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Democratic “Management of Knowledge”?

A Study on Knowledge Management and the European Parliament

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Abstract

In this thesis, the idea of Knowledge Management (KM) and the planning of the introduction of what is called a “KM approach” in the European Parliament (EP) is studied. The first purpose is to analyze how existing KM thoughts can be supplemented by insights from a subset of democratic theory (e-democracy), by placing focus on the elected representative and his or her information needs. Five “democratic criteria” are derived and analyzed related to literature on KM. Out of two “strands” of KM identified, the “IT-Track” and the “People-Track”, it is shown that the former can be broadened with these insights, and this is carried out.

This theoretical framework thereafter forms the basis of a study on the planning of introducing KM in the EP. The purpose is to analyze the KM approach taken in the EP so far and to investigate what additional insights that can be gained of the planning of the KM introduction, by adding the democratic criteria to the analysis. A complementary study on the implementation of KM in the Parliament of Finland is also carried out. This study of the EP shows that one of the “democratic criteria” was prominent in the KM approach taken so far.

Key words: Knowledge Management, European Parliament, e-democracy, elected representative, Parliament of Finland

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1 Introduction

> The European Parliament has a paramount interest to create the best possible Knowledge Management. It would be a crucial step towards securing its position as the spearhead of the European legislative process, vis-à-vis the other European Institutions and lobbyists (Walter, MEP, 2008:9).

Knowledge Management[1] (KM) is a notion that is gaining much attention from both practitioners and researchers. In broad terms, it has got to do with management of information and how knowledge can be created and disseminated in organizations (e.g. Alvesson&Kärreman 2001:995). Recently, it has been decided that a "KM approach" is going to be introduced in the European Parliament (EP) (EP1,2,3,5). This based on the perception that it would "constitute a useful management tool" for the institution (EP3). At the time of writing this thesis, the administration is planning for the introduction of such an approach.

Large investments have been made in KM "systems" and "tools" in private corporations, based on alleged economic benefits and business efficiency and the literature on KM is dominated by practitioners and consultants (NISG 2007:3,7 Bukh *et al* 2005:3). New management methods and tools, like KM, are often outlined as important strategies for modernization of private corporations and national administrations. Though it has been questioned to what extent different management solutions "fit" the unique circumstances of the European Union (EU) (Metcalfe 2000:823). This makes it relevant and important to study KM and the introduction of it in the EP.

The EP is the only directly elected EU institution and the forum of elected representatives that represent the voice of the people[2]. As such, it is held that it brings the only strand of direct democratic legitimacy to the union (Burns 2002:62).

Knowledge, means of communication, information handling, sharing and dissemination as well as new technologies are all areas of focus in KM. Information and communication are also closely bond with democracy. Democracy has got to do with actors, their interactions and the structures within which they interact (Sundström 2001:116). In all democratic practice the right to be informed is a necessity and a right (Mulder 1999: 553) and communication a prerequisite. The role of new technologies is also gaining increased attention in

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[1] The concept is defined in chapter two.

[2] Though, to what extent this is true has been questioned by many due to, among other things, the lack of public interest and low turnouts in the elections to the EP (Bomberg & Stubb 2008:61).

relation to democratic processes. These examples demonstrate "common denominators" in KM and democratic theory and point at the relevance to study the two in relation to one another, that is, to take on a democratic approach to KM.

To study the introduction of KM in the EP becomes especially interesting if taking on a perspective in which KM has been broadened with democratic insights.

1.1 Purpose and research questions

The literature on KM is broad and multifaceted. An approach that appears to be absent though, is the democratic one. Emphasis is placed on *the knowledge worker* and *knowledge work* (e.g. Drucker 2002:135). Therefore it appears relevant to argue that KM thoughts, emphasizing knowledge, information handling and needs as well as the use of new technologies in organizations, are relevant to study from this perspective, where democratic aspects are stressed focusing on the information needs of the elected representative (see section 2.2). *This leads up to the first purpose of this thesis which is to supplement the existing Knowledge Management thoughts with insights from a specific subset of democratic theory.*

In order to fit the scope of this thesis, and to make the study workable, some delimitations are necessary which will be done in section 1.2.2.

At the time of writing the administration is planning the introduction of a KM approach in the EP. The EP is an information intensive and information demanding organization that requires and produces a large amount of information of varying nature. Resources are organized in order to support the work of the Members of Parliament (MEPs) and the KM introduction is mainly directed towards them (Interview EP official). *This leads up to the second purpose of the thesis which is to analyze the planning of the introduction of KM in the EP by using the developed analytical framework.*

These purposes lead up to the following concrete problem formulations:

- *Focusing on the elected representative rather than the citizen, how can the existing Knowledge Management thoughts be supplemented by a specific subset of democratic theory[3]?*

Following this, and based on the analytical framework developed:

[3] To be further elaborated in section 1.2.2

- *When we apply the developed framework on the planning of the introduction of Knowledge Management in the European Parliament, what added insights can be gained?*

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Structure of the study

In the first part of the study the theoretical framework of the thesis is developed, by merging two "areas of thought". As the objective is to add democratic insights and aspects to the notion of KM, it is in the literature on the latter that the study takes its point of departure. In order to strengthen the argument that there appears to be a lack of explicit linking between KM and democracy in the literature, a review is made of a well acknowledged journal in a related field.

