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PANEL 1

**TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY
AND DEMOCRATIZATION**

PARLIAMENTARY TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AS MECHANISMS FOR STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF ALBANIA

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Enkeleda Olldashi, University of Tirana

This academic paper explores the crucial role of parliamentary transparency and accountability as key mechanisms for enhancing democracy and improving governance quality. Transparency and accountability are fundamental components that help build public trust in democratic institutions and combat corruption. These mechanisms are essential for ensuring that elected officials are held accountable for their actions and that parliamentary processes and decisions are open and clear to the public.

In Albania, recent reforms have included increasing transparency in campaign finances and strengthening institutional oversight. However, issues such as corruption and ineffective oversight continue to pose significant problems. This paper provides a detailed analysis of current practices and challenges in Albania, offering recommendations based on international best practices for enhancing parliamentary transparency and accountability. Recommendations include strengthening laws on official accountability and improving the effectiveness of oversight institutions. A central aspect of the study is the development of technology platforms for transparency. Technology platforms, such as open data systems and public expenditure tracking platforms, are crucial for enhancing access to information and strengthening accountability. These platforms can assist in real-time information dissemination, monitoring institutional actions and decisions, and fostering citizen engagement. However, challenges such as the lack of technological infrastructure and limited access to technology for the population need to be addressed to maximize benefits.

This study contributes to provide a solid foundation for implementing reforms that could help build a more robust and accountable parliamentary system in Albania.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION: THE CASE OF ALBANIA AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT BASED ON BEST EUROPEAN PRACTICES

Prof. Assoc. Dr. Bojana Hajdini & Dr. Heliona Miço Bellani, Epoka University

Monitoring the implementation of legislation, or its ex post evaluation, should be regarded as a crucial phase of the legislative process. Although this process provides valuable data on the effectiveness and efficiency of legislative implementation, it remains an underutilized tool. Since 2017, many European countries have started improving their practices and methodologies for ex post legislative evaluation. Initially considered a primary responsibility of the executive branch, this process increasingly involves the legislative branch in many states today.

Since 2019, Albania, through amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, has incorporated ex post evaluation for laws that transpose European Union directives. In this process, led by the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration, the government is required to provide data on the implementation of the law. Although the Rules of Procedure mandate that the Committee prepare an annual report on the ex post evaluation of transposed legislation and present it to other parliamentary committees, such a practice has not yet been established.

Given this context, the paper aims to provide an overview of Albania's regulatory framework for ex post evaluation of legislation, focusing on the role of Parliament in this process. As Albania currently has a regulatory framework in its early implementation stages, the goal is to identify best practices from European or regional states and provide recommendations for improving the regulatory framework, practices, or methodologies employed in this process.

To achieve this objective, the study employs research, analytical, descriptive, and comparative methods to identify the reasons for the ineffective implementation of this process and to develop recommendations for future improvements.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN ENSURING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE, WHAT WENT WRONG?

Erjon Dervishi, Albanian University & A2CNN

The institution of Parliament has a crucial role in promoting democracy, human rights and a good governance. If we analyse the role of Parliament during history there are many times when the institution of Parliament has played a crucial role in order to have a good, accountable and responsibility government. But sometimes during history and especially after 1990, in Albania the institution of Parliament has played an inefficient role for democracy and especially for government. But what went wrong? My topic focuses on the tools that Parliament uses to promote an effective governance, accountable and responsibility. I will discuss based on arguments and research for the role of Parliament as a main institution of democracy. Also, in the light of archival documents and Albanian press, I will argue the role of Albanian diaspora to achieve a better Parliament with new figures and also with new perspectives. Effective governance requires input from a broad range of stakeholders. Parliaments can facilitate public consultations, hearings, and debates, allowing citizens, interest groups, and experts to contribute evidence and perspectives that might not otherwise be considered. This helps in crafting policies that are more inclusive and reflective of diverse viewpoints.

YOUTH WORKERS: ADVOCACY AND POLICY-MAKING

Prof. Asoc. Dr. Nevila Koçollari (Furxhiu)& Asunta Toromëni, University of Tirana

The involvement of youth workers in parliamentary processes, in shaping youth policies, constitutes an axial aspect of their role. Youth workers leverage their practical expertise and direct engagement with youth to advocate for policies that effectively address the needs of this demographic (McGregor and Shulman, 2012). In the context of raising awareness about youth-related issues, we find several effective strategies employed by youth workers, including the establishment of relationships with policymakers, active participation in parliamentary committees, and the organization of advocacy campaigns (Tuttle and Goodman, 2014). Restricted access to decision makers, the necessity for comprehensive knowledge of parliamentary procedures, and the challenge of maintaining sustained engagement over time, are significant key barriers (Smith and Smith, 2017).

