact with each other in different politico-administrative systems.

The increased availability of ICT-enabled information resources help parliamentarians to be better informed on different topics. This, we can hypothesise, increases the likelihood of a better quality of legislative input on their part. However, to test this hypothesis and to gain a good understanding of the situation in different countries, an inventory of the various tools available to parliamentarians in their parliaments would be necessary. This would reveal, one can assume, a high level of variation in countries, and perhaps along the lines of a North-South divide in the European Union in particular. While a STOA study (1998) presents interesting survey results about MEPs expectations about technology tools in the European Parliament based on ICT tools in their own national or regional parliaments, it does not provide us with a detailed picture of the different ICT tools actually in place in national and regional parliaments.

One interesting study on the impact of ICT on the relationship between parliamentarians and government policy-makers was carried out by Malloy (2003). What is striking about his survey is that his survey questionnaire was distributed to parliamentarians and to their staff separately. Staff were asked to fill in the survey on behalf of their office. Disappointingly, the response rate from staff was low so Malloy relies more on the surveys

filled in by parliamentarians His main focus is on how technology is changing the relationship between parliamentarians and public servants in Canada. He suggests that fax machines and government websites are the main tools used by parliamentarians and the internet is also a crucial tool for research staff. However, he goes on to conclude that 'much remains relatively untouched by the new technologies' and 'the telephone remains the most prevalent medium for communication with public servants, both by members and their staff' (Malloy 2003:53). Email is less in use and most sophisticated tools such as on-line databases with transferable files are, according to him, used even less so. Staff are seen to use technology more than parliamentarians and the latter's decision not to use ICT tools may be a question of personal choice, preferring personal contact instead, rather than an actual inability on their part to use ICT tools (Malloy 2003:53). However, other barriers are at play were not, according to Malloy, technological in nature. For example, in the Canadian political system, certain 'structures' as Malloy puts it, prevent direct contact between parliamentarians and public servants, the former being encouraged to go through ministers offices.

As described earlier, simulated online consultations by the UK parliament had a number of positive impacts (e.g. networking) but their long run survival was more limited in terms of setting in motion a general trend of online communication. This finds resonance in Stanley and Weare's (2004) study of the consultation process surrounding the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration authorised by the U.S. Congress. According to them (Stanley and Weare 2004:522) while the ensuing web-base discussion put in place had positive impacts for political participation, 'theory and experience justify a healthy skepticism against the long-run survival of more open decision-making processes in the face of political and bureaucratic resistance'. Bureaucratic resistance is also identified by Watson *et al.* (1999) as a stumbling block in their account of the impact of a project implemented in a municipality in Norway between 1993-5 to improve the information flow between politicians and to strengthen the support provided to them by local government administrators. While the trial was perceived as a success, the council discontinued the project in 1996 and since then, politicians have reverted back to traditional forms of communication such as mail and telephone. While many reasons can be touted for the end of the trial, Watson *et al.* (1999:63) claim that power politics was an important factor and that 'while IT can be a powerful democracy instrument, it will be resisted by those able to resist when technology threatens their power. The project demonstrates that the effects of teledemocracy are constrained by the power structure. Power holders cannot evade or roll back these ongoing changes but they are likely to find new ways of maintaining formal and informal influence' (Watson *et al.* 1999:63).

In the power balance between politicians and public servants, Snellen (2002) claims that while non-elected public servants are actively engaged in negotiations with interested parties in many countries (e.g. the Netherlands), elected officials do not participate, Moreover, in politicians relationship with public servants, ICTs tend to weaken the relative power position of the first in favour of the second and 'partly this has to do with nature of ICTs' (Snellen 2002:195). Snellen goes on to claim that monitoring technologies used for benchmarking could in principle, stem this trend by strengthening the power of politicians with respect to that of the public servants.

PART 2: EPRI Survey: Parliamentarians & ICTs

2.1 Introduction

Following the presentation of the existing debates and research related to Parliamentarians and ICTs, we now turn to the original research conducted in the framework of this project.

The objectives of this research are to shed light on how parliamentarians see the impacts of their use of ICTs, on their different working roles and relationships, and to get an indication of what further developments are likely or necessary, to support the parliamentarians in their work.

Those selected as the target group for this research, are as far as possible, technology 'early adopters' among the parliamentary community. This group was selected not because they are representative of the parliamentary community, but because their situations are indicative of what is possible. They tend to be the most ICT aware, the higher users, often the innovators or pioneers of certain technologies, processes or behaviour.

Looking at this group will *not* necessarily tell us what all other parliamentarians will be doing soon, since, although this may be the case, there is no certain link between the two. Very often, early adopters are experimental and discriminating technology users, who will choose products and technologies that are too specialised or sophisticated for the mainstream - the take up of Apple Mac by early computer users, or of Betamax video recorders are the most obvious examples.

What it does tell us, is what the most advanced users are doing now, what impact is this having, what are the lessons which can be learnt to the benefit of their colleagues, and where are the challenges and opportunities. In this study, the early adopters have performed the role of 'laboratory mice'. The study used a sample of 41 parliamentarians, from across 24 countries – all EU member states, Hungary.

In undertaking this research, we adopted a two-pronged strategy, seeking the basic ICT usage information and behaviour patterns, and for the impact assessment, the more subjective attitude research. The different pieces of research were gathered using a combined approach of written survey and in-depth individual interviews.

Given the multi-faceted nature of parliamentarians' work, in gathering and analysing data we have identified the main 'roles' of parliamentarians and used these as lenses through which to view and examine our subject matter.

In what follows, we present the findings of this study in two parts: The first section presents the details of the use of ICTs and availability, among parliamentarians. The second section will provide the core details of the impacts and attitudes of parliamentarians, toward their use of ICTs.

2.2 Parliaments & Parliamentarians Use of ICTs

This section presents an overview of the research findings on the following areas: Use of ICT tools inside and outside parliament, applications and systems used, ICT-enabled processes in parliament and what ICTs parliamentarians want.

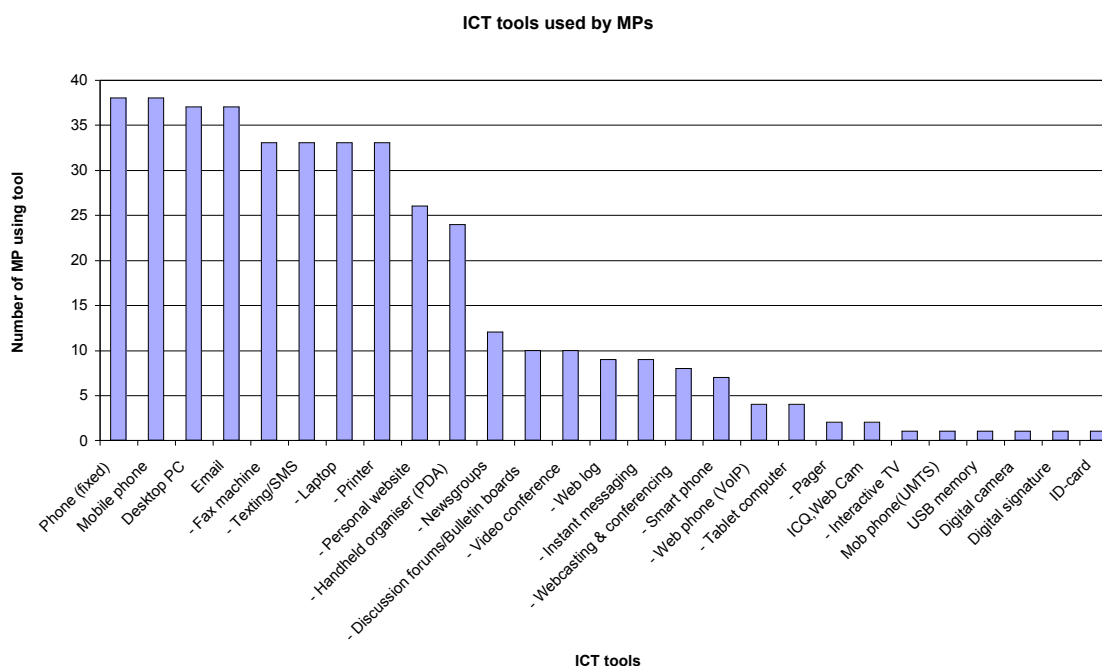
On average, respondents in our survey conduct their parliamentary work from more than 2 different locations during any given week and one third of them are 'on the road' more than 1 day a week. Their main locations of work are, in descending order, as follows: parliament, home and constituency office.

When looking at the number of reported hours spent in different locations, it is clear that many MPs spend more than 40 work hours a week in parliament and they often work after hours and at weekends from home.

MPs have on average 2 persons working for them in parliament and in many cases, the staff are shared with other MPs.

ICT tools used by parliamentarians

Although the use of ICTs varies significantly with respect to the type of technologies and frequency of usage, it appears that the most commonly used tools by respondents are, not surprisingly, telephone (fixed and mobile), desktop PC laptops, printer, fax machines and, but to a lesser extent, handheld organisers (PDA) (63%).



For communication purposes, telephone remains the main channel of communication followed by emails, fax and texting (SMS). 7 out of 10 respondents have a personal website and 2 out of 10 have more than one website. Of those who did not have a website, half of them were planning to or in the process of constructing one and all others relied on their party website.

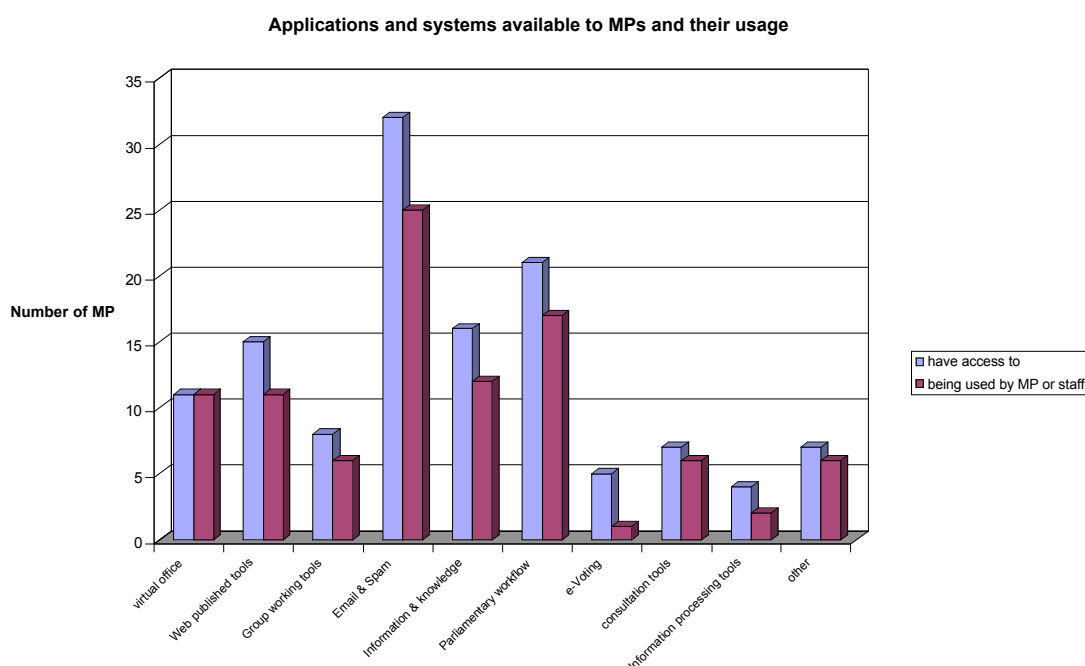
Other web-based means of communications or consultation such as newsgroups, weblogs, discussion forums and instant messaging are used by approximately 1 out of 10 respondents. These are often used on a daily basis and they are more likely to be used in countries where the use of ICT is a more common means of communication as well as by MPs with good computer skills (or an ICT background).

Other factors such as the level of ICT usage by the general public in the country or constituency of an MP, the ICT knowledge of staff and the age of an MP are also influencing factors on the use of ICT. In relation to age, MPs under the age of 30 are more ICT savvy than older MPs. Overall however, the main influencing factor seems to be MPs ICT background and willingness to use these tools in their parliamentary work.

Standard office equipment and communication tools such as telephone and email, have been used by MPs for 5 years and more.

Those respondents who use Web based means of communication other than email, learnt to use them in the last 3 years and those with good IT skills/ knowledge started using these technologies earlier

Application and systems used



The software most used by MPs is, not surprisingly, Microsoft office tools and systems.

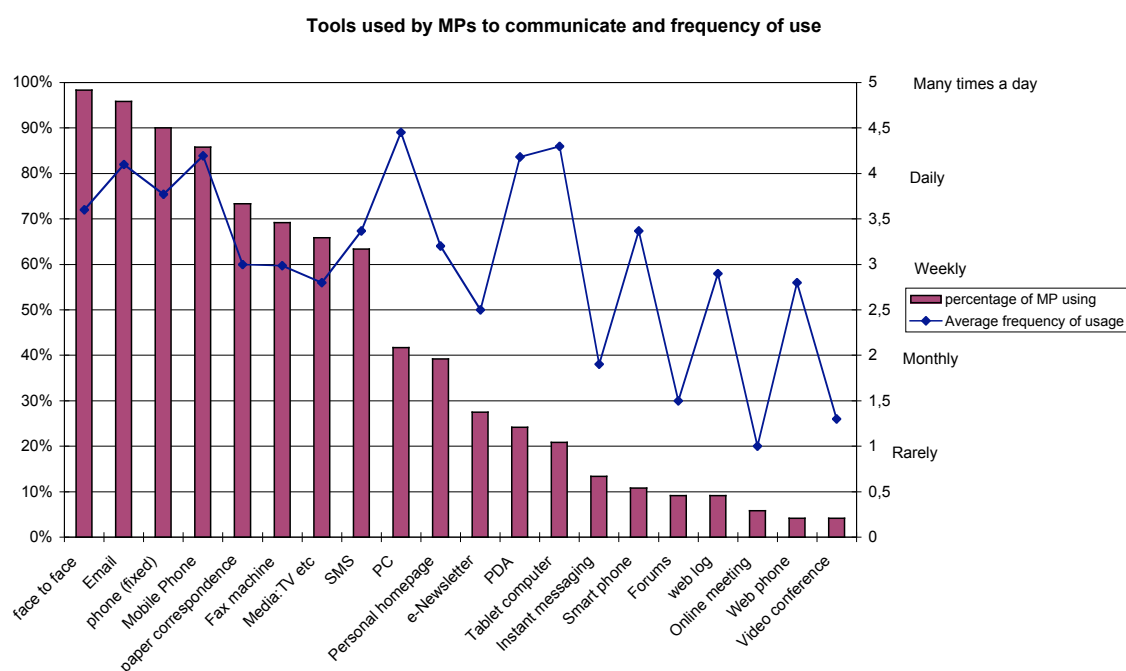
The three applications and systems most used by MPs in their work are, in descending order, email and spam management systems, parliamentary workflow systems information and knowledge management systems. All systems seem to be provided by parliament.