Thereafter, the focus is shifted to the chosen subset of democratic theory, here being that on e-democracy. This is a suitable choice as well as a necessary demarcation of the broad and multifaceted literature on democratic theory[4]. In order to be able to make the broadening in a structured manner a number of "democratic criteria" are needed and derived from the chosen literature. This is made from the perspective of the elected representative, rather than the citizen, and his or her information needs[5]. In a third section, KM thoughts are broadened with these criteria to the extent possible and appropriate. The result of this becomes the theoretical framework based on which the empirical study is conducted.

Before turning to the EP, the main object of the study, an empirical analysis is carried out of the implementation of KM in the Parliament of Finland, as this can bring added insights to the study. The experience of a national parliament is of course more relevant than examples from for example business corporations. At the time of writing the planning of the introduction of KM in the EP is ongoing, though any concrete measures have not yet been taken (EP official). The Parliament of Finland is one of few parliaments that has implemented KM (see Suurla *et al* 2002). The Finnish experience can illustrate how implementation of KM can be carried out with elected representatives as a main target group and parallels can be drawn to the theoretical framework.

In order to answer the second research question, a case study of the EP and the planning of the introduction of KM there is carried out. This is suitable as the purpose is to make a profound analysis. In the making of such a study it is of

[4] see section 1.2.2
[5] see section 1.2.2

course necessary to be aware of limitations, such as the difficulties in making generalizations. As it is not part of the purpose to make general assertions, this does not become a significant constraint here. Some examples from the Finnish case will be taken up in relation to the EP. As such the thesis also contains, although to a limited extent, comparative features. This though, needs to be further motivated. The EU is sometimes outlined as a *sui generis* system of transnational governance (cf. e.g. Matei & Matei 2008:33), an argument that points out the difficulty of making comparisons with its institutions. All parliaments operate within different political settings and with their own powers and culture, though the EP has of course got several features that make it unique. Corbett *et al* have listed eight such characteristics, for example its multilingualism, its fast evolution and that it is "the world's most far-reaching experiment in transnational democracy" (2005:2). The core of this analysis though, is the information needs of the elected representative. There are several similarities between an MEP and a national parliamentarian (MP) and their information needs as elected representatives (cf. Marcella *et al* 1999:172). The Finnish experience is therefore useful. As held by a Finnish MP, "they have got the same information needs but at a larger scale" (Interviewee Finland). To take into consideration experiences of KM projects carried out at the national level has also for example been stressed by an MEP: *"Members of the European Parliament expect that the Parliament administration will prepare and present a model of the Knowledge Management System, based on analyses and experiences from the countries, where such systems already exist."* (e-mail 1).

1.2.2 Delimitations

The scope of this thesis requires demarcations to be made, first regarding the choice of democratic theoretical focus. Democracy implies a wide range of processes including participation, information and means of communication and today the majority among these involve, in one way or another, the use of IT[6] (Grönlund 2001:43). KM emerged together with increased use of new technologies such as the Internet, e-mail and intranets, facilitating immediate interaction and communication (Alvesson&Kärreman 2001:995f). Information, communication processes and new technologies are all also central in the literature on e-democracy (e.g. Macintosh 2008). As these common features may serve as a point of departure for the merging of the areas of thought, this is considered a relevant demarcation. To choose e-democracy is also a way to narrow the scope. Another demarcation is that focus will mainly be placed on

[6] Information technology, IT, is here defined as an umbrella term for the technological means that have been created through advances in computer science and telecommunications. This also includes the term ICT, information and communication technology, in which emphasis is placed in particular on the role of telecommunication (Internet 1, my translation).

new technologies as channels for information and means of communication. Important to make clear here is that e-democracy is not a new form of democracy (Grönlund 2001:43), but referring to democratic practices in a specific context. It is also relevant to clarify that e-democracy is different from, but may overlap with, the concept *e-government* (Kies *et al* 2004:10). An important aspect that makes them conceptually different is that e-government refers to the use of ICT techniques in order to make government operate more efficient (ibid). The latter is not further discussed.

Another demarcation is, as previously held, to focus on the elected representative rather than the citizen. This choice appears evident as the study is made on KM, which mainly focuses on the internal information handling and communication within organizations.

1.2.3 Material

The material for this thesis consists of both printed sources and interviews. The empirical material for the study on the EP is mainly based on eight qualitative interviews. This is suitable when, as here, the field of research is unexplored (Esaiasson *et al* 2003:281). Due to the early stage of the KM project in the EP there is, at the time of writing, a very limited amount of written sources on the matter. The interviews were all carried out in person during a study visit at the EP in December 2008. The interviewees are all officials in the EP administration.[7] The initial selection of interviewees was carried out based on the advice of the chair of the EP's KM steering group (see list of interviewees), motivating the selection. All interviewees were, or were going to be, directly involved in the project. The initial selection was later supplemented by a so called "snowball selection" (ibid:286) as some of the interviewees advised me to speak to two other officials (of which one was going to be involved in the project, and the other had general background knowledge of KM).

The material for the study on the Parliament of Finland consists of five qualitative interviews and some publications on the KM implementation[8]. The interviewees are the former chair of the projects (MP) and his two co-authors of the main publication on the KM implementation (the head of the Parliament's IT Office and an external managing director) that is, three "centrally placed sources" (cf. ibid). This selection was supplemented by a "snowball selection" and interviews with additionally two persons were carried out following their advice (an MP and an external management consultant, the latter was directly involved

[7] As the KM project in the EP was originally an initiative from a few MEPs, my intention was to get supplementary information on the project and their views upon it from them. I have been able to get in contact with one of the MEPs involved who, via his assistant, contributed with a general statement on the project by e-mail.