This paper consists on a comprehensive review of the literature, considering multiple academic databases to capture a wide range of relevant literature and a combination of keywords and phrases related to the research topic, including Youth workers, youth policies, parliament, advocacy and youth workers, policies and processes, youth and parliament. Regarding search limits, books and articles considered are in the time frame of 10 years and published only in English. Studies that do not specifically address youth workers' roles in parliamentary processes or policy advocacy are excluded. The main research questions are: How effective are the advocacy efforts of youth workers in shaping youth-related policies? How do youth workers engage with parliamentary processes to influence youth policy? What challenges do youth workers face in their advocacy efforts with parliament? Youth workers play an important role in engaging with legislative processes and are involved in various aspects of parliamentary advocacy. Looking at this issue from a global perspective, youth workers impact differently political processes and parliamentary systems in different countries. Youth workers often face barriers that can limit their effectiveness in advocating for meaningful policy changes.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING: MECHANISMS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT. THE CASE OF ALBANIA

Ph.D. Candidate Nadia Guni

In order to ensure that government policies are supported by solid facts and data and to provide the public a voice in the decision-making process, transparency and accountability are essential elements of evidence-based policymaking. In these domains, particularly in Albania where democratic institutions are still developing and strong public participation in governance is becoming increasingly important, public engagement and supervision procedures are essential.

Transparency, accountability, and public participation in evidence-based policymaking have always been in the main focus by the European Union (EU), especially for candidate nations like Albania that are undergoing the accession process. How far Albania may go toward joining the EU will depend on how well it can align its institutions and governance practices with European norms, which require close adherence to these principles.

Despite different obstacles, Albania has improved accountability and openness recently, mostly as a result of increased civic activity, EU integration initiatives, and governance changes. These initiatives are essential for bolstering evidence-based policymaking and guaranteeing that public policies are in line with the wants of the populace.

This study aims to make the connection between the use of digital tools (with a focus on artificial intelligence) in order to ensure transparency as one of the main points that will bring Albania's membership in the EU. This research will examine how the automation of parliamentary procedures would affect the rule of law and to ensure full transparency in Albanian Parliament, in comparison to countries with strong democratic institutions. Furthermore, it analyses whether there is a necessity to maintain a human aspect in this process, raising the question of the role and importance of a human mind? In order to bring a fresh perspective to the field of law, it compares the use of artificial intelligence versus human intelligence.

THE DEFICIENCY OF DEMOCRACY IN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES AND THE ROLE OF THE PARLIAMENT IN POLICY-MAKING TRANSPARENCY

Qani Nuhiu

Parliaments in democratic countries are representative bodies of citizens and bearers of the legislative power of the state, whose work is regulated by constitutions and related regulations. In terms of their vocation, they should be the institutions that should reflect transparency towards the citizens, because they directly represent the citizen.

The Parliament as an institution represents a general sublimation of the representation of interests and different political orientations within a society.

However, at the same time, the political representatives must be under the control and monitoring of their voters and be revocable. According to the constitution of North Macedonia, the MP may resign (Article 65, paragraph 1), and the same cannot be revoked (Article 62, paragraph 4).

So in this paper, the subject of research and study will be the transparency and policy-making in Western Balkans countries based on evidence and facts.

This paper should provide us with an overview of the condition of democracy and the reasons why it is so? So, in this aspect, we can say that this paper presents a comparative research and analysis of the general principles for building the democracy in six Western Balkans countries.

The scientific goal is to investigate the situation and find the reasons why democracy in the six Western Balkans countries is at an unsatisfactory level. Not all electoral systems are completely similar, as each of them has its own specifics, but based on their general principles they are very close to each other.

Research has been also conducted to see the role of the controlling, supervisory and monitoring mechanisms of the permanent and temporary working bodies of the parliaments, since the parliaments can establish survey commissions for all spheres and for any matter of public interest. Parliaments also establish commissions of inquiry on freedoms and human rights. The findings of the surveying commissions are the basis for setting up the procedure for determining the responsibility of public office bearers.