Web publishing, virtual working enabling tools (such as virtual office and group working tools) and consultation tools are used by approximately 1 out of 3 respondents but not on a frequent basis. E-voting systems, consultation tools and information processing tools are rarely available in parliaments and rarely used by the respondents.

With regard to the software application and system used most by MPs, a wide variety of brands are used but they are used for very basic functions such as email management systems, dictionaries and publishing tools.

Use of ICTs with main audiences

The main groups MPs communicate with in their work are, in descending order: party members, citizens, special interest groups, groups related to their parliamentary work (staff, officials, other MPs etc), as well as organisations and private companies.



Although the use of ICT varies significantly with respect to the type of technologies and the frequency of usage, it appears that the most commonly used tools used by respondents to communicate with the 5 main groups are similar.

MPs commonly communicate through face-to-face meetings, emails, telephone (fixed line), mobile phone, and paper correspondence followed by, fax machine, traditional media and text messaging (SMS).

While MPs use text messaging (SMS) more frequently to communicate with party members than with other groups, they use traditional media to communicate with citizens.

Emails and text messages are used by party officials very frequently with text messages used for setting up appointments, for sending messages during a campaign and for types of communication that need to be transmitted quickly.

In countries where mobile phones are widely/ commonly used by citizens, and where MPs are willing to be contacted through this medium, text messaging is also used on a daily basis between them and citizens.

Use of websites by MPs and their political parties

The home pages of MPs and parties websites tend to be used as a broadcast medium although party websites seem to have more interactive features.

MP	Party
Information	- Political profile, his/her background, fields of interest as well contact information - Some provide their speeches, voting record, MP or House schedule
Picture and sound	-Picture of MP -Some sites include pictures of events, sound or video clips
News provider	Some include more general news such as national and or international headlines.
links	-Link to the parliament or party website - Links to parliament - Links to news-provider
interactivity	- Send email to MP(all) - Sign up for an electronic newsletter (one in four) - Forum (2) - Bulletin board (2) - Online survey (1)
other	- Shop on line - Intranet (for party members) - Possibility of having homepage (for MPs) - Possibility of having email address on party server

An interesting point is that the quality of an individual website is not necessarily related to an MP's familiarity with and use of ICT. Other explanatory factors include the qualifications of staff, the organisation of MPs' secretariats, and budgetary and time constraints. However, MPs who are very passionate about using ICT media tools will find time to update and experiment with ICT tools regularly.

Finally, a few party websites seem to facilitate bottom-up communication from citizens to parties and party officials. This includes the opportunity to provide feedback and input into the policy process, the use of more permanent interactive tools or the possibility of deploying several interactive tools for a limited period of time; (e.g. election campaigning).

ICT enabled processes in Parliament

Most of the information and documents relating to parliamentary activities are digitalised and most of the interactions between MPs and other relevant groups inside parliament can, and tend to be done, using ICTs.

However, the main activities which require a physical presence are meetings (with committees, political groups etc) and plenary sittings.

All parliaments seem to have satisfactory legislative databases even if these are not accessible to all of them externally.

In most parliaments, MPs have the possibility to following the legislative process, submit amendments digitally, follow current and future activities of committees and/ or plenary sittings as well as using electronic voting.

But for interviewees in France, Austria, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain, amendments cannot be made digitally.

Most of the *electronic voting* systems consist of a voting system that immediately registers the number of people present as well as the number of votes cast. But for interviewees in Austria, Cyprus and Czech Republic, the Netherlands and the UK, MPs have to vote physically by raising their hand or standing up.

The possibility of voting remotely are currently being studied in several parliaments (for example in Estonia and the Netherlands) but there are still technological and psychological barriers, both from MPs and citizens, that may hinder the full implementation of these initiatives.

Wireless networking and the use of wireless technologies which enable MPs to access information from outside their offices or committee rooms, seem to be (and to have been) the next logical move towards the development of an e- parliament. However, this will be subject to different barriers in different countries. In Ireland, barriers are physical while it's a question cost in Sweden and more generally, psychological barriers exist with respect to the use of wireless technologies during plenary sessions.

Problems encountered using ICTs in parliament

Lack of adaptation of procedures to new technologies	Lack of adjustment of MPs work culture to new technologies	Non-compatibility between services and tools provided by parliament and those acquired by MPs or their political group
<p><i>(With regard to the pace of the process) we have to develop a culture that makes sure that the values and the quality of a non- ICT supported process are still there. (DK)</i></p> <p><i>The fact that things have become digital, workable, sendable; easily debatable, easy to compare, to check, allows people to create new procedures but this is not done. (PT)</i></p> <p><i>Even if you use electronic means you have to use papers at one point for procedural reasons (EL)</i></p> <p><i>you can look up a law in process but usually in committees and plenary sessions we use paper (LV)</i></p>	<p><i>Unfortunately many MPs do not use ICT so a lot of paper is circulating (PL)</i></p> <p><i>We have an electronic voting system but we also need to raise our hand because so many GSMs and a lot of noise (CZ)</i></p> <p><i>negative is that during plenary sessions when debate not interesting people surf and forget what is going on (LT)</i></p>	<p><i>We are only allowed to have Lotus Notes on one computer due to licensing problems so my secretary cannot access my emails (IE)</i></p> <p><i>I can't access intranet without using the laptop given by Bundestag (DE)</i></p> <p><i>Everybody has a blackberry but it is not compatible with outlook so can't get our calendar (NL)</i></p> <p><i>I can't use my electronic documents from parliament in other offices (LV)</i></p>

What ICTs parliamentarians want

When asked about which tools they would like to see developed in the future, the reaction of MPs interviewed indicated that many had given it some thought and that they were aware of the importance of such information and communication tools both for daily communication and political campaigning.

Although “developing my website further” or “making my website more interactive” seems the objective of many MPs, this they interpret as meaning the addition of more text on their political beliefs, photo galleries or short film clips. However, it seems that many MPs would like to use ICT tool to dialogue more with voters or at the very least, to target their message towards specific groups.

As a representative	As a party member	As a legislator
To open, to develop further or render the home page more interactive	Using their homepage more actively for campaigning	Electronic voting systems and remote voting systems
Possibilities of consulting with citizens through tools such as chat rooms, SMS	Create or develop further a data base with electronic contact details of voters and potential voters	Introduction of wireless network/ facilities inside parliament
Use a video or net meeting system to install permanent communication with their constituency		Email and security management

The main tools or services MPs express an interest in seem to relate to increased mobility inside parliament as well as improved email and security management systems. In cases where parliaments are highly digitalised, MPs tend to express an interest in tools that will give them even more mobility and they are more concerned about ICT security issues.

2.3 Attitudes towards ICT and its impacts

Before conducting this research three principle roles or identities of parliamentarians were identified, each with very different objectives, audiences and motivations: the Representative, the Party Actor, and the Legislator. The research was organised and conducted with these various profiles in mind.

In overview, *The Representative* refers to the Parliamentarian in his or her capacity as an elected political representative, representing the interests and concerns of his/her electors, in the parliamentary assembly. In this capacity, members are guided by their need for visibility, contact and closeness with their voters, an understanding of their needs and concerns, and especially how to behave in Parliament to guarantee re-election. Translated into process terms, Representatives need reliable and consistent means of reaching and communicating with their voters, being contacted by them, effective mechanisms to communicate their messages, activities and results, and for feedback gathering and consultation.

The *Party Actor* on the other hand, has as objectives the interests of the Party as a whole, as well as his or her relative position within it. The Party Actor will participate in the overall evolution of the party, its policies, political responses to external events and debates. It is motivated by the prospect of electoral success, internal and external political rivalry, public and private competition, and winning. In parliament, the Political Actor is driven, guided or even constrained by the interests of a bigger machine. At the local level, the parliamentarian's key audiences are the local party members and local party officials.

The third head of the Parliamentarian is *the Legislator*, whose main function is the development, processing, adoption, review and amendment of legislation. The Legislator is interested in efficient, accurate and relevant information exchange, consultation and deliberation among colleagues, with expert inputs where appropriate. The Legislator as law maker and regulator, must be mindful of the potential for distorting influences by interested (mostly external) parties.

Balancing these three, often conflicting roles cannot be easy. In this light, understanding how the different roles might be affected by changes in professional life, such as the use and integration of ICTs, is of interest and importance. In the subsequent sections, the impact of ICTs on the three parliamentary musketeers is examined.

2.3.1 *The Representative*

In looking at *The Representative*, we sought to examine how the relationship between the MP and citizen might have, or be perceived to have changed. While the respondents tend not to have a clear communication or representation strategy, the use of ICTs by MPs has had an impact on their interaction with citizens.

Many of the changes cited are unsurprising, even predictable.

MP attitudes towards these developments are less predictable: feelings are very mixed – one moment positive, and negative the next. The parliamentarians interviewed have provided a variety of responses to most questions, although general tendencies across the group are apparent.

Level of contact with citizens

In terms of the level of contact, there has been a marked increase in overall contact between parliamentarians and their citizens, through the use of ICT – particularly through email. In some cases MPs have also seen a decline in their inbound correspondence by traditional means (post and telephone), while their overall totals are rising.

The barriers of writing are down (envelope, stamp, mail box procedure). The number of letters, faxes or telephone calls have gone down. (FI)

This increase in communication is not just an increased frequency of contact with existing audiences (mainly constituents), but an increase in the number and type of people contacting them. Over a third said that many of these new correspondents would not be making contact without ICTs. – younger people and those outside their constituencies.

More communication channels gives you access to more people (EL)

[ICTs] ...help you reach people you haven't been able to contact before. For example, the effects of a law, the person who is affected will tell you. You would never have spoken to that person otherwise. (DK)

[I now have] contact with people outside constituency or outside party or younger people, contact with people who wouldn't show up physically (EL)

In addition to feeling more contacted, the MPs feel generally more 'contactable' - they are easier to reach now.

Even ordinary people send me emails (BE)

The parliamentarians expressed a mixed response to this new situation – sometimes pleased with this trend (a more engaged citizenry), but also rather fed up and disappointed by the additional (and often 'unnecessary') extra workload.

Physical versus virtual contact

In general, *The Representative* has not yet become a completely virtual, rather than physical communicator (except in one case), and they do not expect to become so. MPs clearly recognise the continued importance of physical contact with their voters.

In their capacity as Representatives, most of their virtual communications tend to occur with younger people, organisations, experts and interest groups, while their physical contact mostly takes place with their constituents and older people.

Estonians are more ICT inclined, but face-to-face is still very important (Est.)

I use a lot of ICTs but not for the purpose of representation (LT)

In the constituency, people want to shake hands (PL)

I use face-to-face, but I think its more necessary for the voters than for me because they need to see that I really exist and that I am not a virtual creature.(MEP)

Each month I visit between 750 –1000 houses (BE)

Do MPs understand better their voter interests and concerns?

Despite the evident (ICT-induced) increased levels of communication with their citizens, parliamentarians do not feel they have a better understanding of their citizens' interests or concerns.

Those people that say they have an increased contact with, are not representative of their constituents, and often the new correspondence they receive by ICT is not 'directly relevant' to their work, but too general.

People ask me to do things that are close to their lives –not really political issues – this influences your political work but doesn't necessarily mean I have a better understanding of them. (BE)

Voters have a better understanding of how system works but it doesn't necessarily mean that the MP has a better understanding of their expectations (DK)

ICT have enabled me to be in touch with a wider range of subject, but doesn't necessarily mean that I have a deeper understanding (Est.)

No, polls or the people who write to you are not representative of the whole population (AT)

People using ICTs are not representative (LT)

Furthermore, they feel that to gain a better understanding of their citizens concerns, they need face-to-face contact.

I receive more emails on specific questions or queries but face-to-face contact has a better quality (IE)

No, for this face-to-face is still a better way to communicate with voters (EL)

Although...

Maybe [I understand better my constituents] because more people write - because it is easier compared to having to write a letter. (AT)

Are citizens better informed?

In general citizens are not necessarily better informed about politics, the processes and activities of parliament, or of their representatives, except those who are already interested or involved in politics.

Probably the people who were well informed before are even better informed now (LV)

[More informed?] Yes, because of the internet and the general information flow in society (SE)

Many parliamentarians believe that the use of ICTs, and the increased availability of information has not had much impact on the level of citizens knowledge or understanding. On the contrary, the extra communications traffic tends to be less informed, and is often redundant and irrelevant.

Are citizens more informed? Yes and no. Many people think they have a very clear image of what we are doing which can be quite far from reality.(DK)

You could think they are better informed but you can't tell from the emails, they send emails because it is easier (DK)

I hope so but I am not totally sure (PT)

The exception to this seems to be those already engaged and active in politics, who do take advantage of the new tools to better inform themselves. One indication cited, of this group being better informed, is seeing public responses appear faster on the internet (after an event) than before.