[8] During the writing of the thesis I was informed about the existence of additional printed sources, though only available in Finnish. Due to limited time and resources I have not been able to consult these.

in the project). One of the interviews was carried out in person at the Parliament of Finland and the others were telephone interviews.

Due to explicit request by some, the interviewees are given anonymity to the extent that they are not referred to or quoted by name in the text. A shortcoming following this is that it is neither possible to distinguish between officials working in different Directorates General nor between director, heads of unit, the information specialist etc. All interviews were carried out by semi-structured method. The questions were mainly predetermined, though the interviewees got to speak freely (cf. Lantz 2007:33). Furthermore, due to the different working fields and competences of the interviewees, I have not posed exactly the same questions to all of them.

1.2.4 Disposition

Following this introductory chapter on purpose and methodology, chapter two first introduces the reader to KM. KM is presented by dividing the literature into two main strands. Thereafter, an introduction to e-democracy is given and a short discussion on the limitations of the chosen literature on democracy. Based on the chosen perspective of the elected representative, a number of "democratic criteria" are derived from the e-democracy literature and thereafter the KM thoughts are broadened, to the extent possible, with these. Chapter three gives an empirical illustration of the implementation of KM in the Parliament of Finland, based on insights from the theoretical framework. Chapter four analyzes the planning of the introduction of KM in the EP, based on the theoretical framework derived in chapter two. Some parallels are also drawn to the Finnish example. Chapter five presents the conclusions of the study.

2 Theoretical foundation

2.1 Knowledge Management

2.1.1 An introduction to Knowledge Management

It is obvious that the idea that knowledge is manageable, as the term KM indicates, has got large appeal. The literature on KM is dominated by practitioners and consultants in which terms such as "intellectual capital" and "intangible assets" are frequently emphasized (Bukh *et al* 2005:3f). Several KM initiatives, especially in the business sector, have been documented though it is often rather vague what these include (Bouthillier & Shearer 2002:141). Neither is there any agreement on what constitutes knowledge itself or KM in the literature[9]. KM is "a term which has now come to be used to describe anything from organizational learning to database management tools" (Ruggles 1998 in Alvesson & Kärreman 2001:1003). Many attempts though have been made to give knowledge and KM a theoretical definition. To exemplify, KM has been defined as *"the process of applying a systematic approach to the capture, structure, management, and dissemination of knowledge throughout an organization in order to work faster, reuse best practices, and reuse costly rework from project to project"* (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995 in Dalkir 2005:3). Such theoretical definitions though, give a limited understanding. As held by Sveiby, concepts are best defined by the way that people use them (Internet 3). In both literature and practice, there is a divide between those focusing on technological aspects and those who focus on people and personal interactions (e.g. Alvesson & Kärreman 2001:996). As this is a rather common distinction, that gives a structured approach to KM, this two sided approach (given several different labels) will be used as theoretical starting point.

[9] See for example Alvesson & Kärreman 2001 for a detailed analysis on the matter.

2.1.2 Knowledge Management: the "IT-Track"

Using Sveiby's categorization, the "IT-Track" refers to those within KM focusing on management of information through different IT based systems, such as intranets, databases and expert systems. Knowledge is perceived as objects that can be identified and handled and there is seldom any clear distinction made between knowledge and information. (Internet 3, Skovvang Christensen & Bukh 2005:20). Focus is placed on collecting, storing and distributing different sources of information. "Knowledge sharing" is emphasized, to which well functioning information processing systems and structures are seen as important devices. It is also essential to make information held by the organization easily accessible, for example by codifying information sources. (Skovvang Christensen & Bukh 2005:20ff).

Vendelø argues that the focus on different IT systems for KM is too vague and makes the broader distinction between "memory support systems" and "interaction support systems". The former aims at storing and distributing organizational information through *"indirect knowledge bases"* (databases that give information on what employees have which competences), *"direct knowledge bases"* (e.g. databases for information storing and document sharing systems) and *"profile-based information systems"* (profiled distribution of information to persons to which it may be relevant). The latter includes *"communication systems"* (aiming at supporting the internal and external communication through for example e-mail and discussion forums), *"coordination support systems"* (that support and facilitate the coordination of electronic work procedures) and *"online cooperation systems"* (supporting for example digital meetings through web-cameras, chats etc). (2005:41ff).

According to Hansen *et al* there are two main strategies to "choose from" when implementing KM, which they refer to as the "codification strategy" and the "personalization strategy" (the latter will be referred to in the next section). The codification strategy focuses on information technology and "[k]nowledge is carefully codified and stored in databases, where it can be accessed and used easily by anyone in the company". (Hansen *et al* 1999:107).

2.1.3 Knowledge Management: the "People-Track"

Sticking to Sveiby's categorization, the second strand within KM is the "People-Track". Focus here is placed on people, their behaviours, skills and interactions. The aim is to maximise the organization's knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. Knowledge is approached as "processes" that are constantly changing and emphasis placed on know-how and skills. The "IT-Track" requires investment in IT systems. The "People-Track" on the other hand calls for investment in people, recruitment and in the office environment. Trust and the

"human infrastructure" are key words. (Internet 3). A common distinction in the literature is that between explicit and tacit knowledge[10]. Knowledge, it is held, is created via complex processes and transformation between "tacit" and "explicit" knowledge. Nonaka has referred to this as a "knowledge spiral" in which knowledge is created via different processes labelled "socialization", "externalization", "combination" and "internalization" (Skovvang Christensen & Bukh 2005:25).