Parliamentary committees are an important part of the structure of any parliament and play an important role in supervising the work of various institutions and public bodies. They can be permanent and temporary. They have the right and responsibility to review, analyze and report on various issues related to public and state interest. Parliamentary commissions can have several main functions, such as: supervision and control, review of laws, reporting on certain issues, hold hearings and consultative sessions, to do research on certain issues where it is suspected that there may be abuses, etc.

PANEL 2

**THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE IN THE
PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES
AND THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

AI-DRIVEN OPTIMIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION -MAKING PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF THE ALBANIAN PARLIAMENT

Dr. Besarta Vladi, Head of research and Analysis Service, Parliament of Albania & Dr. Emiliano Mankolli, Polis University

Artificial intelligence has already revolutionized almost all sectors of society, including the public sector. Parliaments, as part of this sector, are constantly using artificial intelligence to draft laws and improve the overall efficiency of the legislative process, despite the risks involved. By combining an in-depth literature review with a specific case study, the aim of this paper is to explore the advantages and disadvantages of AI-based decision-making, as well as the existing regulatory framework for AI use in parliamentary procedures and the legislative processes, at both national and international levels.

The results of this study show that implementing AI in the legislative process can significantly improve the quality and overall efficiency of this process. Additionally, AI implementation in parliamentary context is associated with a lot of security and ethical risks. There is no unified regulation for AI at the international level. Different countries are using different strategies and guidelines to regulate AI at the national level. The European Commission AI Act (August 2024) can be considered the first institutionalized attempt to regulate AI at the EU level, or even globally.

Apart from scanning the process of AI implementation in the parliamentary context, by looking at the AI models that are already being used in the legislative process in different countries, the main outcome of this paper is providing a prototype of an AI based drafting system 'LegAL' for the Albanian legislative process.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT AND SMART PARLIAMENT

Dr. Enkeleida Shyle (Petanaj), Universiteti i Tiranës & MSc. Ivana Dalipaj – MBZHR & Universiteti “Reald”

This paper aims to highlight the impact of integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into parliamentary activities, with the goal of identifying the opportunities and challenges that AI presents for decision-making processes in Albania. In the context of a global revolution in technology, where AI is transforming many aspects of our lives, it is essential to understand its impact on legislative processes and the need to establish standards for the functioning of parliamentary life by increasing the efficiency of the Assembly's operations.

Through the integration of AI in Albania's Public Administration, the use of the e-gov portal for digital services, its incorporation in providing public services through the e-albania platform, and various other machine learning projects, pathways have been opened for the implementation of these systems within the parliamentary framework, which may contribute to transforming the institution's activities.

The results of this paper indicate that AI has the potential to improve the efficiency of parliamentary work by utilizing platforms that digitalize administrative tasks, enhancing data analysis, providing virtual assistance to members of parliament, enabling access to a digital library, and supporting lawmakers in drafting legal amendments.

The study also identifies several challenges, such as the risk of embedding biases in AI algorithms, issues of privacy and transparency, and the potential for public opinion manipulation if the technology is misused. Practical issues and proposed solutions are also a focus of the paper, aiming to analyze this transformation in parliamentary life to further democratize the representative body of a country aspiring to join the European Union.

The experience of parliaments that have already embraced AI in their decision-making shows that implementing a strategy to establish a modern and functional system remains a challenge for Albania.

THE IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES: THE CASE OF ALBANIA

Shezeina Rama & Valiana Rama, Aleksandër Moisiu University

This paper proposes the use of Artificial Intelligence in the parliamentary activities of Albania. In 2024, the European Parliament adopted the Artificial Intelligence Act. In the context of Albania's integration into the European Union, the position remains to be seen, starting from the adaptation of legislation, but also the implementation of the law in practice, challenges, advantages and disadvantages.

Since 2012, Albania has made strides in digital governance, a fact reflected by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, Albania ranks above other Western Balkan countries.

By promoting the use of Artificial Intelligence, transparency in legislative procedures and not only of the Parliament in Albania will be supported.