Many are better informed, because an hour after something happens, it is on the net. (DK)

Of those who felt that some citizens are better informed, the explanation offered was that among their increased and more diversified contacts, they are being contacted now by more specialist groups beyond their ordinary constituency.

Those surveyed always demonstrated an awareness of the non-representative nature of the communications received from ICT-connected citizens.

People who use ICT are so few compared to traditional communications so I can't say. (EL)

Voters have a better understanding, but the problem is that older people don't use ICTs and younger are not interested and seldom use their knowledge (LV)

People using ICTs are not representative of the population (IT)

More citizen engagement?

Parliamentarians believe that their use of ICTs does have an impact on citizen participation in politics. But again, this does not necessarily mean more 'engagement'. They see that more people communicate with them, but because it's easier, not because they are more interested.

People communicate more with MPs when something's wrong because it is easier now than before (DK)

Better communication but do not know how much is "real" communication (sometimes people send you whatever... I try to stay polite) (BE)

Quantity is more but I am not always sure about the quality of the feedback (SE)

Not more engaged, it's just easier to contact your MP (DK)

Again, it is often pointed out that it is the 'already politically engaged', who participate using ICTs:

Some are more engaged, yes - active civil groups on the net. A large group still doesn't feel that Internet has anything to offer (DK)

People who are participating have become more engaged, but I am not optimistic in general terms. (Pt)

Sometimes: when citizens want to criticize they are very active to write emails - for example on the Government decision to make parents pay for school books...(DE)

There is more engagement among those who use ICTs - yes (EL)

Amongst those explaining the lack of engagement and activity of ICT-connected citizens, there is slight shift of emphasis in explanation between North and South. In the high internet usage countries (Scandinavia/North Europe), parliamentarians attribute the low political engagement via internet to the general public apathy. In the low internet usage countries (Southern Europe and some East European countries) the reason cited for low political engagement using ICT is that it is the ICT users (i.e. mainly young people), who are politically disengaged and apathetic, rather than the population as a whole.

On consultation

Representatives are using ICTs a little to consult their citizens. This they do mainly through email, and sometimes through the use of specialised tools or activities (including online polls, discussion forums and organised online live debate on specific websites).

Those that do consult using ICTs tend to have an ICT background and are generally more aware of the possibilities.

In general, however, parliamentarians are not consulting very often, only on very 'hot topics' and mostly when it is organised for them (for example by their party or parliament). Among those who do consult, it tends to be more with experts and specialists than with ordinary citizens.

One of the main reasons cited for the low use of these tools for citizen consultation is that MPs are sceptical about the likely utility, outcome or representative nature of these consultations. Furthermore, some parliamentarians expressed their fears of not being ready or able to handle the responses.

It's a good idea to involve everybody but how do you deal with 100 conflicting ideas? (Au)

You don't know who is responding (if it is the target group or not) and it is not representative of population (LV)

These parliamentarians will only seriously consider public consultation using ICTs when they know internet penetration and usage is high enough to merit the use of the tools.

Representatives closer to the citizen?

Perhaps surprisingly, many parliamentarians surveyed said that they feel closer to their citizens, following the use of ICTs in their work.

This was frequently attributed to the fact that due to the use of email they have more frequent contact with people, and also that they are dealing with their own correspondence more. Email correspondence in general, is less formal and one is able to feel closer to the sender more quickly.

Furthermore, representatives are not only more directly exposed to their constituents, but are also getting more personal responses from their citizens. Citizens, flattered to receive email replies direct from their parliamentarian, are replying in an appreciative and informal manner.

[Closer?] Yes - maybe because its faster to get to them and easier for them to say what they need (AT)

They know I am accessible so I think it has changed but again I think its less a function of me, than peoples' access to a computer (MEP)

Yes, if you take the time to read your mails and take it seriously the message is very often important... very often people put their finger on the drawbacks of a law (F)

I feel closer because a reaction comes much quicker and they can see what I am doing on my website (DE)

Closer to citizens, yes, because some have expressed that they are surprised to see that it was so easy to get in contact with me. (SE)

There are even examples of how the personal Representative-citizen relationship has become pretty hi-tech:

I receive SMS on my name day even from old people living in the mountains, and they like that you send them a SMS wish (CY)

Another subtle aspect to this 'feeling closer' is the opportunity that ICTs afford parliamentarians to have an un-mediated communication with the citizens, and more specifically to distinguish themselves from the party.

Many MPs find that their citizens know more about *who* their MP is, what he/she stands for, what he/she's doing and how to get in contact with them – the individual side of this, as opposed to the party line. Through ICTs, parliamentarians have more opportunity to explain their own (individual rather than party) points of view.

My home page helps them understand me (DE)

ICTs are positive or negative for the Representative?

The majority of parliamentarians see their use of ICTs as having positive impacts, on their role as a Representative. One of the main advantages cited was the potential for mass communication at a reasonable cost: new technologies offer a fast, efficient and broad reaching means of direct communication with citizens. These new channels allow MPs to inform and engage in dialogue with their citizens, as well as opening up possibilities for broader consultation. Moreover, ICTs provide opportunities to promote themselves and their political ideas.

The main negatives of using ICTs as a Representative are a direct result of this easy to use, fast and anonymous channel of mass communication: accessibility and rising public expectations. Parliamentarians are grappling with the high public expectations that their Representative is always available to them and ready to respond immediately, on any subject they want to communicate about. Add this to the increasing correspondence of the Party and the Legislator, and the spam and chain petition letters, and you end up with complete system overload.

*There are no negatives IF you know how to manage different tools and the information- you have to be able to manage your time the information flow (P)
Emails have created a significant change: the reactivity time has gone down dramatically and you need to be more organized (F)*

Main negative is that you have too little time to answer all emails, do your work, update the website, and inform people about everything (NL)

I still need to read about 100 emails a day despite the fact that my spam system has already taken 100 of them away (SE)

Many parliamentarians complained of an increase in irrelevant mail from citizens, who

...do not necessarily write because they have something very important to say but more because they can. Your MP is just a click away... (DK)

Email makes the public feel you are more accessible: they want answers (IE)

When my virtual assistant gives an out of office reply people get some times very angry as if I should be sitting there waiting for every email (DK)

We need a good balance between being open to people and getting their respect (BE)

We are still developing a culture or ethic in how to use emails as a means of contact (DK)

Its too easy to send an email to an MP. Even if it is not interesting you still have to take the time to download email and look at it. (DK)

Can't control the information you get in and I can't see how many people really share the idea [Referring to a petition chain email] (DE)

People are expecting more from me than I can do (NL)

Those Parliamentarians who cited only positive effects of ICT on their role as representative, tend not to use ICTs much in communicating with their citizens (as opposed to experts or special interest groups).

The MPs who only mention negative impacts on the other hand, use ICTs a lot as a means of communication with all audiences. Their main complaint is the email overload problem: too much email, spam and e-petitions.

A statement made by one parliamentarian sums up the situation:

Email is a promise that gets broken the moment when everybody starts using it. (AT)

2.3.2 The Party Actor

As Party Actor, parliamentarians' adoption and integration of ICTs have been significant in their relations with the political party. As can be expected, similar patterns exist for the Party Actor as for the Representative, in terms of usage of ICTs, increasing levels of virtual communications, as well as the positives and negatives. The increased use of ICTs has, however, had other less predictable consequences for the Party, for example new members from among the ICT-connected; the possibilities for increased internal democracy along with new opportunities for coordination and control.

While parliamentarians as Party Actors have been subject to the (ICT based) modernisation of internal party processes and communications, they are less conscious, (or perhaps interested) in the benefits. They are however fully aware of the opportunities, using ICTs, to distinguish themselves from their political homes.

There appear to have been major changes to their internal working, improving internal information flows, better disseminating of information from the centre to the local offices. The instant dissemination of messages and coordination of responses across the party using websites, email and SMS, clearly has not only internal consequences in terms of party cohesion, but also external- namely an impact on public perceptions of the political parties.

Many parliamentarians also claimed that ICTs have enhanced bottom-up communications, and even increased democracy within their parties. And surprisingly, it seems that in some countries the extended use of ICTs have helped to attract new party members, who operate more virtually than the traditional base.

There are still several parties who apparently don't use ICTs much internally. There are also some parties who have consciously decided to avoid the democratising possibilities of ICTs. The overwhelming trend is enhanced information dissemination and low cost

communications, driving towards not necessarily more participatory or democratic practices, but coordination and control.

Contact with party members

As expected, parliamentarians have quantitatively more contact now, with party members and even more so with party officials using ICTs, to the point where it replaces fax, letter and phone. But physical contact remains very important at the local party level. More of the improvements and changes in contact occur between the (parliamentary) offices and party officials.

The difference between the parliamentarians' relations with the party centre, and periphery is also evident in terms of content: with officials, email communication can often be substantive (e.g. on policies or issues) as well as the coordination and logistics (campaign messages, meeting planning etc.). Whereas with the local party, virtual contact is mainly administrative or logistical (setting up meetings, sending minutes or programmes etc.).

Parliamentarians claim ICTs have helped to improve information and communication flows between offices across their countries, and have opened up possibilities for 'everybody to be heard'. ICTs also seem to have brought more structure to the way information is produced and presented: distribution mechanisms and processes condition (homogenise) how information is structured and packaged in order to make distribution (albeit still from the centre) easier and faster.

The overall speeding up of despatch and response times has, in many cases led to more dialogue and interaction across the party.

Better contacts than before and more often (CY)

More contacts and we are getting better to coordinate at different national levels ... are also getting more feedback "remember what we spoke about..." (DK)

We are gradually evolving into having permanent conversations and contact with party leadership in region.... (LT)

Number or pattern of communication has obviously changed: for example for parts of the party that have to consult regularly, email has become the privileged means of communication because it is more efficient and less expensive (LU)

It was much more difficult before to get information and answers from party in Lisbon (PT)

Among those few who had not seen major ICT- induced changes in their relations with their party, tended to be explained by the slow take up of ICTs by the party either due to lack of incentive or opportunity, or a conscious policy to avoid more 'bottom up' developments.

Besides, not all parties are using ICTs as intensively for their internal communication. In many cases the main barriers are badly developed ICT infrastructure in the country, low usage of ICTs by members or more simply a cultural barrier to use of these technologies.

No, the party is not using the potential benefits of ICTs (reactivity, quickness etc), it is still very hierarchical. (FR)

We do not have many changes in contacts, we still use a lot of face-to-face meetings (IT)

It seems that the use of ICTs have helped the information to circulate more quickly and more broadly.

It was difficult to stay in contact with party and discuss issues due to the size of the country (FI)

Lot of bottom up communication (SE)

Virtual versus physical contact with party members

Typically, physical contact with party members is still extremely important for parliamentarians, but their party work is becoming increasingly virtual, especially for all logistical, preparatory and administrative tasks.

In some cases, ICT is used to lower the need for physical interactions between members, but for the most part physical meetings remain the locus for decision-making.

General communications and exchanges of opinion between party officials and grass root party members are taking place in parallel to, rather than replacing, the traditional physical meetings.

Discussions now through email list, but still meet physically, specially MPs (FI)

On parliamentary group level there are a lot of mails, SMS and face to face, on national level it is more virtual and on local it is both (EE)

There is more virtual, but the main means of communication is face to face (EL)

Top is more virtual than bottom (PL)

20 % of party members do not use ICT but many of these use the internet to find information but have to debate with their MP and be satisfied by your answers. 80% you never see at meetings because they send me an email when they have a question or send in a contribution (NL)-

With people I use email conversations and then meet them at conferences (SE)

On consultation

As Party member, parliamentarians might use ICTs for consultation more often than as Representative, but still not much. This mainly occurs through the use of email.

Many of the party websites, apparently offer possibilities for party members to interact, but some MPs use email for dialogue in parallel to these tools

Exchange of suggestions through emails: the emails are sent to everybody with questions and answers (LV)

I use a contact list to send information to members at local level to get them involved in primary process...email discussion groups - send out information and people respond (SE)

The Party also has a database of experts and I consult them when I need information through email and discussions groups (SK)

Better understanding of party members interests and concerns

Many parliamentarians don't feel that they have a better understanding of the interest and concerns of their party members, mainly either because not all party members are ICT connected, or the headquarters has consciously decided not to use ICTs for this purpose.

Never forget the digital divide: the only way to reach them is to get there (PT)

No it's still the top that is deciding everything - am pessimistic about the changes ICT could bring in the sense that it is a political will that is needed to change this (FR)

I would like to develop that part -hope to develop a more lively discussion on email etc. on some forthcoming issues in parliament; Would like to hear their opinion before going on stage (LT)

Are Party Actors better informed?

The Party Actor does feel that the rank and file members are better informed now than before, mainly since their parties are also better at making the information rapidly available. But again the will to be informed or to participate is more dependent on people's ability or willingness to access the information rather than the amount of information available.

Yes, before had newspaper, now have more, better and permanent information possibilities (PT)

Hope so, when compared to before ICT use, when people were complaining about not being fully informed... (LT)

As everything in life some are some are not. The problem is the amount and the ability of the population to use ICTs (IT)

They can be if they read the website (AT)

ICT impact on participation within parties

ICTs have helped to stimulate an increased participation within parties, mainly using email, websites and e-newsletters. MPs feel that the use of ICTs by party members has created a new dynamic: improved information and communication flows also mean better circulation of views within the party.

Yes party supporters are more engaged now; they can contact you so easily and know that they can express their views (LV)

Democracy is better than before (SI)

Has increased democracy inside party (BE)

Most interesting proposals come through email (CY)

Absolutely: you email something or give a call, you don't get together that often anymore... its less hierarchical (EE)

Yes because everybody has the possibility to contribute (FI)

Those who see no impact on participation among party members refer either to the limitations of low ICT connectivity among the population or the problem of party structures that do not make room for grass roots members in their decision making.

