



IFLA Section Library and Research Services for Parliaments

IFLAPARL – Standing Committee Open Meeting, March 2021

Held virtually in two instances:

- 23 March 2021 at 11h30 (Amsterdam)
 - o SC Members Present: I. Watt; S. Bebbington; E. Valentine; I. Kelemen; K. Finer; M. Mazanec; C. Hiyama
 - o Section members and guests in attendance: Andy Richardson, IPU; Edward Wood; Neil Murray; Margaret Bywater; Steve Wise; Elisa Spahovic; Rafael Joseph del Mundo; Sanita Berznaska; Holger Scheerer; Leonor Calvao Borges; Anna Lee; Antti Virankoski; Asrar Abidi; Edina Fazlagic
- 23 March 2021 at 22h30 (Amsterdam)
 - o SC Members present: I. Watt; S. Bebbington; E. Valentine; J. Anderson; K. Zaal; C. Wellems; J. Silveira; Clara Bessa Costa; José-Maria Hernandez Vallejo
 - o Section members and guests in attendance: Noah Too; Lou Ocha; Evangelina Cabrera Portillo; Laura Mendez; Maria Vazquez Valdez; Fabiola Elena Rosales Salinas; Carolina Alonso; Massiel Morales; Mike Morden; Bousalham Aissat; Margarida Cabral; Jennifer Carmody; Nicole Cottrell; Augustin Lopez; Eliana Carridor

Agenda:

1. Roll call and Quorum (Secretary)
2. Welcome (Chair)
3. Guidelines for Library and Research Services for Parliaments – update (Chair and E. Wood)
4. World Directory of Library and Research Services for Parliaments – update (J. Anderson)
5. Elections and upcoming vacancies for IFLAPARL (Chair)
6. COVID-19 Survey – follow-up questions (Chair)
7. IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) 2021 (Secretary)
 - a. Details from IFLA
 - b. Proposed approach for IFLAPARL
8. IFLAPARL virtual event (Chair)
 - a. Option with IPU
 - b. Proposals for sessions
9. Action Plan update (Chair)
10. Reports from regional associations (as present)
11. Roundtable of Standing Committee members (SC members - optional)
12. Close of meeting

1)

Attendance was recorded through the meeting platform.

The meeting being held over two instances, quorum was confirmed after the second instance.

2)

The Chair welcomed SC members and all attendees to the meeting, thanked them for their engagement during a difficult year, and encouraged their continued participation in and support for IFLAPARL initiatives.

3)

The Chair provided background on the project to update the Guidelines for Legislative Libraries, last revised by the IFLAPARL section for publication in 2009.

The draft was finalised by Lillian Gassie who led the revision, and the Chair expressed the SC's thanks to Lillian for her excellent work.

The Guidelines were submitted to IFLA and returned to the Chair with some suggestions for revision.

[Note: to clarify the very minimal section on collection cataloguing ensuring it refers to the latest guidance available elsewhere in IFLA while note repeating said guidance; to address some repetition in the work overall, and; to do a general language edit. SB].

Meanwhile, there is an opportunity with the IPU to co-publish the work as with the Research Guidelines in 2015. We continue to look at the option to publish them subsequently in wiki format, with the intent to make them easier to update in the future.

Edward Wood of the UK HOC Library will take on the remaining revisions. Edward informed the committee of his approach: working with Sonia Bebbington and Alexandre Fortier of the Library of Parliament of Canada, the section on cataloguing will be reworked to focus on what is unique in the parliamentary context, addressing the benefit of custom description (taxonomies) to fulfill our role not only as consumers of information, but as information creators and organizers as well. Chapters 2 and 9 will be assessed for repetition, with information about the value proposition of parliamentary libraries added, and then a larger thematic edit will be undertaken. The new team is hopeful to be able to send the Guidelines around for comment in the later spring and summer, with August targeted for submission to IFLA. The Guidelines could be the basis of a session or workshop at a future IFLAPARL event.

