



Service of the Parliament of Montenegro

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PARLIAMENT – EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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Foreword

Communication represents *conditio sine qua non* of human life and social order. As a matter of fact, it is the basic social process and functional precondition of all social systems. According to communicologist France Vreg, communication is the core element of human understanding, cooperation and overall engagement in the society.¹ Therefore, communication can be used for exchange of information, knowledge and experience among participants, which is crucially important in order for every institution to achieve success, advance and attain its goals. Hence, it occupies a central place, because management, goals, plans and development of an institution are determined by the quality of communication. Aside from internal communication in the institution, communication with the public and other organizations, i.e. external communication is also very important.

The right to free access to information is guaranteed to citizens by international and national legislation. Therefore, democratic parliaments dedicate a great deal of attention to external communication, i.e. seeking to become as much transparent and open to public as possible. As stated in the document “Parliament and Democracy in the twenty-first century”², informing the public about the work of parliament is not only a responsibility of independent media, but also of parliaments. Over the course of past few years, parliaments from around the world have invested great efforts into informing and educating the public about their activities and grabbing their interest and attention. For this purpose, they draft strategies in order to inform the public about the work of parliament and seek to cooperate actively and closely with the civil society, for the purpose of finding solutions to problems faced by the state and improving the quality of legislation. In addition, most parliaments seek to increase the interest of citizens in their work through educational activities at school and faculty level and the level of parliament. In addition to common mechanisms of communication with the public (visits to parliament, bulletins, broadcasting of sittings, etc.), ongoing development of new forms of communication, such as the internet largely contribute to the achievement of the aforementioned goals.

Among many important goals envisaged by the Action Plan of the Parliament of Montenegro during the period from December 2010 to November 2011 is also further improvement of transparency of the Parliament and its communication with the public. One of the steps realized in the process was the gathering of information on the manner of definition of this issue in other parliaments, which organized, systematized and presented in this document in a table format.

¹Zoran Tomić, *Pojam komunikacije*, available at http://www.zorantomiac.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=145:pojamkomunikacije&catid=42:politicko-komuniciranje&Itemid=94

² David Beetham, *Parlament i demokratija u XXI vijeku: Vodič za dobru praksu*, UNDP Srbija i European Agency for Reconstruction, 2008.

Section for Research, Analysis, Library and Documentation gathered information through the ECPRD Network³, by collecting replies regarding the external communication issue from thirty chambers: **Austria** - Österreichisches Parlament, **Belgium** – Senate, **Belgium** - Chamber of Deputies, **Denmark** - Folketinget, **Estonia** – Riigikogu, European Parliament, **France** - Assemblée nationale, **Greece** - Hellenic Parliament, **the Netherlands** – Tweede Kamer, **Croatia** – Hrvatski sabor, **Ireland** - Houses of the Oireachtas, **Iceland** – Althingi, **Italy** - Camera dei deputati, **Israel** – Knesset, **Finland** – Eduskunta, **Lithuania** – Seimas, **Macedonia** – Sobranie, **Norway** – Stortinget, **Germany** – Bundestag, **Germany** – Bundesrat, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, **Poland** – Senat, **Portugal** - Assembleia da Republica, **Romania** – Camera Deputatilor, **Russia** – Duma, **Slovenia** – Državni zbor, **Spain** – Senate, **Switzerland** – Federal Assembly, **Sweden** – Riksdag and **Turkey** – Grand National Assembly. The summary of replies prepared by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, which is available on the ECPRD Network, also served as a data source.

The research is based on the following variables:

1. Strategic approach to external communication and types of documents dealing with this issue in parliament;
2. Organizational units within the parliamentary administration dealing with external communication;
3. Mechanisms of external communication: activities for informing the public with the work of parliament, educational activities and modern mechanisms of external communication.

The complete document in Montenegrin language can be found at: <http://www.skupstina.me/images/dokumenti/biblioteka-istrazivanje/1%20Istrazivanje%20Eksterna%20Komunikacija%20-%20septembar%202011.pdf>

³ ECPRD Request No. 1294 *Public Engagement by Parliament*, November 2009.