Top takes the decision because doubts about bringing out the issues with the base who does not have the experience or the proper level of education/ knowledge to express a valid point of view (FR)

Yes, it can have a positive effect but the problem with the rural population or elder people is that they are not internet oriented (AT)

Party responsiveness

ICT impacts on party responsiveness are mixed. ICTs enable parties to react more rapidly, both in communicating internal news or decisions, or responding to external events or media. It is not clear, however, that there has been an obvious change in the organisations' 'culture to respond'.

ICTs, and more specifically SMS, are however being used to coordinate messages (and parliamentarians speeches) so that 'the party speaks with one voice'.

We are developing now a culture where you check your emails before going on the train to check the home page for new information (DK)

Yes, its quicker as members all use ICTs (AT)

Yes, its easier, it helps to come to common views (LV)

Letters became emails and now we all have Blackberries; Now when a topic comes up, you are informed about what the party line is so you can communicate it yourself (NL)

The message is clearer and more participative (PT)

Yes (party response is quicker) but it is also dangerous because some people do not use ICTs by choice (or not) and have to be careful not to exclude anybody (SE)

In theory yes, but decisions are still made during face to face meetings (EL)

No not really.... But what has changed is that internet has brought more structure to the way of formulating information (LU)

Not really, what really works is to make communicating quicker and make decisions better known. Things are done the traditional way (PT)

Technology is not taking over how we communicate in the party –technologies are good for back office (UK)

Use of ICTs for election campaigns

Most Party Actors confirmed their use of ICTs in election campaigning. In several cases, this was due to competitive pressures. The internet is considered an *additional* tool, rather than a decisive tool in their communications strategies. Only one MP (Finnish) has been using the internet as his main campaign tool, actively using chats, bulletin boards etc. as a main channel of communication with citizens and using banners on commercial sites to promote his campaign.

The tools that are mostly used are personal website (16) and emails (11) and to a far lesser extent SMS (4) chat rooms or forums (3) and e-newsletters (3). These tools are mostly used as a new or additional medium to give more information about themselves and/or their party rather than soliciting communication or feedback from citizens.

Most parliamentarians update their existing websites for campaign purposes, rather than attempting more innovative use of ICTs. Only in a few cases are websites specially designed for the campaign and targeted to specific audiences (mainly for young people).

You use all the tools that you can (AT)

ICTs are not widely used because people distrust when a party speaks: the general idea is that the party says what ever people want to hear during election campaigning to get their votes and then don't keep their promises (AT)

I had a temporary website with information about me, were you can meet me and with the possibility to ask me questions (IT)

Had an interactive website in 2001... was used mainly by young people; They asked questions, suggest information or news that wasn't on the website... had a forum run by a webmaster to avoid dirty jokes etc. (IT)

Targeted youth with regular emails and electronic newsletters and launched a SMS campaign (MA)

Gradually everybody is trying to make the tools interact but still most important information goes through newspapers (EL)

I used these technologies but direct contact is more important (EL)

No I didn't use ICT. It is being used increasingly but is not particularly widespread or effective (UK)

Even if journalists and politicians are the least trusted, it seems that a politician is more trusted when a journalist is reporting what he said (DK)

Website and email address are mainly communicated through traditional means of communication such as posters, leaflets, letters and articles, and rarely through electronic means. Some use banner advertising placed on popular third party (commercial) sites.

I used website, reference to website or banner in the newspapers, but it was mostly passive (ES)

Used website to introduce myself and advertised the address through media and leaflets (EL)

A few MPs described experimenting with mass mailing as a means to reach a larger audience. The success of these tools is mixed: the response rates were very low and in some cases these emails were perceived to be spam.

The overall impact of ICTs on the electoral outcome has not been estimated or evaluated by any of the respondents, mainly for financial reasons.

Some feel that the effects are marginal, some see an added value in terms of contact with certain groups (e.g. young people). Visit to their sites do increase during campaigns, and especially when linked to cross-media promotion. But none of the respondents believe that the use of ICTs have produced any significant electoral benefits.

We saw during election time that the number of hits increased on personal and party site (LU)

People refer to things on my website so I have a feeling that can use it for campaigning (SE)

On the whole, it seems that most parties have grasped the importance of these new means of communication and mainly use them as a means of structuring the information and communication during election campaigning. The participatory elements are less prominent but not entirely absent.

Through the party website we send SMS on the day of the election (IE)

At the last elections, the party gave the possibility to everybody to discuss their program with them: 20 000 reacted via email (NL)

Other parties used blackberries so everyone could communicate the same message at the same time. (NL)

We opened our website to discussions... it was done because media started focusing on which parties used or not ICTs... it was interesting but not a decisive factor (PT)

My party created a special website where we asked people for their input to help them formulate their policy (SE)

Expected future use ICTs for election campaigns

Although most MPs intend to continue using ICTs during the next election, they do not have a very clear idea of what tools they would like to develop or use more actively. The level of

consideration already given to this subject is, rather obviously, linked to timing of the next elections, and to a lesser extent, the level of ICT use of during previous elections.

The fact that the party also provides campaign help (sites, activities, information resources etc.) does not seem to diminish the individual parliamentarian's intention to do something alone. In many cases, parliamentarians use their own tools in addition to those provided by the party.

Among those who have a clearer picture of their next election plans, two main objectives are mentioned:

- make more use of their own website and make it more interactive
- develop an email database of voters

Although "developing further my website" or "making my website more interactive" generally translates into incorporating more information about MPs views, photo galleries or film clips, there seems to be a need for MPs to engage in dialogue with voters or at the very least, to target their message.

MPs clearly feel the need for more engagement with people, and want to create their own networks although they often don't understand how to achieve this, what's involved and how much it takes to make it work and sustain it.

"I want to use more but I do not know how much. During the campaign you need to go where you get most for the money (DK)

Maybe a chat room to have direct contact with different people who's address I don't have (AT)

Could think about doing more structured chats and try to build up contact list of emails and send out news brief instead of having them having to ask for the information (LU)

I want to collect the emails of the people who voted for me to get in touch with them ...- it's quicker and much cheaper (EE)

To develop my homepage to give information and to chat to get contact with internet users so I can share my ideas about what I want tot do in parliament (DE)

It's to early to say, I was just elected (EL)

I'll see what becomes popular (PL)

Free phone, free video conference.... Local voting with video appearances from different places (PT)

I would like into the possibilities of fund raising (LT)

I would like to see more campaign tools developed because we need to have our voice heard (SE)

At the next elections you will find that the number of website will explode; I will not be using one because I don't have the money... will be using emails, not mass mailing and use party homepage intensively. (DK)

The party will develop new intranet facilities so we have increased access to information for campaigning and to better coordinate at all levels (DK)

Positives and negatives of ICT use by Party Actors

Parliamentarians see the main positive effects of ICT use, in their role as Party Actor, as the benefits of improved information and communication flows, cost efficiency but also in many cases, more open and democratic internal functioning.

It's easy to get information from the centre especially when you don't live in the capital (AT)

It gives the opportunity for people to say what they need (DK)

You can communicate with 250 people at the same time - a great improvement from before when everything was done by telephone, and costs were high (SE)

It's positive but must not forget that some people don't trust the technologies (there are security questions etc) or don't want to be online (SE)

Lots of positives: quick to communicate, to spread a message, getting response... negative: is less time to communicate directly which also has many positive elements (LT)

In the party there is a growing awareness that we need to communicate in a more efficient way – there is some work to take place (LU)

It's the quickest, cheapest way but not all people are ready for this (IT)

No negatives but the positives are to soon to say: are valuable once more widely used (EL)

Step by step it will become the party's communication channel but not for now (PL)

The flip-side of this, is the increasing problem of information overload. The information dissemination isn't always well managed: parliamentarians are copied in to an abundance of mail that does not concern them, and there is a tendency to use emails as a mass communication tool through email lists without any targeting of the recipients. A further negative consequence of increased ICT use, is the raising of expectations of turnaround times for responses.

Everybody expects you to know everything immediately and expect immediate response to their question; It's the same thing with parliament, people expect to read what is going on right after it happened (DE)

Mass tool: emails drops in all the time/ An MP has to make a decision on how much time we want to devote on responding (AT)

Too much information in a random way (DK)

2.3.3 The Legislator

Donning the last of the three hats, we examine ICT-induced changes in the life of the Parliamentarian as Legislator. It is this role which, according to most of those interviewed, has been affected the most by ICTs. From the conscious modernisation of internal processes and infrastructure, to the unintended consequences of increasing pace and quantity of legislative work, the Legislator is the most ICT-enabled of the three Parliamentarians.

Improved efficiency

The use of the internet, the introduction of new technologies in parliament, the digitalisation of information and, to a certain extent, of the legislative process are all elements that have led to Parliamentarians becoming more efficient in their Legislative role. This is cited, by the great majority of MPs, as the area where the impacts of ICTs have been the greatest. The increased

efficiency is noted by parliamentarians not only in their search for information, but also in the instant and wider access to sources and experts.

We don't use the library as before, all is on my laptop (MT)

Don't need to stay in an obscure cellar to look up something made 5 years ago (LU)

It helps a lot when I need to look for arguments, information etc when deal with special issues (SE)

Things get done faster (LV)

Without ICTs I wouldn't be able to do my work today (DE)

Yes it is easier to reach specialists, read articles etc (NL)

There are clearly negative consequences of this efficiency increase. Some parliamentarians mentioned that their dossiers are becoming bigger and more complicated, but also more short-lived. Furthermore, they have the impression that more legislation is being pushed through, since information sharing processes have all been accelerated. Predictably, this is one of the consequences parliamentarians are not so happy with.

Its going to fast, the laws go to quickly through chambers. The facilities of ICTs makes you believe that things have progressed because you can send easily, have hearings easily, make changes very easily (DK)

Are Legislators better informed

Most parliamentarians feel better informed in their capacity as Legislators. The same reasoning prevails, namely that of more information available and better and faster dissemination.

A few mention the problem of information overload and the related problem of increasing quantity and decreasing quality of information.

On the other hand, while an abundance of information exists, many feel they don't manage to use it. They still rely on the delegation of responsibilities in parliament, to tell them how to act or vote on a certain issue.

You goggle and become an instant expert (MEP)

I am much better informed (UK)

Not really. We are trying to force people to use new technologies (PT)

I believe I am but you have to be critical of the source (SE)

More topics but not necessarily quality (EE)

Even if I succeeded getting more information on the internet I would still not have the time to watch or be informed about what's going on [in the Parliament] (NL)

More inputs into the legislative process?

Most parliamentarians believe that the use of ICTs in parliament has had a positive impact on the ability of citizens and organisations to participate in the legislative process. Moreover, they feel that this has already led to an increased input from citizens and groups.

The reasoning is that since more information is available via the internet, and parliamentary processes have become more transparent, individuals or groups can, and do (particularly civil society) more easily react to an issue. This perceived increased input from outside takes place through increased direct contact with MPs (those dealing with the topic), or through emails or

petitions sent to all MPs. Although whether this increased external feedback actually has any impact, is recognised to be more of a political choice than one made individually by an MP.

In those parliaments with a liberal 'dissemination of information' policy, proposals from citizens or organisations might be circulated on a par with official parliamentary documents.

Proposals in the hearing are on the internet so if you are interested you can give your opinion, so we get many more opinions in regards to legislation (DK)

I believe yes. [-more citizen input]. We receive a lot of emails addressed to all MPs (EE)

Input is easier. The website looks a lot like the intranet: you can find all documents, give input, write to MPs... everyday I find 50-60 emails that have been written by citizens to all MPs... I respond to those related to my activities (IT)

It's easier to understand processes in parliament [now]... its open... ICTs are the most successful tools to make it open (LV)

I think yes. When something is debated it causes a lot of debates - we know about it immediately because we receive a lot of emails (SE)

Yes, now party positions etc are being discussed. People can see what's going on; that was not possible before (PT)

Yes because it is an open procedure... committees have the obligation to declare when and what will be debated and everybody is invited to present a proposal... according to the law all proposals have to be considered by members of committee... in some cases we get quite a lot of proposals from citizens (LT)

Maybe because have access to more information (LV)

Yes, can hear and read debates etc on the web (AT)

Not through the internet... every party has chats about actual questions but these are not used by legislators (DE)

Not really, it depends of the nature of the majority and if it is open to suggestions. It's not a question of tools but a political choice (PT)

Positive and negatives of using ICTs for the Legislator

In assessing the positive and negative impacts of using ICT on their work as a Legislator, the overwhelming majority of MPs find the impacts positive, most referring to the efficiency of information provision and exchange.

Only positives, it's a fantastic progress Its so much easier to work now because we have more information (PT)

Better informed and can have many more helping you to improve legislation (NL) (Can consult many other people – expert panels... etc)

Made my life much easier; I do not have to walk with a kg of paper on me (P)

Information search, its specially good to find comparative elements from other countries (FR)

Quicker to prepare development of a draft good conferences with my colleagues on website, emails etc and can get a lot of information from outside and people interested in a piece of legislation (LT)

The negatives that are pointed out relate to problems of technology compatibility as well as the speed induced by digital society (increased pressure of work and pace of life) and the use of ICTs in parliamentary work in general. Other negative consequences cited include security risks, or non-compatibility between services and tools provided by parliament and those acquired by the MP themselves, or by their political group.

We are only allowed to have Lotus Notes on one computer due to licensing problems so my secretary can not access my emails (IE)

I can't access the intranet without using the laptop given by Bundestag (DE)

Everybody has a Blackberry but it is not compatible with Outlook so we can't get our calendar (NL)

I can't use my electronic documents from parliament in other offices (LV)

The great concern of the Legislators is the 'speeding up' of already complicated issues, and linked, the rising expectations. The wide and rapid dissemination of information leads to the often false belief that parliamentarians are prepared and knowledgeable on a given topic – "just because you've been sent the information, or because it's out there".

