



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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Parliament website represents a complete transformation in the delivery of information to the public

The new website of the Gibraltar Parliament www.parliament.gi is now up and running. This is in line with the manifesto commitment of the GSLP/Liberal Government to establish an independent Parliamentary website outside that of the Gibraltar Government itself.

The website has been designed by the Government's IT and Logistics Department in consultation with the Clerk of the Parliament. The home page includes a short introduction and contains the preamble to the Constitution. There is also a short history of the Parliament building itself which explains that it was first erected in 1817 by public subscription by the Exchange Committee. This was the first prominent representative body of the civilian population of Gibraltar which pushed for civilian rights in what was primarily still a military fortress. It was later known as the Exchange and Commercial Library.

The website then contains a short section on the composition and the procedures of the Parliament. There is also a list of every Government and Opposition that the people of Gibraltar have elected since the then House of Assembly was established in 1969. The entitlement criteria in order to be able to vote in parliamentary elections by inclusion in the Register of Electors are also shown on the new website.

The most useful part of the website is the section entitled "Proceedings of Parliament". This section contains an audio version of proceedings of Parliament which will be uploaded soon after a meeting has taken place. It also includes a video of the ceremonial opening of the present Parliament which took place on 21st December 2011, shortly after the last general elections where the people of Gibraltar chose a GSLP/Liberal Government.

The Hansard, which is the official record of parliamentary proceedings, is also now available on-line in the new website. This already contains the last question and answer session of 15th February barely a few weeks after the meeting took place. This alone represents a vast improvement from what was available to Ministers, to the Opposition and to the general public in the past where it sometimes took many months for this information to become available.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“The new Government promised to make Parliament more accessible to the people and this is exactly what we have done. The new website, which went ‘live’ over the weekend, represents a considerable step forward in transparency and in the supply of information. This must be seen in the context of important reforms which have been actioned already like monthly meeting of the House and of other reforms like televising the proceedings, which are in the pipeline. The new website will allow the ‘live’ streaming of proceedings to take place once this has been formally discussed and approved by the Members of Parliament itself.

There have already been meetings in order to explore further the provision of a much needed integrated voice-recognition, sound and recording system.

These democratic reforms run in parallel with the Gibraltar Commission on Democratic and Political Reform which was established last month and which has already started to meet independently of the Government and Opposition.

The Government is very grateful to the Clerk, the staff of the Parliament and to the Head and members of the IT and Logistics Department who have worked extremely hard in order to make this project a success. This represents a radical transformation in the way that Parliamentary information is made available to the public.”