Hansen *et al's* second KM strategy, the "personalization strategy", is relevant to mention here. In this the role of computers is downplayed and emphasis placed on the individual. (Kärreman *et al* 2005:125). Computers serve a secondary purpose and are mainly used as supportive devises that facilitate personal contact within organizations. Personal contact is crucial for creation as well as spreading of knowledge. There is therefore a need to create spaces for communication between people such as open-plan offices. Whereas codification was held as important in the codification strategy, networking and creative employees are vital here. (Skovvang Christensen & Bukh 2005:28).

2.2 A democratic approach to Knowledge Management?

The discussion above further elaborated on the central role of information, communication and means of interaction as well as new technologies in KM. As held above, these are also central features in democratic theory. The literature on KM writes about *knowledge work* and how to increase productivity of the *knowledge worker* (cf. Drucker 2002:135). An elected representative is not only a "worker" but a communicator and decision maker with different information needs. Though, not much appears to have been written on KM and democracy or the elected representative and his or her information needs. This assumption was strengthened by making a review of the articles on KM published in the peer reviewed scholarly journal MIS Quarterly[11]. The word "democratic" appeared once, though in a different context and not in relation to KM[12].

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[10]The former refers to "knowledge" that can be disseminated, reproduced and captured in a tangible form, for example images and audio recordings. The latter refers to "knowledge" that resides within the heads of people. It is more difficult to make explicit into words or text. (Dalkir 2005:8)

[11] The review was made by searching for the word democracy (/democratic etc.) in the abstract and key words of the articles published in the journal between 2003 and 2008. MIS Quarterly mainly treats themes such as the management of IT-resources, IT-based services and "the use, impact and economics of IT with managerial, organizational and societal implications" (Internet 4).

[12] In Vol. 27, nr 2, 2003.

2.3 E-democracy

> [I]f William Shakespeare was sitting among us today, he would have said …to 'e' or not to be. And that my friends would be the real question. (Fathy Sorour in UN 2008:11).

2.3.1 An introduction to e-democracy

It has been argued that apart from economic growth it is in relation to democracy that IT has produced the highest visions and expectations (Grönlund *et al* 2003:12). It is based on this perceived positive relation between the two that the notion e-democracy has emerged. Whereas some hold that e-democracy simply refers to electronic voting methods, others refer to it broadly as the use of IT in democratic processes (Grönlund 2001:43). In this thesis, a middle range approach is taken, referring to e-democracy as *"the use of information and communication technologies to engage citizens, support the democratic decision-making processes and strengthen representative democracy"* (Macintosh 2008:89).

E-democracy can take on different techniques, depending on what aspects of democracy that are promoted. Kies *et al* define e-democracy as "all electronic means of communication that enable/empower citizens to hold rulers/politicians accountable for their actions in the public realm". Apart from accountability, they stress three other main "aspects of democracy": transparency, participation and deliberation. (2004:10). Whereas all would have been relevant to analyze in relation to KM here, the scope of this thesis brings along a need to make a demarcation. Therefore focus will be placed on transparency and accountability, both prominent in the literature on e-democracy as well as in "classic" literature on democracy. Both are discussed, in separate sections, below taking on the perspective chosen and motivated in the introductory chapter.

2.3.2 Limitations of using e-democracy as "theoretical backbone"

Through their use of the Internet and technological applications, elected representatives are a "key group" in e-democracy (Suomi 2008:65). In this literature main themes are access to information, participation and two-way communication between the representatives and the public (e.g. King 2006:19). This though, seems generally to be made exclusively from the perspective of the citizen. Academic research taking on the perspective of the elected representative appears to be scarce (cf. Suomi 2008:65). As such, it is unfeasible to use "democratic criteria" taken directly from the literature on e-democracy. When analyzing transparency and accountability and issues such as access to information, channels of information and communication the citizen and the representative are of course "two sides of the same coin". Therefore it is relevant to derive such criteria by taking the citizen's perspective as a point of departure.

This also demonstrates that the literature on e-democracy appears to be somewhat narrow, and confirms the need for further research on e-democracy also from the perspective of the representative.

2.3.3 Transparency and the elected representative

New technologies have opened up possibilities for direct channels of communication and information without intermediates or "gatekeepers" (cf. Barber 1999:24). An important technique for increasing transparency in the e-democracy literature is "e-access", meaning the use of the Internet to enhance the citizen's electronic access to political information and official documents (Kies *et al* 2004:45). Access can take two forms, active and passive. The former implies the ability to transmit information to decision makers, with or without the right of being heard, and the latter the possibility of obtaining access to information about decision making (Héritier 2003:821). Both require open and effective channels between the citizen and the representative (cf. Macintosh 2008:86). Channels to the citizens are also important for the elected representative, as it fosters openness, interactivity and increases their understanding of the concerns of the citizen (UN 2008:127).

The first criterion is therefore *open channels for information and communication between the representative and the citizen.* Personal websites and weblogs are concrete examples of this (ibid:134).

As in democratic theory in general, the importance of an informed citizenry is frequently emphasized in literature on e-democracy (e.g. Macintosh 2008:87,91). In any democratic activity, to be informed can be held as both a necessity and a right (Mulder 1999:553). A prerequisite for informed decision making, as well as for the representative to be able to answer queries from the citizens and to provide accurate information, is of course that the representative has got access to information.

The second criterion is therefore *that the representative has got access to information, of internally produced as well as external sources of information.* (UN:2008:111, cf. Marcella *et al* 1999:170).

Access goes hand in hand with accessibility. To be able to locate the information that corresponds to specific needs, recognize what is the most useful and to organize the material in an easily accessible manner is also essential.