The pace of the process, the easiness of all logistics does that changes are made quickly... you realize that nobody actually has given it a thought but on the other hand when you're riding the tiger you can get a lot of opinions or facts (DK)

Everything is being done online: this is negative because everything is going quickly – if overnight a new initiative has been sent out by a member of committee you have to print, read and react very quickly/... the response are too vague because they don't have time to go into any depth; the meaning of one word can change everything. (DE)

Unsurprisingly, some parliamentarians blame their institutions for the lack of forethought during the planning and preparation of their modernisation of processes and structures.

The House is making efforts to provide members with ICTs but they are investing all the money in technologies and not enough in human resources (ES)

Access to all European parliament databases are too dependent on national government to get information and they are always behind (SL)

Role most affected

Although the use of ICTs has affected all three roles, parliamentarians feel overwhelmingly that the impacts have been most significant in their legislative role. Explanations offered include higher ICT usage (in their professional capacity) among the main actors in the legislative process, and increasing digitalisation of processes that parliaments have undergone in recent years.

Legislator, because the transformation from paper to bytes gives the chance to have all the information at anytime and anywhere (AT)

The representative role is also considered to have been somewhat affected by ICT use, the main reason being an overall increase in the quantity and frequency of contacts with citizens. When asked about the roles MPs feel should be more developed, it is the Representative role where progress could or should be made.

Representative is where most progress is to be done (PT)

For the representative role; it depends more on me (LT)

Representative is the role that has changed the most but it could change much more (UK)

Part 3: Conclusions & Recommendations

3.1 Conclusions: The mobile Parliamentarian

In summary, in terms of use of ICTs by parliamentarians, there are not too many surprises in the results of the research. All of the parliamentarians, selected because of their 'early adopter' status, use most of the mainstream, publicly available ICTs. Everyone has a mobile phone (although not necessarily third generation), and email is starting to replace the highly popular fax machine as the main tool for written communication, although verbal wins out over written. Interestingly SMS has become popular among members of parliament, suggesting firstly that parliamentarians are now more likely to use the technology themselves (rather than just their assistants, on their behalf) and secondly that they will be potentially doing new things, and with new people e.g. taking care of more of their own logistical or organisational matters (as with most SMS users) or having increasing contact with certain groups – perhaps experts, advisors or voters. And of course, face-to-face contact is still very important and desired, both in and out of parliament.

Overall, there is a lack of strategy in how parliamentarians use these tools: there is simply an 'ICTs just add to my toolbox' approach. The outlook is still 'first base', with few insights into the full potential of using ICTs in their work. There is not much beyond brochure-ware on most of the parliamentarians individual websites, although this is not an indication of their level of interest in, competence with, or commitment to technology: several early adopters have no websites at all. They have few insights into the full potential of using ICTs in their work. Their approach is very broadcast-media and not particularly participatory or dialogic, using tools for information dissemination rather than consultation or engagement. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence of evaluation of the impacts or results of their ICT activities, and surprisingly, very little cost-benefit analysis, even among those who have invested in full-time webmasters.

A slightly more creative use of the internet, either of websites or other online activities, is still a rarity. Those who have weblogs or undertake online consultations are relative innovators. Experimenting using mobile technologies is still quite far off. There is also relatively little mention of participating in third party online activities, given the concern expressed over the lack of perceived credibility of information on their own sites.

Parliamentarians are not particularly ambitious or experimental in their *plans*, as well as their existing behaviour. Their 'wish-lists' consist of upgrading their websites or having tools and applications to solve current technical problems (e.g. spam management), rather than experimenting with new forms of consultation, representative or legislative practices.

The main drivers behind the deployment of ICTs by parliamentarians (and their parties) are efficiency, cost and broadcast efficacy – despite the lack of formal evaluation. The parliamentarians are realists in their assessment of the relative advantages of devoting more time and resources to online activity while their populations are still in the real (and often un-wired) world. This realism is observed in their low interest in and preparedness for online activity for their next elections.

Interestingly, the traditional and predictable North-South or East-West divides were not really visible in either behaviour, or attitudes or our sample. While this does not reflect the character of their colleagues, it might suggest some similarities (since homogeneity is far to strong) in our early adopter community.

So who is our wired Parliamentarian? In short, in their use of ICTs, these parliamentarians seem to be more 'mobile workers' than e-democrats (or e-representatives). This is exemplified by their areas of concern (personal safety, data security and confidentiality) as

well as their ICT wish-list. While this is a likely outcome of the early adopter status of our group, this seems to resonate with some of the research presented in the literature review.

The connected Party Actor

Within their parties, similar patterns in the use of ICTs are emerging: ICT is predominantly used for efficiency-driven information dissemination. It is interesting to note the perception that the potential for increased internal party democracy (i.e. more 'bottom-up' inputs) is sometimes stifled by the same enabling technologies, steered by political will in one direction rather than the other.

In terms of activism, ICTs have not obviously extended activity or participation in party life. There is not much evidence of the use of general e-democracy tools such as e-consultations, by either individual parliamentarians or parties. While some parties have experienced a slight increase in membership numbers through online recruitment drives, these new 'e-members' tend to have (and want) a looser association with the party, without deep involvement in internal party life.

Clearly ICTs, have a potential for increased cohesion and singularity of presentation of political parties, through a tighter and more rapid message control system. This could possibly lead to an increased strength and position of parties, in an age of decreased partisanship and political de-alignment.

Despite the perceived trend for parties to use ICTs to support their central co-ordination function, Parliamentarians do see the potential for more 'individualisation of politics' through the use of ICTs, with politicians being able to develop highly individualised and personal relations with audiences beyond their immediate reach.

The online Representative

The Representative in our study is shown to be the least 'transformed' through the use of technology, in terms of day-to-day work, but with possibly the most potential for future change.

With the ever-increasing amount of contact, and decreasing formality of contact with their citizens, (through the use of email and now SMS) our representatives have the feeling of being closer to citizens. Yet they do not feel they have a better understanding of what people think, or what their interests are, and neither can they better represent them. This paradox is clearly one of the potential areas for change.

While our Representatives still prefer face-to-face contact, most of them read and answer their own email correspondence. If this is a trend which will go beyond the early adopter set, it will clearly have consequences for staffing requirements and the internal organisation of parliamentarians offices.

The impact of ICTs on political participation remains ambiguous. The findings of this study point to an increase in activity of the 'already-active' (e.g. party members or interest groups) and possible increase in participation among those who might fall into the latent or potentially active category, but triggered into action perhaps by the convenience or anonymity of ICTs. There is little evidence of ICTs extending or broadening participation, as opposed to deepening it among the already active. This leaves our representatives with the impression that they are still 'preaching to converted'.

The wired Legislator

The Legislator is the most affected by the use of ICTs, of our three parliamentarians. While on balance this appears to be a convenient and satisfying development, there are several

negatives. The perceived speeding up of parliamentary life and the feeling of greater pressure from drowning in the sea of information overload, is paramount. This raises related questions as to the impact on the quantity and quality of legislative output, as well as the possible consequences for the legislators' ability to balance interests.

Further research questions

Our study has revealed details of how the use of ICTs is shaping the behaviour and working life of our political representatives – at least for a set of the early adopters. Whether or not these patterns will be extended to the broader parliamentary community remain to be seen. Still, it is pertinent to raise questions as to the consequences of these trends, sooner rather than later.

One obvious area of concern for parliamentarians, democrats and researchers will be the impact on democracy and representation, of the overall increased quantity of conversations, and the nature of it. With an already significant rise in level of contact between representatives and citizens and organisations (quite in advance of full internet penetration in all countries), we find ourselves in a situation where it feels as though everybody is talking, often at the same time, and sometimes with very little to say. Who is doing the listening? With such information management problems, who has the time to listen? There is not, so far, much evidence of an awareness of these (potential) issues, let alone the political drive to tackle them. Alarm bells should also be ringing over the repeated perception of the rising irrelevancy of citizens correspondence (with their representatives).

Furthermore, in a democratic environment, public debate, group discourse, open deliberation and a transparent public sphere are critical elements. The current trend of the pervasive and continuous individual (bi-lateral) conversation between representative and represented, and private bi-lateral correspondence, poses a significant challenge to these basic democratic requirements.

In terms of the relationship between representative and representative, the issue of trust is paramount. It would be interesting to see if and how this might be affected, over time, with the use of ICTs.

In the legislative sphere, more research could clearly be conducted into the possible 'speeding up' of legislative processes: namely the potential impact on content quality and productivity, as well as examining the possible effects on temporality or 'shelf life' of issues and political agendas.

The general lack of innovation and creativity in the use of ICTs by the early adopter parliamentarians, is striking, even in their 'wish-lists'. This sluggishness perhaps could be explained by an underlying lack of exposure to not just existing and emerging technologies, but popular culture and marketing and communications trends that are integrated into mainstream social interaction, and which most of their citizens have become used to. Furthermore, the parliamentarians' (and parties') tendency to regard and use ICTs as another (albeit cheaper) form of 'broadcast' media suggests they have somehow missed the point, or at least the opportunity, embedded in new technologies. Further research could help to understand whether this short-sightedness is by design or default.

There is a surprising lack of awareness of the wider internet world, as well as the risks associated with its use. Few parliamentarians are involved in engaging with third party sites or online events, or

There is still much less awareness of the potential abuses (e.g. via spam or in chat rooms and hacking of websites). It is important for parliamentarians to know about these opportunities and risks.

Concerns over the possible deployment of ICTs by political parties for increased control rather than internal democracy are worth investigating. A further analysis or evaluation

pertinent to parliamentarians would be a real qualitative evaluation and cost-benefit analysis of the 'improved information flow and efficiency' versus 'problems of information overload.'

A further analysis or evaluation pertinent to parliamentarians would be a real qualitative evaluation and cost-benefit analysis of the 'improved information flow and efficiency' versus 'problems of information overload.'

In direct follow up to this study, it would be interesting to further explore the changes taking place within the different parliamentary roles: Are they simply process or qualitative, positive or negative, sustainable or replicable?

3.2 Recommendations

This study has provided a range of insights into the activities and perceptions of a specific group of 'early adopter' parliamentarians, concerning their use of ICTs. While there are limitless opportunities for encouraging and building on the success of, and learning from the limitations or failings arising from, their use of ICTs, only a few are summarised below.

Representatives

ICTs offer parliamentary representatives the opportunity for better representation, in terms of quality and quantity. This opportunity will only be realised however, through a strong commitment to research, design, creation, and use of optimised processes, the cornerstones of which are:

- Better **management of public expectations**, formally setting their expectations in terms of possible areas and courses of action, response times, and likely outcomes. This is not a particularly complicated 'informational' task, and could be easily achieved by either individual MPs at the local level, or by the Parliaments themselves, implemented through a variety of on- and offline channels.
- Better **organisation and management of online relationships** – enabling parliamentarians to have regular, direct contact with their citizens, to gain the required understanding of their concerns and interests, and to successfully represent these interests and concerns in the policy and legislative arena, or otherwise clearly demonstrate why this has not been done. All this can be significantly supported through the conception and design of online/mobile applications, with strong training, monitoring and support.
- Create **more transparency in the representation process** – both on the part of the elected representative and their political party context, and on the part of participating citizens and organisations. The credibility problems experienced by parliamentarians in the eyes of their voters, rests in part with the lack of transparency of decision making processes – voters not understanding why policy or legislative proposals are on the agenda or not, and how they are formed or influenced. On the other hand, the parliamentarians surveyed expressed strong concerns over the increasing ICT-enabled abuse by spammers or organised campaigning groups, which overload or distort the representative process. The consequent mistrust from both sides could be alleviated using ICTs (among other channels) through the development of an almost real-time representation of policy and legislative decision making practices, demonstrating and explaining all inputs and quantifying or evaluating influences. Tools to better identify measure and display the depth and breadth of support for particular perspectives (or

lack of it), among the public or specific concerned parties, would be a significant improvement in talking this credibility problem.

- Clearly efforts must be oriented to reforming the **culture of representation**, moving the 'political representation' back into the foreground of social interaction, through opening up new representational channels and encouraging, guiding and supporting the participation of new users and groups.

Party Actors

Political parties are taking advantage of ICTs, only to the extent their competitive electoral environments demand. Parliamentarians could lead by example, (rather than being led by the limitations of their parties) to better integrate ICTs into their work where they can add democratic value.

- Party actors should develop **strategies** which encourage and support the **consultation, engagement and participation** of their members and activists. ICTs can be used to invigorate party democracy, supporting internal debate, and the expression of a variety of viewpoints, and the take up of consultation-based policy development processes.
- In informational terms, parliamentarians as Party Actors can clearly better **present, explain, broadcast and narrowcast** their views, policies, activities and results to their audiences, using ICTs. Some parliamentarians have already incorporated ICTs into their individual (and party) communications strategies but many have not, or not taking advantage of the customisation possibilities to talk appropriately to different audiences. These opportunities exist not only in terms of what parliamentarians are ready to develop themselves, but also taking advantage of existing third party opportunities or systems. Some parliaments have enabled their parliamentarians to set up 'party customisation' options in their outbound communications management systems. This type of co-habitation makes not only good financial or technical sense, but good political sense, helping to reduce the confusion many citizens feel about their political systems.

Legislators

Legislators clearly need to address their information overload problems, many related as much to questions of information access and management as to technological infrastructure – or the conversation between the two. In addressing this large and unwieldy area, some pointers, based on the concerns of those parliamentarians surveyed, may be of value:

- An examination and possibly **evaluation of the impact of** quantity, quality, variety, 'representativeness' and reliability of **information** inputs or expertise, **on the quality of legislative** output, would be useful. This would ascertain the nature and consequences of the problem, as well as assist in the development of a solution. This understanding is central to be able to manage, prioritise, balance and 'weight' information inputs accordingly, in decision making processes.
- The development and integration of **official consultation channels** into parliamentary decision making processes, will support the overall efficacy and democratic value their work. Such steps have been taken in several parliaments on an

experimental, ad hoc, basis, but these efforts, once plentiful, have stagnated, and learnings have not been shared.

