



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Open Legislative Data in Paris

A Conference of the Third Kind with Hacktivists and Academics

**Friday the 6th
of July and
Saturday the 7th
of July 2012**

When? 6th & 7th July, 2012

Where? Sciences Po in Paris

Who? The Law Factory (Regards Citoyens + Sciences Po)

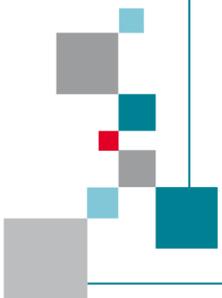
Open Legislative Data is a term mixing Open Data (the idea that certain data should be freely available to everyone to use and republish as they wish) & Legislative Studies (the academic study of parliaments and legislators).

**Sciences Po
Paris**

The Law Factory is a French group comprising hacktivists (Regards Citoyens) and academics (Centre d'études européennes & médialab Sciences Po). We are organizing a conference in Paris about Parliamentary informatics.

The conference has two aims:

- To discuss the latest developments regarding parliamentary informatics, eg. parliamentary open data, computer analysis of parliamentary activities, e-parliament...
- To assemble two groups that usually do not communicate: the academic world of legislative studies and individuals and organizations from across the open data and parliamentary informatics spectrum.





Tell me more

In Paris, we will discuss a variety of topics related to parliamentary informatics. For the last years, information technology and tools of parliamentary monitoring have experienced a great transformation both with the development of new tools related to parliaments and with the spread of open data projects related to legislatures. The aim of this conference is to establish a statement of those rich developments. What are the main and most effective ways of using open data in order to visualize and analyze parliamentary activities? What are the main past, present and future developments in that area?

Beyond this statement, the marriage between new technologies and old legislatures brings about a lot of critical questions for the state of representative democracy. What does the new informatics tools tell about the functioning of legislatures and their political role in the XXIst century? How do the new process of counting and visualizing parliamentary activities impact the parliament itself? Between MPs, parliamentary clerks, hacktivists and ordinary citizens, who are the actors of the on-going process of opening parliamentary data? Who will win? Who will lose? Also, does a greater online access to parliamentary activities change the public perception of the legislatures as a whole and of specific MPs? Last, is there a kind of parliamentary resistance towards the computer age? Are there parliamentary activities that are just unfit for computers?

Those questioning are central to the future of parliamentary representation given the significance of the latest informatics development related to all aspects of parliamentary activities (roll-call, attendance, amendments, speech, control of public spending...). The conference is driven by the idea that those issues should be answered by filling the gap between academic research and the hacktivist world. The two communities are undoubtedly different. To the exception of a few personalities, they don't share the same history, assets or methodology. Yet, both have a lot to gain by working together and comparing their ways of understanding parliaments. For instance, the Law Factory group, convener of the conference, is made of members from both academic and informatics background. We will present during the conference a prototype of law tracking system.



What kind of topics will be covered?

We welcome proposals on any aspects of parliamentary studies linked to the use of computer science, be it in order to present existing projects, to explore new informatics tool, to discuss their effects, to analyze legislatures through open parliamentary data...

Special attention will be given to the five following areas:

- *Law tracking.* How MPs change draft bill in assemblies? Is there a way of collecting and presenting systematic data about the amendments?
- *Roll call analysis.* How MPs vote in assemblies? How can their votes be presented through dynamic informatics visualization? Public access to their votes being almost always partial, what is the value of focusing only on on-line accessible votes? Also, what is the added-value of software developments for the spatial theory of voting in assemblies?
- *Discourse analysis.* How MPs talk in assemblies? Studies of political discourse through lexicometry computer programs have developed strong results to that question. What is therefore the impact of a greater online access to parliamentary public debate?
- *Parliamentary informatics in developing countries.* What is the state of open data related to legislatures in developing countries? What is or can be the role of the on-line access to those data for improving democracy? For fighting against corruption?
- *The pros and the cons of opening data for parliaments.* Can we assess concrete improvements of parliamentary democracy through the development of on-line access to their activity? On which aspect (corruption, attendance, law quality, parliamentary turnover, electoral participation...)? Conversely, what are the threats associated with increasing transparency in legislatures?

All the presentations will be held in English



What is the program ?

On the morning of the 6th of July, we'll have a plenary session with keynote speeches and the public presentation of several on-going projects like the Law Track System by the Law Factory Group.

On the afternoon of the 6th of July, there will be several parallel thematic sessions.

On the morning of the 7th of July, a hackspace in Paris will host an informal meeting devoted to performances, exchanging practices and networking.

How do I get involved?

We welcome different kind of presentations from individual or groups, from academics or hacktivists... or both!

There will be two ways that you can participate:

- Lightning presentations (5 minutes)
- Talks (10-15 minutes)

You'll find an on-line application form [here: http://www.lafabriquedelaloi.fr/submit-a-proposal/](http://www.lafabriquedelaloi.fr/submit-a-proposal/)

Application must be sent before April 28th 2012!

We've also got a dedicated mailing list for discussions around the conference which you can write to: TheLawFactory@ml.regardscitoyens.org. If you'd like to join the discussion, sign up by sending an empty e-mail to TheLawFactory-subscribe@ml.regardscitoyens.org.



Can I ask for a grant?

Yes! The Ile-de-France Region is the main sponsor for the conference. We offer limited funding for international participants in order to cover part of their travel and accommodation fees. To ask for a grant, please find more in [Grant Call for Applications](#).

Application must be sent before April 28th 2012. Answers will be provided by Mai 5th 2012.

Can I sponsor the event?

Yes please! We are still actively seeking sponsorship for lunches, coffee, travel and accommodation for international participants and so on. If you think you might be interested, please contact Angela Tacea at picri@regardscitoyens.org to find out more about the sponsorship opportunities available.

Where do I find more?

<http://www.lafabriquedelaloi.fr/>

<http://www.regardscitoyens.org/>

<http://www.medialab.sciences-po.fr/>

<http://www.cee.sciences-po.fr/>

<http://www.iledefrance.fr/>