Andy Richardson of the IPU expressed IPU interest and support for the project.

4)

Julie Anderson updated the committee on the WDLRSP. The Directory currently has poor uptake with only 20 jurisdictions recorded and the initiative is intended to improve uptake and make the directory more successful.

Julie has proposed to analyse the questions asked of jurisdictions and minimize/simplify them as a first step. Once the simplified questions are confirmed, the options for updating the tool will be examined, including jurisdictions continuing to update their own entries; SC volunteer supporting the entry of records where necessary, or; assessing if another data entry tool could be used.

5)

The Chair updated the committee on the ongoing elections process for IFLA, with particular attention to the vacancies on the IFLAPARL Standing Committee. The elections come after a governance review by IFLA which has led to some changes.

Anyone in the profession who is supportive of IFLAPARL and willing to work to achieve its goals is very welcome to stand for the Committee. It is not necessary for the institution or individual to be a member of IFLA.

Nominations (which require as well the written consent of the nominee) must be submitted by April 13th, 2021. A link to the IFLA website outlining election information was shared with attendees via the chat function: <https://www.ifla.org/node/93615> .

The IFLAPARL SC must have a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 members. Of the existing Committee, one member has completed two terms and cannot stand again; seven members have completed one term and may stand again. Those completing their first term must be nominated again to stand for a second term.

Ten vacancies for 2021 are advertised on the IFLA website for the Standing Committee – this is based on the maximum of 20, which it is not compulsory to reach. on

The officer roles of Chair, Secretary, and Information Coordinator are elected from among the SC members in office for the 2021-23 period, so members interested in those roles must first be named to the SC.

As a consequence of the governance review, the role of Corresponding Member in IFLA is abolished. There will be an option to co-opt members after the election period if the maximum of 20 is not reached and if the Committee and IFLA considers it necessary to assure a diversity of representation.

The Chair repeated the invitation to all interested in the profession to stand for the Committee.

6)

The Chair asked if the SC still wished to repeat the survey of responses to the global pandemic, as decided at previous meetings. The 2020 survey was the basis of our very successful inaugural virtual event in December 2020. The survey and virtual event link on the IFLA website was shared with attendees via the chat function: <https://www.ifla.org/node/93449> .

If the SC confirmed their decision then the proposed timetable was to prepare the survey in April and run it in May-July, with results available for the virtual event already foreseen for September. This time around, the SC may have access to a survey tool provided by IFLA. It may be possible to take a more sophisticated approach.

The proposal to repeat the survey exercise was supported by SC members and feedback from the wider audience was positive: members felt it was useful to share experiences and expressed willingness to support the initiative. One attendee stressed the need for caution in interpreting the responses as many services were still in the crisis and could not reach final conclusions on its impact – the Chair acknowledged this concern but the benefits of sharing experience here and now, rather than running a survey when the crisis was over, outweighed the risk.

Potential areas for survey questions include:

- Reviewing the impact one year on
- Staff management and mental health issues
- Issues around resources and facilities
- Changes in working and service models, esp. telework/remote work and the service's digital offering

Volunteers to support survey design and delivery include F. Fitsilis, J. Anderson, and J. Silveira.

7)

It is confirmed that IFLA WLIC 2021 will be an online offering. [Post-meeting note: the dates are now confirmed as 17-19 August 2021].

The online conference will necessarily be more modest than the in-person offering. As a result, sections will have access to one conference session with a maximum time limit of 45 minutes. Sessions must also align closely with one of the themes set out by IFLA and must follow one of the formats they propose. Information on the conference planning from the IFLA website was shared with attendees via the chat function <https://www.ifla.org/node/93537>.

IFLAPARL had prepared and shared with SC members a call for presentations requesting case studies related to the theme of ENABLE, though was advised by IFLA to have the session approved before sending out the call. The proposed approach for IFLAPARL session development is to invite speakers (maximum of 3 or 4, based on the time limit) rather than issue a general call. The starting point for invitations is proposed to be submissions received for Dublin a year ago, based on the similarity of the theme of evidence.