- Furthermore, **improved transparency** of the work of the Legislator would not only help parliamentarians to communicate the status and results of their legislative work, but encourage and support the participation of relevant inputs.

Parliaments

This study has shown that there are many challenges and opportunities, raised by these early adopters, but experienced by many more, which invite parliaments to act.

- **Mobility – Remote (& wireless) working**

One of the main areas where parliaments can support their members in their take-up and use of ICTs is mobility. Parliamentarians complain not of their lack of equipment, but of the lack of supporting infrastructure which enables them to work remotely. This mainly refers to the lack of external access to intranets containing the essential documentation, groupware, parliamentary information, and communications tools connecting their offices. Further problems are encountered with the lack of compatibility of their mobile devices, when they return to parliament. This mobility applies to within, as well as beyond the parliaments, with several calls for wireless networking capability within their parliaments.

- **Spam and email management**

Of the specific applications or systems frequently suggested by those surveyed, spam and email management was uppermost. Spam filtering systems and technologies are already in place in most parliaments, but are considered far from satisfactory. While high levels of spam protection are undoubtedly required, no system has proven to be watertight. In any case, in a democratic context, multiple and various voices are assets to be cherished, not shut out. Therefore an essential part of the solution is assisting parliamentarians in their coping strategies – identifying best practice, and training their staff to manage what may indeed prove to be a necessary evil.

- **Information management, overload and presentation**

Parliaments are responsible for internal information management as well as external presentation of information. The information overload problem encountered by their Members inside, is as much a responsibility of the institution, as the confusion and lack of transparency experienced by their citizens outside.

Parliaments are already involved in trying to solve the 'overload' problem, but usually from a technical or capacity perspective. There is an obvious parallel with this situation: Wider motorways lead to more traffic. Rather than building better motorways, parliaments need to rethink their approach to information, better understanding what the essential informational requirements are, and reviewing strategies to obtain and guarantee access to this

In terms of external information provision, Parliaments need to be involved in how their individual parliamentarians and political groups or parties inform and communicate with the outside world. As previously referred to, systems which enable Members to have a basic standardised communications practices, with the possibility for group or individual customisation, will go a long way to help diminish the confusing and opaque nature of parliaments and governance. Moreover, parliaments should explore and develop ways of representing their activities, the considered or influencing factors and outcomes, in an accessible way, to their publics.

- **Consultation systems**

Building on the transparency and information issues, Parliaments should research and establish official consultation mechanisms and procedures for the various levels or stages of parliamentary activity. Many of the recent experiments in ICT enabled consultations concern committee-stage evidence collecting, or initiative-stage petitions, and feedback gathering for a post-legislative review of implementation. There is already a wide ranging experience among parliaments (world-wide) on the subject of (e-) consultation. This experience should be gathered, analysed and developed into a formal proposal for debate, and adoption among the parliamentary community.

- **Training**

Many parliaments are moving swiftly in the direction of a 'paperless parliament'. As the use of ICTs spreads within parliaments, so does the training requirement. The necessary training is not simply the 'how to use ICTs', but more importantly should enable parliamentarians to understand, and later take advantage of, the full potential of the new tools and technologies. Our study has shown a surprising absence of imagination in the use of these technologies (i.e. mainly process modernisation rather than innovation). Furthermore, parliamentarians apparently lack an exposure not just to the communications practices and opportunities to which their citizens are accustomed, but also the potential abuses to which they might be subject. With the use of new technology comes a cultural shift – not simply a process modernisation. Members of Parliament need more than a lesson in using Microsoft Outlook, to master this new environment.

Overview of key areas of recommendations

	Representative	Party Actor	Legislator	Parliament
Organisational	Better organisation & management of online relationships			More mobility – remote working Better spam protection
Informational			Evaluate information requirements in legislative process	Better internal information management
Presentational	More transparency of the representation process	Better present, explain, broadcast & narrowcast	Improve transparency of legislative process	Better external information presentation
Relational	Need to better adjust to 'Culture of representation' Manage public expectations	More consultation, engagement & participation strategies	Official consultation channels	Create official ICT-enabled consultation processes

Appendix A: Country Abbreviations

Country	Abbreviation
Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Czech Republic	CZ
Cyprus	CY
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
France	FR
Finland	FI
Germany	DE
Greece	EL
Hungary	HU
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE
United Kingdom	UK

Appendix B: Methodology

B.1 Literature Review

Sources

Preliminary research was conducted on the databases of European and American political science and computer journals and the websites of international organisations.

Bibliographies from these sources were used to cross-check for related sources and materials, which were then located on the internet or via electronic academic databases.

In addition, a keyword search of the internet was undertaken, to locate any additional sources, especially workshop and conference papers and non-academic material (journalistic, private sector or institutional reports).

Article pre-selection criteria

Over 130 articles, papers and reports were selected as the preliminary sample, on the basis that they dealt with interesting topics of high relevance for the study and many asked interesting questions which helped to frame the questions that were subsequently put to MPs in the survey and interviews. Of particular interest were questions used in survey-based empirical articles and papers conducted in different world regions on MPs and ICT.

Selection of themes

After screening the sample, three themes were identified, under which all materials could be categorised. Sources treating more than one of the selected themes were grouped accordingly.

Article review process

After grouping our sample under different themes, those that were most important in terms of generating specific insights to inform the study were identified. As such, papers/articles/publications dealing with the themes in a general way were less interesting for the purposes of the study than with specific insights based on empirical data. Close attention was paid to survey-based empirical studies in order to understand what debates were emerging between different authors in order to gain a understanding of current debates about ICT and parliaments, dis/similiar conclusions by authors and in which direction these debates were moving.

B.2 Survey

Subject definition

In the EPRI project Description of Work (and subsequent Management and Activity Report) submitted to the European Commission, the general themes of the studies were to include a study on "Awareness, understanding and activity levels of MPs" concerning ICTs.

A preliminary discussion amongst the project team, with expert input from Prof. Stephen Coleman at the Oxford Internet Institute who acted as a sounding board for our ideas and approach.

After lengthy discussions and numerous drafts of a survey outline, the objective of the research was agreed as well as the approach to be taken.

The objectives of this exploratory research are to shed light on how parliamentarians see the impacts of their use of ICTS on their different working roles and relationships and to get an indication of what further developments are likely or necessary to support the parliamentarians in their work.

Those selected as the target group are as far as possible technology "early adopters" among the parliamentary community. This group was not selected because they are

representative of the parliamentary community but because their situations are indicative of what is possible.

Background research

After lengthy discussions between the project team, a particular approach was agreed involving a survey and interviews as the most appropriate tools to gather the information needed. It was decided that the survey questionnaire and interview questions should be in English to accommodate MPs from 25 EU member states. It was also decided that the questionnaire would be sent by email and the interviews would be conducted by telephone.

Questionnaire and interview split

The aim of the interview was to focus and explore impacts of parliamentarians' use of ICTS on their different working roles and relationships.

The aim of launching a questionnaire was to collect a baseline set of data that would provide an important foundation for our study. In seeking to understand MPs use of ICT, hard core data was needed in order to form a picture about the overall use of ICT and the types of tools been used.

Questionnaire and interview design

A very simple and short questionnaire was designed and agreed upon and this proved to be a selling point in getting MPs to agree to participate. As far as possible, MPs could simply tick boxes or indicate a number. For the interview, followed a semi-structured approach was adopted. The interview were scheduled to take half an hour but time between each interview always allowed MP to talk longer if he/she so wished.

Respondent selection and recruitment

As far as possible, the project team sought to identify 2 'early' adopters MPs in each of the 25 member states of the EU. In view of time constraints, it was agreed that 2 MPs per country was both realistic and adequate for the purposes of the study. To locate 2 'early adopter' MPs in 25 member states of the EU, the heads of the Information Technology Department in each of the 25 parliaments were contacted and were asked to suggest MPs who they considered to be 'early adopters' of ICT in their parliament and second, to provide their contact details. The definition given of an 'early adopter' was an MP who they considered to be more advanced than others in his/her use of ICT tools or an MP who took an active interest in ICT-related debates in their parliament.

In seeking to select 'early adopter' MPs, the focus was on parliaments at the national level and MPs in lower houses of parliament in order to control for differences in political systems across the 25 member states of the EU. The contact details of 'early adopter' MPs were received from the following sources:

- 18 Heads of Information Technology Departments in parliaments
- 3 Parliamentary Committees dealing with ICT issues
- 2 Parliamentary Information Offices
- 2 EPRI conference participants

Interviews and questionnaire

The 42 interviews with MPs were conducted in English. 39 were conducted by telephone and 3 were conducted face-to-face at the EPRI Conferences in Stockholm in October 2004.

The interview guide was designed as a semi-structured questionnaire, reflecting the three themes identified in the literature review. To control for the fact that the standard of English spoken by interviewees was highly variable, it was agreed that a semi-structured approach was most appropriate in order to put the MPs at ease and to encourage them to answer the questions posed in as complete a way as possible.

This approach allowed MP to guide the conversation to a large degree, which was found to very productive in terms of the information they imparted to us. The main limitation of such an approach is that not all aspects were equally covered.

Data processing & analysis

The processing and analysis of survey and interview data involved 2 steps:

Survey

All survey data was entered into an EXCEL sheet and analysed. All answers given by MPs were analysed. In some cases, MPs chose not to give answers to all survey questions which had to be taken into account in the analysis. The main parameters looked at were 'type' (of ICT tool used), 'frequency of use' and 'groups contacted'. Correlations between the following were sought:

- Correlation between 'ICT background' (ICT committee membership or other relevant ICT role)
- Correlation between use of ICT and geographic location (i.e. 'old' versus 'new' EU members states)
- Correlation between the 7 EU countries with the highest ICT development and 7 EU countries (included in the survey) with the lowest ICT development. The selection of 14 countries for closer analysis was based on the e-Europe 2005 index based on the benchmarking indicators developed to encapsulate the aims and objectives of the e-Europe 2005 Action Plan, as informed by a 2004 INSEAD report on *eEurope 2005: a study of the degree of alignment of the new member states and the candidate countries*.

Interviews

All 41 telephone interviews with MPs from 24 members states (except Hungary) and 1 MEP were transcribed. In analysing the answers given by them, patterns in responses, quotes to underpin the responses as well as 'unique' comments were identified. To link the quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) data, of ICT in their parliament, patterns emerging from both sets of data were cross-checked.

Respondent profile

Number of questionnaire respondents per country (N=38)	Austria (2), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (1), Denmark (2), Estonia (2), Finland (2), France (1), Germany (2), Greece (2), Ireland (2), Italy (1), Latvia (2), Lithuania (2), Luxembourg (1), Malta (2), the Netherlands (2), Poland (1), Portugal (2), Slovakia (1), Slovenia (2), Spain (1), Sweden (1), United Kingdom (2), European Parliament (1)
Number of interviewees per country plus European Parliament (N=42)	Austria (2), Belgium (1), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (1), Denmark (2), Estonia (2), Finland (2), France (1), Germany (2), Greece (2), Ireland (2), Italy (2), Latvia (2), Lithuania (2), Luxembourg (1), Malta (2), the Netherlands (2), Poland (1), Portugal (2), Slovakia (1), Slovenia (2), Spain (1), Sweden (2), United Kingdom (2), European Parliament (1)
Age of MPs/MEP	2 under 30; 40 over 30
Gender	7 females; 35 males
Parliamentary level	41 national MPs; 1 MEP
Member of ICT/ICT-related committee	20 members of ICT/ICT-related committee

Appendix C: Questionnaires

C.1. Interview question Guide

EPRI Knowledge Study 1: Individual Interviews

The following interview questions relate to your use of new Information and communication technologies (ICTs) in your work

We will ask you questions about your role as a representative, a party member, a legislator, and about virtual parliaments.

IF WE CAN START BY LOOKING AT YOUR ROLE AS A REPRESENTATIVE

1. How have ICT's affected your relationship with your citizens?

For example (refer to the 2 –3 first points (frequency –N° & type of contact –virtual/ physical contacts)

Has it changed the amount of contact you have	Frequency
Or the number and range of people you're in contact with	No. & Type
Or perhaps you have more virtual or physical contact with citizens now	Virtual vs., Physical
Do you consult more widely (with a larger number) or more often (Ask for examples on which topics and how/ which tools used)	More consultation and tools used
Better Understanding of voters interests and expectations	Better representation
Are voters better informed (have a better understanding of the political process or your work)	More informed citizens
Are they more engaged – do they participate more or differently (Probe for communication tools used by citizen to participate)	More participation
You use different tools for different voter segments?	Segmented audiences
Are you more proactive (consult on more topics) now than before?	More proactive
Any tools you would like to further develop?	Future communication tools
How has it affected your sense of distance or closeness to your citizens? - And has it affected your citizens' view of you?	Distance to citizens
To resume, what are the positives and negatives of using these new technologies, for you as an "Elected Representative»?	

NOW WE WILL BE LOOKING AT YOUR PARTY POLITICAL RELATIONS

2. How have ICTs impacted on your relationships with your political party and your election (or re-election)?

For example (refer to the 2 –3 first points (frequency –N° & type of contact –virtual/ physical contacts)

Has it changed the amount of contact you have with party members	Frequency
--	-----------

Or the number and range of people you're in contact with	No. & Type
Do you have more virtual or physical contact with party members now	Virtual vs., Physical
Do you consult more widely (with a larger number) /more often (Ask for examples on which topics and how/ which tools used)	More consultation and tools used
Better Understanding of members interests and expectations	Better representation
Are party members more or better informed	More informed/engaged
Are they more engaged – do they participate more or differently (Using what tools)	More participation
Does the party react differently/more rapidly i.e. policy development, messages	Party response
Have you used ICT tools in your election campaigning? - What have the impacts been? - And how is ICT used in elections in your country? -	Elections
Have you used ICT tools for campaigning? What have impacts been?	Campaign activity
To resume, what are the positives and negatives of using these new technologies, for you in your «party political»role?	