Part of the second criterion is therefore *that internal information sources are organized in a manner that make them easily accessible/searchable to the elected representative. The internal sources should be integrated with external sources.* (UN 2008:111). Concrete examples of ways in which this may be done is through information repositories, through systematic codification of documents and insertion of rich metadata. This criterion can be extended, as there is also a need for the representative that information reaches out to the public in an easily accessible manner.

"Computer literacy" and "Information richness" are two concepts sometimes referred to in the literature on e-democracy, and the former can to some extent be

interpreted as a prerequisite for the latter. As held above, representatives need to be well-informed, but there is no "formal requirement" for them to have advanced technical skills. From a democratic perspective what is important is that information is equally accessible to all representatives regardless of such skills.

The third criterion is therefore *that the representative is embedded in an "information infrastructure" in which he or she is not dependent on technical skills for information retrieval and provision.* Concrete examples of this can be to have research assistants and assistance from information specialists through for example library services.

2.3.4 Accountability and the elected representative

An important theme in democratic theory as well as in e-democracy is how citizens can hold their representatives accountable for their actions (e.g. Kies *et al* 2004:10). This concerns the ability of the electorate to make knowledgeable judgements of the performance of their representatives. From the perspective of the citizen, a prerequisite for accountability is "traceability of information", meaning the possibility to identify a sender of information (Sundström 2001:141). This aspect of democracy can also be approached from the representative's perspective as also he or she ought to be able to identify the sender of information among his or her peers.

The fourth criterion is therefore *traceability of information, meaning that a sender of information is identifiable.* A concrete example may be search tools that make it possible to search information by the name of the elected representative (cf. Craig&Shires 2003:148).

Archiving is also important, as the possibility to access older information is necessary from the accountability perspective (UN 2008:121). As held in the World e-parliament report 2008: "The archiving of documents is also a fundamental responsibility of democratic governments, as access to such records is important for holding governments accountable" (ibid:121). This also refers to digital information. This possibility should exist for the citizen but also for the elected representative.

The fifth criterion is therefore *the existence of systems for archiving documents as well as digital resources, which makes it possible to access older information including digital resources.* (cf. UN 2008:121 ff).

2.4 Knowledge Management and the “democratic criteria”

2.4.1 The “IT-Track” with democratic significance

The “IT-Track” has to a large extent got to do with collecting, storing and distributing documents and other information resources. Access to a coherent body of information, and that this is organized in a manner that makes it easily accessible was outlined as criteria above. There is a clear overlap between what was outlined in the “IT-Track” on accessibility and the “democratic criterion” on accessibility/searchability. Both include for example information repositories and codification. KM can as such be a tool for enhancing accessibility of internal information resources and goes hand in hand with the democratic criterion. Access to information resources itself ought to be considered as a prerequisite for this and not itself a subject for KM. Important to add though, is the importance that KM does not limit which information is made accessible.

An important aspect in the “IT-Track” is to implement IT-based systems so that knowledge can better be shared between units and actors within an organization. It is the organization rather than the individual that is considered as the “owner of knowledge” (Skovvang Christensen & Bukh 2005:23). Such an approach though, can be problematized here as the perspective taken is that of the elected representative. He or she is embedded in a political context in which knowledge sharing is not obvious. The approach taken to knowledge sharing and accessibility in the “IT-Track” is mainly internal. The extended accessibility criterion, as well as the criterion for open channels between representative and citizen, indicates that such an approach is too narrow here. Here, more than emphasizing internal knowledge sharing, emphasis ought to be placed on methods for the elected representative to communicate his or her views to the electorate and get feedback from them. This can be seen as an extension of the knowledge sharing aspect. Also the accessibility approach ought to be broadened by taking into consideration that information accessibility is not only necessary from an internal perspective, as outlined above.

When approaching the meeting between IT and democracy there is, according to Barber, a significant obstacle. In his own words: “those who know the most about technique seem to be the ones who know the least about democracy, and those who are knowledgeable on democracy often do not know almost anything about technique” (1999:13, my translation). As held above, KM is argued to enhance for example organizational efficiency, and the ability to understand and use KM tools are a prerequisite for knowledge sharing and “information richness”. The democratic criterion above demonstrated that the point of departure has got to be to make sure that the needs of the representative are met

and that information retrieval and other information flows are functioning. This is as such an additional aspect to take into consideration.

The “IT-Track” can also be supplemented by taking into consideration the criteria related to accountability above. Craig and Shires have addressed how what they refer to as “Knowledge creation technology” can enhance the possibility of public accountability by improving access and allowing users to “evaluate public actions in details from multiple perspectives” (2003:143). One aspect that they refer to is that information should be searchable by the name of the representative (ibid:148). Based on the argument made above, this is an approach relevant to take into consideration both from an internal and external perspective.

The literature on KM emphasizes document storing systems, though this frequently without further specification. This can be related to, and extended by, the archiving criterion above. From an accountability perspective it is essential that written and digital records can be accessible also in the future and as such archiving could be an essential part of KM. For example, attention is seldom drawn to the management of digital resources such as information provided on websites (cf. UN 2008:121).

2.4.2 The “People-Track” with democratic significance

The KM “People-Track” has not been considered feasible to link to the “democratic criteria”. This as emphasis here is placed on for example “knowledge creation” through complex processes and sharing of knowledge through human interactions. It can be held that personal knowledge sharing is a way to access information, although this argument appears rather far-fetched here.

As held above, the role of IT is given secondary importance here. This can be related to the argumentation in the literature on e-democracy holding that it is not sufficient to focus on technology in isolation, instead “technology should be viewed as an enabler in specific ‘democratic contexts’” (Macintosh 2008:92).