Through good practices of other European Union countries and not only, it is intended to reflect the approach that Albania will have regarding these changes.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING IN PARLIAMENTS: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH SERVICES

Viktor Merkuri

Building capacity for evidence-based decision-making (EBDM) in parliaments requires a multifaceted approach to strengthen the role and functionality of Parliamentary Research Services (PRS). This article outlines critical strategies to improve Public Resource Spending (PRS) and effectively incorporate evidence into legislative processes.

Key recommendations include prioritizing the continuous professional development of PRS staff through advanced training in research methodologies, data analysis, and emerging trends via specialized workshops, certifications, and cross-training.

Modernizing PRS capabilities also involves integrating advanced technological tools such as data analytics software, comprehensive research databases, and collaboration platforms. Investing in these technologies and maintaining an updated technological infrastructure are essential for efficient research operations.

The article underscores the importance of fostering collaboration with academic institutions, research organizations, and international networks. Engaging in collaborative research projects and knowledge-sharing platforms can expand resources and expertise available to PRS.

Institutionalizing evidence-based practices through legislative mandates and clear guidelines is also emphasized. Formalizing evidence-based decision-making and implementing evidence-based impact assessments for legislative proposals are crucial steps.

Addressing resource constraints, the article suggests securing dedicated funding and optimizing resource allocation to ensure PRS operations are sustainable and effective. Developing robust feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and consultations, will help gather input from legislators and drive continuous improvement in PRS practices.

By offering practical recommendations and addressing key elements of enhancing PRS capabilities, this article aims to provide actionable insights for parliaments to improve their EBDM practices, leading to more informed, transparent, and effective governance and fostering greater public trust and responsive policymaking.

THE IMPACT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ON LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING BY PARLIAMENT

Dr. Heliona Miço Bellani & Prof. Assoc. Dr. Bojana Hajdini, EPOKA University

Academic research plays a crucial role in shaping legislative processes by providing evidence-based insights that inform policymaking. The article explores the dynamic relationship between academic research and parliamentary activities. This suggests an exploration of how universities and other higher education institutions influence the legislative process, potentially through research, expert consultations, and collaboration with lawmakers, through the support of the legal framework and strategic policies of higher education and scientific research. It highlights the important role that academia plays in shaping policies and legal frameworks by providing evidence-based insights and contributing to public policy debates. The objective of this article is to examine how academic research contributes to the legislative process, enhancing the quality of debates, supporting the development of policies, and ensuring informed decision-making within parliaments. This analysis employs a critical analysis approach, by emphasizing the need for stronger collaboration by analyzing existing gaps and advocating for improvements in evidence-based policymaking. The findings reveal that academic research significantly enhances the legislative process by providing rigorous evidence, offering expert testimonies during hearings, and facilitating informed discussions on complex policy issues. The article also identifies challenges, including the accessibility of research and the need for stronger collaboration between academics and legislators. The article underscores the critical need for robust collaboration between academic institutions and parliaments, advocating for increased efforts to bridge gaps between research and practice to foster evidence-based governance.

EMPOWERING COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND THE 'SCIENTIFIC-LEGAL CENTER' IN THE EXAMINATION AND MITIGATION OF FEMICIDE: EVIDENCE-BASED INSIGHTS FOR ALBANIA

Dr. Pjereta Agalliu & MSc. Tevia Agalliu

For addressing femicide and its legislative implications, the Albanian legal framework has adopted a series of normative provisions. This research aims to delineate and explore, through evidence-based methodologies, the significance of sustained collaboration between scientific inquiry, particularly within jurisprudence, and the Parliament in addressing both the prevention and remediation of femicide issues.

Employing methodologies rooted in background information and legal synthesis, this analysis assesses the engagement of Parliament and Academia in enhancing collaborative efforts and their respective direct and indirect impacts on the mitigation of femicide and the enhance of civil society awareness.

The synthesized data indicate that notwithstanding the rational initiatives undertaken by legislators, frequently catalyzed by media portrayals, there persists a deficiency in the comprehensive application of these regulations, whether in the overarching societal framework or within cultural and educational domains.

In this regard, it is imperative to foster and reinforce collaborative efforts between rigorous academic examination of the origins, impacts, and preventative strategies concerning femicide and the legislative body's endeavors aimed at developing tailored legal frameworks based on evidence-based findings.

The respective authors are responsible for
the content of their own text.



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dhe Bashkëpunim SDC**

*Ky aktivitet mbështetet nga projekti i Agjencisë Zvicerane
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