IN TERMS OF LEGISLATION**3. How have ICTs facilitated/affected you in your role as a legislator?**

For example:

Affected your results or efficiency	Efficiency
Are you better informed – on what's happening internally (in the parliament) and externally (in society or industry)	More informed internal & external
Are many of your processes been computerised? (Can you elaborate?)	Technol. of processes
Changed the amount of input from your citizens or organisations into the legislative process	More consultation & more input
Changed the number /range of subjects you are involved in	No./range of subjects
To resume, what are the positives and negatives of using these new technologies, for you in your role as a «legislator»?	

Looking at the 3 roles (elected representative – party political role – and role as a legislator) which one do you feel has changed the most. (Would you like to develop it more)

AND NOW WE HAVE A SCENARIO QUESTION ABOUT VIRTUAL PARLIAMENTS**4. How far is your Parliament from being a 'virtual parliament'?**

For example, if following a terrorist attack or other event, the parliament building had to closed down for a period of weeks of months, how would parliament do its work? How much of your work could you continue to do virtually?

Probe for main constraints	Main constraints
Probe for what would need to make parliament work virtually	What's missing
Probe for if virtual parliament is something he / majority of MPs would like	Is virtual parliament something good

And finally.

Do you have any major concerns about using ICTs in your parliamentary work (ex security breach, spam)

Ex security breach, spam, e-divide etc
(Many aspects may already have been covered through the +/- aspects questions)

Or perhaps suggestions for technologies or developments in our parliament you'd like to see happen?

OPTIONAL

Also. What ICT related issues/subjects are of most interest to you as parliamentarian and what would you like to see dealt with in a (the) upcoming workshops and studies?

C.2. Questionnaire

EPRI Knowledge: Study on use of ICT by Members of Parliament (2004)

We thank you for completing this questionnaire, before the planned interview with yourself, or your Member of Parliament (MP). Please fill in answers in the grey boxes ().
Please return completed questionnaires by email (as an attached document) to benedikte@polpit.com or fax to +322 644 3775.

1. Please list the different places from where you conduct your parliamentary work (e.g. Parliament, local office, home...) and how much time you spend in these places.

Location:	Time spent at location: (Delete as appropriate)
Location 1.	days per week/month
Location 2.	days per week/month
Location 3.	days per week/month
Location 4.	days per week/month
Location 5.	days per week/month

2. Please indicate the number of staff you employ (e.g. secretary, researcher, advisor etc.) and where they are working (e.g. Parliament building, local office, home etc.).

Number of staff and type of staff	Location (their workplace)

3. The following table contains a list of communications tools and services. From this list, which of these do **you or your staff** :
- have access to and use in your workplaces,
 - how often do you use them?
- And c) how long have **you (MP)** been using these tools and services? (including the time before you were elected.)

Tools and services	a) Have access to: (How many)	b) How often you use it: (Please tick)					c) N° years (MP) uses it List number of years from "0-5" or "more"..
		Many times a day	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	
Phone/fax							
- Phone (fixed)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mobile phone		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Smart phone		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Web phone (VoIP)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Fax machine		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Pager		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Texting/SMS		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Computer/organiser							
- Desktop PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Laptop		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Tablet computer		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Handheld organiser (PDA)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Printer		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Web							
- Email		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Personal website		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Web log		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Newsgroups		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Discussion forums/Bulletin boards		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Instant messaging		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Webcasting & conferencing		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
TV/Video							
- Interactive TV		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Video conference		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (Please specify)							

4. The following table contains a list of applications and system options. Which of the applications and systems from this list:

- a) are available to you or your staff inside and outside of the Parliament,
- and b) are used by you or your staff?

Applications and systems	Please describe (product name, function, producer or service provider... etc.)	Have access to: (Please tick)		b) You or your staff use
		In parliament	out of parliament	
Virtual Office		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web publishing tools		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group working tools		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email & spam management systems		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information & knowledge management systems		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parliamentary workflow systems (e.g. legislation systems)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e-voting systems in/out of Parliament		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation tools		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information processing tools (e.g. Natural Language Processing)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify):		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Which software applications and systems do you (MP) use most?

.....

6. Please list the applications you (MP) have started to use recently:

.....

7. Please list and describe any applications which have been specifically designed for you (MP):

.....

8. What groups (citizens, special interest groups, party members, constituency office etc...) do you communicate with in your work and where are they located?

Group:	Group Location:
Group 1.	
Group 2.	
Group 3.	
Group 4.	
Group 5.	
Group 6.	

9. Which of the following means do you use to communicate with these various groups, and how often?

(Please use the same “groups” you have indicated in Question 8)

(Please use the following scale: 5=Many times/day; 4=Daily; 3=Weekly; 2=Monthly; 1=Rarely; 0=Never)

Means of communications	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Phone/fax						
- Phone (fixed)						
- Mobile phone						
- Smart phone						
- Web phone (VoIP)						
- Fax machine						
- SMS Text messaging						
PC						
Tablet computer						
Handheld organiser (PDA)						
Pager						
i-TV						
Video conference						
Online meeting, web conferencing						
Web						
- Email						
- Personal homepage						
- e-newsletter						
- Forums/Bulletin boards						
- Instant messaging						
- Web log						
Traditional						
- In person/face to face						
- Paper correspondence						
- Media: TV, Radio Press						
Other (Please specify):						

10. In your opinion, which 3 tools, technologies or applications have produced the greatest benefit for you in your work as a Member of Parliament, and why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

11. Which technologies would be most useful to you for accessing your parliament remotely?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Please can you complete the respondent information below:

Respondent (i.e. Who is answering this questionnaire):

Elected Representative Staff Secretariat Other

Name of Member of Parliament:

Party Name:

Committee membership:

Other relevant ICT role/position:

Once again, many thanks for contributing to this research.

Please return completed questionnaires by email (as an attached document) to benedikte@polpit.com or fax to +322 644 3775.

The EPRI Knowledge project is funded by the European Commission, IST programme. www.epri.org

Appendix D: Bibliography

- Akkerman, T. & Hajer, M. & Grin, J., (2004) 'The Interactive State: Democratisation from Above?', *Political Studies*, 52:1, p.82,
- Anttiroiko, A.V., (2003) 'Building strong e-democracy, the role of technology in developing democracy for the information age', *Communications of the ACM*, 46:9,
- Banducci, S.A., Donovan, T. & Karp, J. A., (2004) 'Minority Representation, Empowerment and Participation', *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66:2, 534-556.
- Barber, B. R.(1998-1999) 'Three Scenarios for the Future of Technology and Strong Democracy', *Political Science Quarterly*, 113:4, 573-589.
- Barnett, S. (1997) 'New Media, Old Problems: New Technology and the Political Process', *European Journal of Communication*, 12:2, 193-218.
- Becker, T. (2001) 'Rating the impact of new technologies on democracy', *Communications of the ACM*, 44:1, 39-43.
- Becta, the Evidence Team, (2001) 'The 'Digital Divide' A Discussion Paper', April
- Beder, S. (1994) 'The Role of Technology in Sustainable Development', *Technology and Society*, 13:4, 14-19.
- Bennett, C., DeLong, A., Forbes, P. et al. (2002) 'E-Government: the message to politicians' Changing Government, 7, Oct.
- Bentivegna, S (2002) 'E-campaigning in the 2001's Italy elections', Paper prepared for delivery at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 29-1 September, Boston.
- Blumler, J.G. (1997) 'Origins of the Crisis of Communication for Citizenship', *Political Communication*, 14, 395-404.
- Blumler, J.G. and Coleman S., (2001) "Realising Democracy Online: A Civic Commons in Cyberspace", *IPPR/Citizens Online Research Publication*, No.2 March.
- Bohman, J., (2004) 'Expanding dialogue: The Internet, the public sphere and prospects for transnational democracy', *The Sociological Review*, 52:1, p.131.
- Brunsting, S. & Postmes, T., (2002) 'Social Movement Participation in the Digital Age: Predicting Offline and Online Collective Action', *Small Group Research*, 33, October, 525-554.
- Caldow, J., (1999) *The Virtual Ballot Box: A survey of Digital Democracy in Europe*, Institute for Electronic Government, IBM Corporation. Available at: <http://www-1.ibm.com/industries/government/ieg/library/papers.html>
- Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (2004) *Online availability of public services: How does Europe progress? Web based survey on electronic public services. Report of the Fourth Measurement, October 2003*, Report for the European Commission DG Information Society, January.
- Cardosa G., Cunha C. and Nascimento S., (2004) 'Ministers of Parliament and Information Communication Technologies as a means of Horizontal and Vertical Communication in Western Europe' *Information Polity*, 9 (1-2), 29-40.
- Chadwick, A., (2003) 'Bringing E-Democracy Back In: Why it Matters for Future Research on E-Governance', *Social Science Computer Review*, 21, November, 443 – 455.
- Charih, M. & Robert, J., (2004) 'Government On-Line in the Federal Government of Canada: The Organizational Issues', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 70, June, 373 - 384.
- Chen, P. (2002a) *Virtual Representation: Australian Elected Representatives and the Impact of the Internet*, Research Report for the Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, December
- Chen, P., (2002b) *Australian Elected Representatives use of New Media Technologies*, Research Report, Centre for Public Policy University of Melbourne, 17 June.
- Cheney, G., Mumby, D., Stohl, C., & Harrison, T.M. (1998) 'Communication and Organisational Democracy: Introduction'. *Electronic Journal of Communication*, 8:1. Available at: <http://www.cios.org/www/ejcrec2.htm>.
- Cisco Corporation, *Digital divide best practices*. Available at: http://www.cisco.com/en/US/learning/netacad/digital_divide/academy_guide/
- Clift, S., (1998) *Democracy is Online*. Available at: <http://www.publicus.net>

- Clift, S. L., (2004) 'E-Government and Democracy: Representation and Citizen Engagement in the Information Age'. Article based on research provided to the United Nations - UNPAN/DESA for the 2003 World Sector Report. Available at: www.publicus.net
- Coleman, S., (1999a) 'Cutting Out The Middleman: From Virtual Representation to Direct Deliberation' in Hague, B. and Loader, B. (eds.), *Digital Democracy*, London:Routledge,
- Coleman, S., (1999b) 'Can New Technology Invigorate Democracy?', *Political Quarterly*, Jan., 16-22.
- Coleman, S (2002) *Elections in the 21st Century: from paper ballot to e-voting*, Report of the Independent Commission on Alternative Voting Methods, ERS.
- Coleman, S., (2004a) 'From service to commons: Re-inventing a space for public communication', in Tambini D., & Cowling, J. (eds.), *Public Service Communications*, IPPR: London.
- Coleman, S., (2004b) 'Connecting parliament to the public via the Internet: Two case studies of online consultations', *Information, Communication & Society*, March, 1-17.
- Coté, F., (2004) 'Parliamentary institutions and cyber democracy', *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, 23, Autumn, 23-26.
- Crisp, B.F., Escobar-Lemmon, M.C., Jones, B. S., Jones M.P. & Taylor-Robinson, M.M. (2004) 'Vote-Seeking Incentives and Legislative Representation in Six Presidential Democracies', *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66:3, 823-846.
- Dahlberg, L. (2001) 'Democracy via cyberspace: Mapping the rhetorics and practices of three prominent camps', *New Media Society*, 3, June, 157-177.
- Dandjinou, Pierre (2003) '*E-Parliament as a tool for fostering parliamentarian networks*'. Paper presented in the framework of the UNDP - West Africa Sub-Regional Resources Facility. Available at: www.undp.org/surf-wa/nepad/parliamentarians/docsen/eparliamenten.htm
- Dobell, P. C. (2003) '*E-governance: some implications for parliamentarians*', *Occasional Papers on Parliamentary Government*, 17-18 September.
- Doroshevich, M (2004) " Belarusian ICT market development future trends: a round table discussion at the parliament", 26 May.
- Edmiston, K. D. (2003) "State And Local E-Government: Prospects and Challenges", *The American Review of Public Administration*, 33, March, 20-45.
- EPRI, (2003) 'Final declaration- European Conference of Members of National Parliaments on Information and Communication Technologies', 6th Conference, Berlin, 7-8 October.
- Ester, P & Vinken, H. (2003) 'Debating Civil Society: On the Fear for Civic Decline and Hope for the Internet Alternative' *International Sociology*, 18: Dec, 659 - 680.
- European Commission (2004) 'ICT not yet radically transforming democratic practice in Europe finds research', *eGovernment News* 24/03.
- Feenberg, A. (1991) *Critical Theory of Technology*. Oxford University Press: New York and Oxford.
- Ferber, P., Foltz, F & Pugliese, R. (2003) 'The Politics of State Legislature Web Sites: Making E-Government More Participatory', *Bulletin of Science Technology Society*, 23, Jun, 157 - 167.
- Gascó, M. (2003) 'New Technologies and Institutional Change in Public Administration' *Social Science Computer Review*, 21, February, 6 -14.
- Gibson R. K., Lusoli, W. and Ward, S.J. (2002a) UK Political Participation Online: The Public Response. A survey of citizens' political activity via the Internet. Salford: ESRI. Available at: www.undp.org/surf-wa/nepad/parliamentarians/docsen/eparliamenten.htm
- Gibson R.K., Lusoli W. and Ward S.J. (2002b) 'Online Campaigning in the UK: The Public Respond?' Paper presented at the APSA 2002 Conference, August 29 - September 1, 2002, Boston.
- Gibson, R & Ward, S. (2000) 'A Proposed Methodology for Studying the Function and Effectiveness of Party and Candidate Web Sites', *Social Science Computer Review*, 18, August, 301 - 319.
- Gibson, R.K. & Ward, S. (2002) 'Virtual Campaigning: Australian Parties and the Impact of the Internet', *Australian Journal of Political Science* 37:1, 99 - 129.
- Gibson, R & Ward, S. (2003). Participation, political organisations and the impact of the internet (ESRC End of Award report L215252036). Salford: ESRI.
- Gibson, R.K & Margolis, M & Resnick, D. & Ward, S. J. (2003) 'Election Campaigning on the WWW in the USA and UK', *Party Politics*, 9:1, 47-75.
- Grönlund, A. (2003) 'Emerging Electronic Infrastructures: Exploring Democratic Components', *Social Science Computer Review*, 21, February, 55-72.

