



THE MODERNIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARY ARCHIVES: SPANISH SENATE'S ARCHIVE

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If the purpose of civil service is to provide services to citizens, this responsibility of transparency and publicity coincides literally with parliamentary principles. Modernization and public access have been crucial criteria in determining the Senate's policies and, specially, in the Archive policies.

In the actual democratic bicameral period, the Senate's Archive was set up as an independent administrative unit in 1986, the year in which the new computer technologies were implemented in the upper house. This fact allowed the development of electronic records from the beginning, making all documents deposited in the Archive perfectly retrievable and accessible, including those from the Historical Archive (1834-1923) and those created and received during prior legislatures (1977-1986).

At the same time, a parliamentary administration database was developed (1986-2006), starting out as a basic database to record incoming entries, but eventually evolving, due to subsequent developments and application of archival criteria, into the central axis upon which the future administrative and archival system of the Senate shall spin.

For this purpose, an integrated project of document management and archive system (SGDAS) has been created from the Senate Archive. This project has been recently presented to the Parliamentary Administration, and will begin to be developed shortly.

The result of this process and the electronic conversion of documents (paper, audio, video, photos, etc.), allows access to the complete history and activities of the Senate over the

internet, turning it into a pioneering organization in the application of the Information Society's European policies (objective of the Europe 2010's project).

All these new changes compel a reconsideration of professional profiles and functions, since providing services becomes the main objective of the archival function. To achieve this, archive professionals must participate in the definition and implantation of the organizations' production systems during the whole process. Otherwise, these systems can be used for daily administration and information about ongoing proceedings, but not for the management of the organization's collective memory. To avoid these difficulties, the archival principles must be applied from the document's origin.