3 An empirical illustration: Implementing Knowledge Management in the Parliament of Finland

> [W]ork methods of democratic decision-making are subjected to a variety of pressures for change on a continual basis. In decision-making, politicians must assess the effects and importance of a wide variety of factors and phenomena. This also applies to knowledge management (Suurla *et al* 2002: 1).

3.1 Background

The Parliament of Finland consists of 200 MPs, their assistants and approximately 600 civil servants. Apart from enacting legislation, deciding on taxes and state expenditures, it watches over the ministries and takes part in the national preparation of EU-affairs. (Mustajärvi 2002a:2).

Based on an initiative from the parliament's "Committee for the Future" two parallel KM projects were carried out between 2000 and 2001, together with external researchers and experts. The overall objectives of the projects were to "assess the effects of KM on work cultures" and to "produce a joint reference frame and vision for practical KM activities in the Parliament". (Suurla *et al* 2002:2,123). The following definition of KM was used: *"Knowledge Management consists of systematic development and management of the knowledge, competence and expertise possessed currently by the organisation, and that being acquired by it in future"* (Mustajärvi 2002a:3).

3.2 The "IT-Track" and the "People-Track"

"What we emphasise is the human being, the working community, and goal-oriented reform of work methods and processes. This means that both these approaches [the behavioural and the technological, my addition] must be taken into account" (Suurla *et al* 2002:33). As held by the head of the IT Office in the Parliament, Olli Mustajärvi, "KM is basically not a technical issue. However technology can be an excellent assistant" (2002b:10). A managing director taking part in the project held that the actual "main issue" in KM is to understand that it is personal, not technical (Interviewee Finland). According to a participating

management consultant, the division between the two approaches is wrong, as in KM projects it is necessary to use technologies and take into account how people interact within these systems (Interviewee Finland). As such, the Finnish case cannot be categorized according to the two tracks outlined in chapter two. Therefore, an "integrated" analysis will be made. The two projects will be referred to simultaneously.

3.3 An overview of the Knowledge Management projects

> Parliaments are "knowledge organizations" and parliamentarians are "knowledge workers" (Interviewee Finland).

When the projects were carried out, KM was a rather new concept, particularly in the parliamentary context. To analyze the concept itself and its content, as well as related concepts such as values, knowledge and lifelong learning, was a purpose. (Suurla *et al* 2002:v). In order to get a thorough understanding of KM, outside experts and researchers were involved. For example Nonaka's, the scholar outlined as influential in the "People-Track", work was given significant attention. His, together with Takeuchi's, theory of knowledge creation based on four models; "socialisation", "externalisation", "combination" and "internalisation"[13] was applied to parliamentary work, as well as the concept of "Ba" being "a shared context in which knowledge is shared, created and utilized" (Suurla *et al* 2002:45, 51). A target to address was how to get MPs to work more together, or to "develop cooperative work", how to improve communication between parliamentarians and other offices or "develop communication channels and services" (Interviewees Finland).

One of the projects had more direct technically oriented purposes and most of the projects that were carried out were connected to the work of the parliamentarians, or services given to them (Mustajärvi 2002b:5). In one of the KM projects, the information needs of the MPs (and their assistants) were addressed. It was a agreed by the participating parliamentarians that the ability to handle the vast amount of information that they meet in their daily work, referred to as the "information deluge", was the most important issue to address. This was also outlined as a primary KM objective in the Parliament. (Mustajärvi 2003:102, Suurla *et al* 2002:131, 138). One of the criteria derived above was access to information. Though, as held by Barber, we "brag about the information society as if information would be an obvious, useful tool. […] The problem is that we

[13] See Nonaka, I and Takeuchi, H, 1995. The Knowledge-Creating Company. New York: Oxford University press. Due to limited space these concepts and processes will not be explained in further detail here.

have got too much information with which too little meaning can be created" (Barber 1999: 25f, my translation). Information "overload" was here outlined as a problem to solve.

Focus was also placed on accessibility and making access to information and knowledge more efficient by the use of technology, and different projects were carried out related to this. This for example by seeking out the best manner in which MPs can use information systems and handle information management operations (Salminen *et al* 2005). A concrete example is that each committee has been provided with Internet source collections targeted towards their specific area of work (Interviewee Finland). An approach emphasized was also to develop more personalized services to the MPs. A concrete suggestion by the group of parliamentarians was to let MPs define their own personal missions, being a "personal description of the essentials and core interest areas in his or her work" (Suurla *et al* 2002: 136). This in order to facilitate the production of more profiled information services, e-mail organisation and to enhance co-operation between MPs and civil servants (Mustajärvi 2002b:7). Another concrete project idea was the development of so called "Knowledge Management toolboxes" for MPs, consisting of more and less concrete elements such as a personalized ICT system, networking methods and methods for knowledge creation (Suurla *et al* 2002:139).

The projects also aimed at decreasing the "information load" of those involved by increasing the quality of information (Interviewee Finland). An interviewee referred to the so called "peeling the onion approach" as especially successful. This aimed at enhancing the possibility to easily get acquainted with specific subjects by attaching executive summaries to documents. Another important facilitator of information retrieval was the tagging of content and to improve the insertion of metadata, in order to enhance information retrieval. (Interviewee Finland). Related to this was also the idea that documents should have names attached, which from an internal perspective would facilitate the possibility to get in contact with the authors of the documents (Interviewee Finland), something that can be needed to be able to identify the sender of a document.