- Gualtieri, R. (1998). Impact of the Emerging Information Society on the Policy Development Process and Democratic Quality, OECD Public Management Service. Available at: www.oecd.org/puma/gvrnance/it/itreform.htm
- Haque, M.S (2002) 'E-governance in India: Its impacts on relations among citizens, politicians, and public servants', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Jun, 231 - 250.
- Heidar, K. & Saglie, J. (2003) 'A decline of linkage? Intra-party participation in Norway, 1991-2000', *European Journal of Political Research* 42:6, 761-786.
- Hoff, J. (2003) Presentation of the Final Results of COST Action A14, Governance and Democracy in the Information Age. Available at: www.oeaw.ac.at/ita/ebene5/e2-2a35b.pdf
- Hoff, J. (2004) 'The Democratic Potentials of Information Technology: Attitudes of European MPs towards new technology'. Forthcoming in *Information Polity*, 9:102, 2004.
- Hoff, J., Coleman S, Filmaier P. and Cardoso G. (2004) Editorial, *Information Polity*, 9:1-2, 1-4.
- Hurley, P.A. & Hill, K. Q. (2003) 'Beyond the Demand-Input Model: A Theory of Representational Linkages', *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 65:2, 304-326.
- INSEAD (2004) eEurope 2005 – A study of the degree of alignment of the New Member 8 and the Candidate Countries. Available at: www.europa.eu.int/idabc/en/document/3597/254
- International Parliamentarians' Association for Information Technology (2004), Final Report The Second General Assembly of the International Parliamentarians' Association for Information Technology (IPAII II) Bangkok. Available at: www.ipait2003.org
- Johansen, R.C (2002) 'An e-parliament to democractise globalisation: an idea whose time has come', Kroc Institute Occasional Paper 22:OP:3 November.
- Jones, K (2004) 'Parliamentarian staff and the professionalisation of Australian politicians', Paper presented to the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, Univeristy of Adelaide, 29 September-1 October.
- Katsanevas,T & Tsiartsionis, N (2003) 'A Brief Report on ICT Applications in Parliament and the Civil Service in Greece'. Available at: www.former.epri.org/documents/56_ENG.doc
- Kernaghan K., Riehle, N. and Lo, J. (2003) 'Politicians's use of ICTs: a Survey of Federal Parliamentarians', November. Available at: www.publicsectorit.ca/publications/CBStudy.pdf
- Kingham, Tess (2003) 'E-Parliaments: The use of information and communication technologies to improve Parliamentary processes', World Bank Institute, Series on Contempory Issues in Parliamentary Development. Available at: www.worldbank.org/wbi/pubsbysubject_informationcommunication.html
- Krueger, B.S. (2002) 'Assessing the Potential of Internet Political Participation in the United States: A Resource Approach', *American Politics Research*, September, 30, 476 - 498.
- La Porte, T.M., Demchak, C. C. & De Jong,M (2002) 'Democracy and bureaucracy in the age of the web: empirical findings and theoretical speculations', *Administration & Society*, 34:4, 411-446.
- Levi-Faur, D. (2004) 'On the "Net Impact" of Europeanization: The EU's Telecoms and Electricity Regimes between the Global and the National', *Comparative Political Studies*, Feb, 37: 3 - 29.
- Lilleker, D. and Jackson, N. (2004) 'Review article: Politics, Citizens and Cyberspace', *European Journal of Communication*, 19:3
- London, S. (1995). "Teledemocracy vs. Deliberative Democracy: A Comparative Look at Two Models of Public Talk". *Journal of Interpersonal Computing and Technology*, 3:2, 33-55.
- Louvin, R & Alderdice, J, L. (2001) Regional parliaments in the Internet area'. General Report presented to the General Assembly of Presidents of the European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE), Funchal, Madeira, 29-30 October.
- Lusoli, W. (2004) 'Politics makes strange bedfellows': the Internet in the 2004 European Parliament election'. Paper presented at the 2004 conference of the Association of Internet Researchers
- Lusoli, W. & Ward, S.J (2003) 'Hunting Protestors: Mobilisation, Participation, and Protest Online in the Countryside Alliance'. Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions, Edinburgh, 28 March-2 April.
- Lusoli, W. & Ward, S. (2004a) 'From Weird to Wired: the Internet and Representative Politics in the UK'. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association, University of Lincoln, 5-8 April.
- Lusoli, W. & Ward, S. (2004b). 'Digital Rank-and-File: Party Activists' Perceptions and Use of the Internet', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6(4), 453-470.
- Macintosh, A, Robson, E., Smith, E. & Whyte, A. (2003) 'Electronic Democracy and Young People', *Social Science Computer Review*, 21:1, Spring, 43-54.

- Malloy, J. (2003) 'To Better Serve Canadians: How Technology is changing the relationship between members of parliament and public servants', *New Direction – No. 9*, The Institute of Public Administration, Canada.
- Margolis Michael, David Resnick & Chin-Chang Tu (1997) 'Campaigning on the Internet. Parties and Candidates on the World Wide Web in the 1996 Primary-Season', *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 2: 59–78.
- Margoilis, M., D. Resnick and J. Wolfe (1999) 'Campaigning in the Internet: Minor versus Major parties in the UK and USA'. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 4:3, 24-47.
- Meeks, B.N (1997) 'Better democracy through technology', *Communications of the ACM*, 40:2.
- Meier, K. J & Juenke, G, (2003) 'Electoral Structure and the Quality of Representation: The Policy Consequences of School Board Elections', Preliminary draft paper prepared for the conference 'School Board Politics', Kennedy School of Politics, Harvard University, October 15-17.
- Monge, P & Matei, S.A. (2004), 'The Role of the Global Telecommunications Network in Bridging Economic and Political Divides, 1989 to 1999', *Journal of Communication*, September, 54, 511 - 531.
- Moore, Nick. (1998). 'Rights and Responsibilities in an Information Society', *The Journal of Information, Law and Technology*, 27 February.
- Murray, V. & Harrison, Y. (2002) 'Virtual volunteering : Current Status and Future Prospects', 2002 Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.
- Netchaeva, I (2002) 'E-Government and E-Democracy: A Comparison of Opportunities in the North and South', *Gazette*, October, 64, 467 - 477.
- Newell, J.L (2001) 'Italian Political Parties on the Web', *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, October, 6, 60 – 87.
- Norris, P (2003) 'Preaching to the Converted?: Pluralism, Participation and Party Websites', *Party Politics*, January, 9, 21 – 45.
- Norris, P. (2004) 'Deepening Democracy via E-Governance', Draft chapter for the UN World Public Sector Report. Available at:
www.ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris/Main%20Pages/What's%20New.htm
- OECD, (1999), "Impact of the emerging information society on the policy development process and democratic quality", PUMA, 98/15.
- Peizer, J (2000) '*Bridging The Digital Divide*', Open Society Institute, June 15.
- Perin, C. (1991). 'Electronic Social Fields in Bureaucracies', *Communications of the ACM*, 34:12, 75-82.
- Pinkett, R. D. (2001) 'Redefining the Digital Divide'. Available at: www.tcla.gseis.ucla.edu/divide/politics/pinkett.html
- Proudfoot, S. (2002) "MP's Got Mail... And It's a Problem"
- Rouillard, L (1999) 'Technology and simulation: For a participative democracy in the era of new public management', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, September, 65, 371 - 380.
- Römmele, A (2003) 'Political Parties, Party Communication and New Information and Communication Technologies', *Party Politics*, Jan, 9, 7 - 20.
- Sakowicz, Marcin (2002) *How to Evaluate E-Government? Different Methodologies and Methods*.
- Savin, A., Codru, V, Sullivan, E.K., Tanasescu, L., Boboc, M. & Botocan, M. (2004) 'Parliament. RO: Analysis of Romanian Parliament websites'. Available at:
www.edemocratie.ro
- Schartum, D. W. (1998). 'Access to Government-Held Information: Challenges and Possibilities', *The Journal of Information, Law and Technology* [cited 3/2/1999]
- Schlosberg, D & Dryzek, J.S (2002) 'Digital Democracy: Authentic or Virtual?' *Organization Environment*, September, 15, 332 - 335.
- Schrage, Michael. (1998) 'Technology, Silver Bullets and Big Lies' *Educom Review*, 33:1, 32-37.
- Semetko H. A. & Krasnoboka, N. (2003) "The Political Role of the Internet in Societies in Transition: Russia and Ukraine Compared", *Party Politics*, Jan, 9, 77 - 104.
- Shapiro, A, (1998) 'Is the Net Democratic? Yes -- and No', *World Media Forum*. Available at:
www.cyber.law.harvard.edu/shapiroworld.html
- Slaughter, A.M. (2004) 'Disaggregated Sovereignty: Towards the Public Accountability of Global Government Networks', *Government and Opposition*, 39:2,159 – 190.

- Snellen, I. (2001) 'ICT, bureaucracies and the future of democracy', *Communications of the ACM*, 44: 1
- Snellen, I. (2002) 'Electronic governance: implications for citizens, politicians and public servants', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Jun, 68: 183 - 198.
- Stanley, J.W. & Weare, C. (2004) 'The Effects of Internet Use on Political Participation: Evidence From an Agency Online Discussion Forum', *Administration Society*, November 36, 503 - 527.
- Stevenson, J. (1996) 'The Silencing of a Democratic Medium: Early Public Policy on Radio and the Regulation of the Internet. Paper presented at the Internet Society Conference: Transforming Society Now. Montreal. June 1996.
- Steyaert, J. (2000) 'Local Governments Online and the Role of the Resident: Government Shop Versus Electronic Community', *Social Science Computer Review*, February, 18, 3 - 16.
- Street, J. (1997) 'Remote Control? Politics, Technology and 'Electric Democracy'', *European Journal of Communication*, March, 12, 27 - 42.
- STOA (1998) New technologies and their contribution to facilitating the work of the European Parliament. Available at: www.europarl.eu.int/stoa/publi/98-18-01/default_en.htm
- The Hansard Group (2002) 'Technology: Enhancing Representative Democracy in the UK?'. Available at: www.hansardsociety.org.uk
- The Hansard Policy Group (2002) *Eight Imperatives for Leaders in a Networked World*, John F. Kennedy School of Government, August.
- Trechsel, A. Kies, R, Mendez F. et al. (2003) *Evaluation of the use of new technologies in order to facilitate democracy in Europe*, University of Geneva. Available at: c2d.unige.ch/int/OverviewInstits/Main_Report_final%201.pdf
- Wang, Shouhong. (1997) 'Impact of Information Technology on Organizations', *Human Systems Management*, 16, 83-90
- Ward, S. & Gibson, R. (2003) 'On-line and on message? Candidate websites in the 2001 General Election', *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 5:2 188 - 205.
- Ward, S. & Gibson, R.K. & Lusoli, W. (2003). Participation and Mobilisation Online: Hype, Hope and Reality. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 56:3, 652-668.
- Ward, S. & Lusoli, W. (2003), "Dinosaurs in Cyberspace?: British Trade Unions and the Internet", *European Journal of Communication*, Jun, 18, 147 - 179.
- Watson, R.T, Akselsen, S., Evjemo, B., & Aaraether N. (1999) "Teledemocracy in local government", *Communications of the ACM*, 42:12, 58-63.
- Weare, C. Musso, J.A. & Hale, M. L. (1998) 'Electronic Democracy and the Diffusion of Municipal Web Pages in California', *Administration Society*, Mar, 31, 3 - 27.
- Weber, L. M. & Loumakis, A. & Bergman, J. (2003) 'Who Participates and Why?: An Analysis of Citizens on the Internet and the Mass Public', *Social Science Computer Review*, Feb, 21, 26 - 42.
- Wellman, B. & Haase, A.Q. & Witte, J. & Hampton, K. (2001) 'Does the Internet Increase, Decrease, or Supplement Social Capital? Social Networks, Participation, and Community Commitment', *American Behavioral Scientist*, Nov, 45, 436 - 455.
- Wlezien, C. (2004) 'Patterns of representation: Dynamics of Public Preferences and Policy', *Journal of Politics*, 66:1.
- Yang, K. (2003) 'Neoinstitutionalism and E-Government: Beyond Jane Fountain', *Social Science Computer Review*, Nov, 21 432 - 442.
- Zittel, T. (2004) 'MPs and the Internet, Between the Rock of Technology and the Hard Place of Politics?', Paper presented at the EPRI Conference, Stockholm, October 27-28.

Articles in French

- Arhab, I & Basque, S & Bourgoin, C & Cyr, B & Lafontaine, M & Robichaud, D (2003) "Cyberdémocratie: Réalités et perspectives canadiennes" Département d'administration publique Université de Moncton Le 26 février 2003
- Dacheux, E (2003) "L'inaccessible étoile : la politique d'information et de communication des institutions européennes " analysis published on « Recherches en communication » under the title « Rapprocher l'Europe des citoyens, une nécessité ? », 2003.
- Publicityweb (2004) "Quelle est la visibilité des sites Internet des partis politiques Luxembourgeois pour les élections dans Google ?" www.publicityweb.com

Projects

Annex document: Scottish parliament audit on ICT / Internet related initiatives

Arizona State University, 'Digital divide solutions'. Available at:
www.asu.edu/DigitalDivideSolutions/
UNESCO, "Bridging the Digital Divide project". Available at: [www.
portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-
URL_ID=22261&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://www.portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=22261&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)