

Openness of the Library of the Finnish Parliament and its services to support democracy

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18.8.2014

IFLA World Library and Information Congress, Lyon



PARLIAMENT
OF FINLAND

The Library of the Finnish Parliament

- information on Parliament, law and society as mission
- openness and transparency
- purpose is to safeguard and promote free access to information

Open to all since 1913

Background

- Parliament Act 1906: universal suffrage and eligibility
- First-ever general election 1907
 - > growing political interest of citizens

Opening of the library to the public was a way of strengthening citizens' democratic rights.

Everyone is welcome

- MPs, their assistants and Parliamentary officials
- students, researchers, other libraries, public sector agencies, the Council of State, businesses and the general public

Services are available to all

- generous opening hours (57 hours a week)
- collection policy is to provide open access to all citizens (525,000 titles)
- loans and interlibrary loans
- information services
- customer computers



Parliamentary information supports democracy

- printed and original parliamentary documents
- web service of parliamentary affairs and documents
- documents from other parliaments
- literature on parliamentarism and democracy
- books written by MPs

The open Archive of Parliament

- all documentation produced in parliamentary work
- photographs via an online service
- unique collection of interviews of former MPs



Providing tools for managing legal information

- official material and jurisprudential literature
- collections include material on Finnish, foreign, EU and international law
- information packages on key legislative initiatives
 - > helps to follow up the legislative process

Helping to understand the society and politics

- large collection on social and political topics
- information packages:
 - Finland as a state
 - supporting citizens' participation
 - EU
 - European economic crisis
- collection include also documents of international organisations

Training the public to find the right information

- information management training open to all
- tailor-made trainings to specific user groups
- personal guidance



Social media presence

- Blog 2007
- Facebook 2009
- Youtube 2011
- Twitter 2013

Conclusion

Awareness of how the Parliament and society functions is a key requisite for citizen participation and active citizenship.



Thank you!