Though, as regards new technical tools, a significant obstacle was held as being the reluctance to change when implementing new IT tools in parliament (Interviewee Finland). "It seems like it opens a window for that only every four years when there is a new election, then people seem to adapt more easily to changes" (Interviewee Finland).

One of the components outlined above was channels between the representative and the citizen. A feature that was discussed throughout the project was the possibility to build forums through which the parliamentarians could discuss with the citizens (Interviewee Finland). Furthermore, a pilot project that was carried out was the so called "electronic workplace", which was developed as a service to be given to parliamentarians consisting of, among other things, tools to handle documents, "e-Gallup" for making work related questionnaires as well as a service for storing information profiled according to the areas of work of the different committees (Mustajärvi 2002a:7). To expand this tool to the outside world as a channel for net conversations was an idea that was discussed

(Mustajärvi 2002a:9). Here, it is of course important to place the projects in an accurate time perspective, when the projects were carried out for example, the parliamentarians did not have websites, which is not the case today (Interviewee Finland). Direct channels to the citizens, and information and services to be provided to them, was an issue that was discussed quite extensively during the project. According to an interviewee, KM has partly got to do with information provision and channels to the citizens.

That democratic concerns were taken into active consideration during the project was confirmed by the interviewees. As held by a former MP "we as parliamentarians get our power from the democratic process, so we need to take this into consideration all the time" (Interviewee Finland). It was held that "KM tools" can be used not only internally, but also in a wider perspective, enhancing information provision and making parliament more open. "KM can help to develop e-democracy" (Interviewee Finland).

No written evaluation has been made of the KM project, though the general opinion of the interviewees was that the projects had been successful. According to an interviewee, they have been able to put into use about half of the objectives that they had, mostly the concrete, IT-related parts. Today in the Parliament there are no projects ongoing under the label of KM, but general development of the processes, such as personalized ICT tools, and the idea about the "electronic workplace" are still ongoing (Interviewee Finland). "Information deluge" though, is still a significant problem (Interviewees Finland).

4 The European Parliament

4.1 Background and relevance

The EP has got the important task to represent the citizens of the EU member states and to guide the European legislature to their advantage (Marcella *et al* 1999:172f). As the only directly-elected EU institution, it is often given prominence in studies on democracy and representation in the union (Scully & Farrell 2003:269). That information, communication and democracy are closely bond together is an uncontroversial claim analyzed above. Writings on the EP and democracy frequently focus on its increase in formal powers over time and status vis à vis the other EU institutions and the so called "democratic deficit debate". Writings on the EP and information often concern openness and public access to information. Lesser attention has been given to the MEPs information needs as elected representatives (cf. Marcella *et al* 1999:169). It appears obvious to argue that a democratic approach also is important in a discussion on the introduction of KM in the EP.

4.2 Knowledge Management in the European Parliament

In a resolution adopted by the EP plenary it is held that "achieving the best assistance to Members for the performance of their duties requires further development of the working and administrative structures and the strengthening of existing services" (EP1). In another resolution voted, that the EP "[s]tresses the importance of information technology for the Parliament in general, and especially for parliamentary activities" (EP4). Both these statements are relevant to refer to in relation to the initiative, stemming from the Committee on Budgets, to introduce a "KM approach" in the Parliament. In an initial report on the topic, emphasizing IT-based KM, it was held that: "MEPs and their administration need the best possible information systems to support their work in this current [inter-institutional, my clarification] balance of power" and that KM can be a tool for this (Walter & Röhr 2008:2ff). Perceived benefits of KM have also been confirmed by the EP secretariat, holding that introducing KM could result in a

more professional internal organization as well as contribute to the modernization and efficiency of the EP secretariat (EP5:1).

Based on a request by the plenary, the administration is now planning how KM is going to be introduced. So far a two step approach has been approved. In broad terms, the first step is supposed to focus on parliamentary and legislative work by introducing some modifications to existing technology. An external consultancy firm, specialized in KM, is going to carry out a feasibility study of how KM can be introduced. (EP official). In the second step, KM is planned to be a priority in the coming EP innovation plan. The Ditectorate-General for the Presidency (DG PRES) has been appointed to lead the project and a steering group consisting of representatives from the Directorates-General on Internal Policies of the Union (DG IPOL), External Policies (DG EXPO) and Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC) has been appointed to screen the possibilities for KM in the EP. (EP official).

4.3 The "IT-Track" and the "People-Track"

The approach taken to KM in the EP is, at least so far, focused on information management and technology (EP officials). It can be categorized under the "IT-Track" and the discussion will as such be made related to this. The plenary resolution calls for an in house "*KM system*, bringing together multiple sources of information, texts and references into a single point access-system for both Members and staff" (EP3). Also, in a report by an MEP involved, KM is defined as "the systematic process of finding, selecting, organizing, distilling and presenting information in a way that improves an employee's comprehension" (Walter & Röhr 2008:1). It was held by an official that the core of the request is that MEPs would like to be better able to search for information that they know exist, but not where. As no other part of KM has been taken up by the plenary, this is where the focus is placed. (EP official).

The appeared lack of a specified definition of the concept is one aspect relevant to take into consideration when holding that the views upon introducing a KM approach in the EP, and how KM was perceived, differed. A critique was this lack of a proper definition (EP official). The concept itself was something that a few of the interviewees were quite unfamiliar with. As clearly stated by one of the interviewees: "I know nothing about KM" (EP official). Held by several though, was that the first step of the KM approach in the EP was rather information management than KM (EP officials). "Real KM" would require a second step focusing on the organizational culture and services, not only on technological applications (EP official).

