



#ParlAmericasOPN

THEMES: Legislative openness, transparency, accountability, citizen participation, ethics and probity, accessible and inclusive language.

DATE: March 24, 2023

LOCATION: Virtual

PARTICIPANTS: More than 100 parliamentary staff and representatives of international organizations and academia from 11 Latin American countries.



This activity is aligned with SDG 16.



5th Meeting of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament

The 5th Meeting of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament addressed the importance of using inclusive and accessible language in legislative work to foster informed and empowered citizen participation in parliamentary processes. This communication style seeks to ensure that the content, structure, and design of information published by parliaments can be accessed, understood, and reused by all.

In addition, participants presented on the progress that has been made on applying legislative openness standards in parliamentary committees.

Based on the presentation on the theoretical and technical elements of plain language for the purposes of drafting laws and other legislative instruments, participants exchanged experiences and good practices with regard to how these efforts have led to a better relationship between parliaments and the public in Latin America.



Agenda Highlights

Opening remarks:

- **Luis Rojas** (Chile), Secretary General of Constitutional Process and General Coordinator of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament

Panellists:

- **Rocío Noriega** (Chile), Advisor to the Bicameral Group on Transparency
- **Cristiane Brum Bernardes** (Brazil), International Parliament Engagement Network (IPEN) and Professor and Researcher, Master's Program in Legislative Affairs, Chamber of Deputies
- **Betsy Perafán Liévano**, Academic Director, Faculty of Law, Universidad de los Andes
- **Andrea González Somellera** (Mexico), Advisor to the General Secretariat, Chamber of Deputies

Moderators:

- **Sulma Campos Mata** (Mexico), Head of the Technical Unit for Gender Equality of the Senate and General Coordinator of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Gender Equality
- **Henrique Porath** (Brazil), Coordinator of the Innovation Support Center (Nainova), Federal Senate

Closing remarks :

- **Nelly González** (Panama), Legal Advisor to the Presidency of the National Assembly and Regional Coordinator for Central America of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament

KEY CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING:

- Addressing the various theoretical and technical aspects of using clear, accessible, and inclusive language allows for improved understanding of the critical importance and impact it can have on reshaping the relationship between parliaments and the public.
- Accessible and inclusive language is a tool for improving the accessibility, transparency, and understanding of laws by all persons, regardless of their education, origin, gender, or level of vulnerability.
- Promoting the use of accessible and inclusive language enables the exploration and evaluation of new mechanisms in order to foster and strengthen informed and empowered citizen participation in parliamentary processes and in parliaments' various working groups.
- Strategies to adopt the use of accessible and inclusive language should be approached from an intersectional perspective, whereby technical parliamentary units can contribute their experience and improve how information about legislative processes is communicated when interacting with the public.
- The use of accessible and inclusive language has a significant impact on the open parliament agenda, facilitating efforts under the four pillars of legislative openness. It makes quality information accessible to the public, encourages greater citizen participation, and promotes collaborative relationships between the public and parliamentarians.
- Parliaments in the hemisphere are making progress towards implementing policies and strategies that promote the use of plain language in an incremental and progressive manner, including in the publication of information in the languages spoken by the region's Indigenous populations.



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