Additional invitation will be issued for a longer IFLAPARL event to take place after the WLIC conference.

This approach was supported by SC members.

8)

The Chair has explored the option of an event in partnership with the IPU in late September or early October 2021 and asked the Committee to give this proposal its support. The initiative was prompted by the lack of traditional pre-conference/satellite meetings from August 2019 to August 2022. He noted also the limited scope for IFLAPARL in the WLIC 2021. IFLAPARL required more activity to remain effective as a group 2019-22. Hosting and promotion by the IPU also represented a significant opportunity to reach new audiences.

Andy Richardson of the IPU expresses the organization's full support for the initiative. They are able to address mechanics such as registration, meeting platform, and interpretation services for some sessions, and to provide virtual event expertise, including advice on developing engaging and varied virtual programming.

The Chair acknowledged that the proposal developed with IPU is larger in scope than what the SC originally considered for an event in September; however, with the support provided by IPU, and our focus therefore on content development, perhaps the SC would see this as an advantageous change.

Some program space would be provided to the IPU to present themselves and their initiatives, and IFLAPARL would be responsible for the remainder of the programming, aligned with our expertise in Library and Research Services for Parliaments. The event would also give IFLAPARL broad exposure to IPU member states.

One question was raised from a member requesting background on the IPU and how they are funded. Andy Richardson confirmed that the IPU has 179 member countries, and is an organization devoted to promoting and strengthening democracy and sharing best practices across member states. He provided some examples of work they have undertaken including the e-Parliament report, the PARLINE database, and previous partnerships with IFLAPARL. IPU is funded to 70% through membership fees and the remaining 30% through international development programming grants / NGO support:

<https://www.ipu.org/about-us> .

Further discussion was extremely positive, and the committee supports the proposal.

The initiative has been notified to IFLA HQ which is supportive.

9)

An update to the Committee's Action Plan was provided by the Chair. In addition to the items already covered through the meeting agenda, IFLAPARL continues to work on outreach to regional associations and parliamentary strengthening organizations. It was noted that an event in partnership with IPU would be helpful in promoting IFLAPARL, the benefits of membership, and its initiatives.

It was also noted that although IFLAPARL may not have made as much progress on some planned initiatives, the work undertaken in response to the pandemic, including the COVID forum on Basecamp, the survey, and the December virtual event was not planned and represents good and significant work.

Sections were recently requested by IFLA to update their Action Plans; IFLAPARL has submitted its update.

10) [Maybe the agenda headings would be handy, as this looks like a continuation of the last point]

APLIC: the Association of Parliamentary Libraries in Canada remains active in its collective reference functions, newsletters, and regular meetings of the Executive. The conference for 2020, intended to be hosted by Québec, was cancelled, and the conference for 2021 is proposed to be a modest virtual offering, likely in September 2021.

ECPRD: the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation has undertaken similar work to IFLAPARL related to understanding how member services have responded to the global pandemic. This was explored in an online seminar co-hosted by the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS). In June 2021 ECPRD is going to organize an online seminar and is hopeful that it can host a physical seminar in Israel in October and will report on these events in a future meeting.

Janice Silveira welcomed and introduced to the IFLAPARL meeting her colleagues from the South American and Caribbean Parliamentary Library network, including Fabiola, who helps lead the network. The attendees were welcomed by the IFLAPARL Officers. As proposed in the letter from IFLAPARL to the regional associations, the network is interested in obtaining a Basecamp site for their own communication, which was provided by the Information Coordinator. The Network has interest in expanding, potentially beyond parliamentary libraries, and has hosted a virtual event, with more to come.

11)

Roundtable of SC members was managed by exception, no additional items or comments from members.

12)

The Chair closed each instance of the meeting with a reminder of upcoming election deadlines, encouragement to stand for the Committee, and expressing appreciation to all attendees for their participation and continued engagement.

The first instance of the meeting closed at 12h34; the second at 23h36.