4.4 Knowledge Management in the EP and the "democratic criteria"

4.4.1 Access and accessibility

The main aim of implementing so called "KM systems" is to handle internal information and facilitate integration and sharing of the knowledge held by an organization (Alavi & Leidner 1999:1). There is a multitude of information data bases available to MEPs and officials in the EP. Among the most important are the Legislative Observatory (OEIL)[14], ITER[15], the Library Catalogue and EPADES[16] (EP5:6). None of the interviewed officials outlined *access itself* to information as a problem or as a target for KM, rather the contrary (EP officials). "The problem is not that the information does not exist, but that there is so much information that you can hardly command it" (EP official). The main purpose of introducing KM in the EP is to *make it easier*, for parliamentarians, their assistants, as well as other staff to find information (EP official). Increasing efficiency is also an explicit target. As held by an MEP "Our objective is to create an environment, in which Members of the European Parliament can carry out their legislative work with the maximum efficiency" (e-mail 1).

Information accessibility or "searchability" in the EP was outlined as problematic by several of the interviewees. The information is available, but there is no direct access (EP official). The EP has gone through several changes throughout its history, though the internal administrative and communication methods have not followed in the same pace (EP official). The handling of information has mainly developed for "local" and specific purpose. For example each committee secretariat has developed individual systems of archiving and managing "local" information (EP official). As further described by an official: "When you want to retrieve this information it is very difficult […] I do not think that the MEPs know the details of KM, but they understand that this is a mess" (EP official).

In the EU political will is necessary for management reform (Metcalfe 2000:822) and "technical has to adapt to political". A problem coming from the past, it was held, is that the Internet became a priority some years ago, so advanced applications and facilitations have been developed on the Internet

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[14] "an administrative, forecasting, information and research service for EU legislative and non-legislative procedures involving the European Parliament" (Internet 2)

[15] an internal database purposed to follow parliamentary activity (EP5:6).

[16] European Parliament Application Document Exchange System, which is a source of electronic versions of official documents produced by the EP (EP5:6). As it at the time of writing not is decided what information sources that are to be included in the KM approach, any detailed discussion will not be made on these.

environment. But at the same time the production environment did not follow the same pace. There is therefore also a need to modernize the production environment. (EP official). KM is going to be introduced now, because it has become a political priority. As held by an official "for me, this is something that has been in the minds of those working in the information field for centuries" (EP official). According to another official, the aim is to build an information structure that is more adequate for the future and that now is a particularly good time for internal change. "Technology evolutes very fast and in recent years we had to face several enlargements […] but now we are in a phase where things are more settled […] I do not think that there will be a big change for the institution as a whole, this is something that should be acknowledged as logical" (EP official).

Another major problem outlined was the current lack of coherent in house classification. Today, the producer of a document decides about its classification, when there is one (EP official). This makes it impossible to search for information on specific themes and therefore a plan related to the KM project is to focus on insertion of metadata, in order for this to be possible (EP official). According to some of the interviewees, a major problem related to information accessibility in the EP is that the various databases are not aggregated (EP officials). The first step for the KM project in the EP is planned to be to aggregate different information databases, and to create a search engine with which it would be possible to retrieve information from different databases (EP official). These can both be related to the accessibility requirements outlined above, that not only access, but also to make information easily available is a requirement from the perspective of the elected representative.

An aspect highlighted above, was the criterion that the lack of "advanced technical skills" does not become a constraint as regards information retrieval. A related aspect was brought up by an official: "if we end up with such a complicated tool […] that in fact can only be used by people who were able to spend 'five years' training on it, that is not accurate" (EP official). An official, working with IT, held that he did not foresee any major changes, as the idea is only to rationalize the means (EP official).

Based on what has been planned so far, the "KM system" in the EP is going to be implemented for internal use only and there is no explicit link to the citizen (EP official). Though, according to an official specialized in IT and others with him, depending on what information that is to be included, the KM system could be "opened" for external use. This could imply that also citizens would be able to search documents on a theme, and access information that is better linked together. To make it possible for citizens to search for public information on themes instead for on a name or number, would be one way of enhancing accessibility. There will probably be a decision made later on regarding whether it will open up to the public (EP official). Several of the interviewees outlined this as a possible "democratic implication" of the implementation of KM in the EP (EP officials).

Another perspective brought forward by the interviewees was the inter-institutional perspective. It would be useful if documents that are produced by the

European institutions as a whole could be more easily searched for. Though this is nothing that has been planned so far. (EP official). The interviewees almost all held that a major difficulty in this project, as well as in many other cases, is the multilingual nature of the Parliament.

4.4.2 "Channels" to the citizens

An important aspect of KM is knowledge sharing, which was extended to channels to the citizens in the theoretical chapter. As KM in the EP so far is for internal use, this will not be given any thorough discussion here. Some examples taken up as "KM communication systems" under the "IT-Track" were e-mail and discussion forums, which are rather general communication devices. This is one example that demonstrates that a project like KM in the EP of course cannot be referred to as if it "operated in a vacuum". MEPs have for example got personal websites. Under 2009 though, work is being carried out in order to improve interactivity on the Internet, but this is not a part of the KM (EP official).

Internal knowledge sharing on the other hand was problematized by some of the interviewees. It was held that "the political aspect of the Parliament is inhibiting the practice for any real KM" and that it is ridiculous to "think too much in the way of collaboration" between political groups. "Probably in the committees where they are dealing with technical issues there would be more willingness to share information […] but there is always going to be a limit to how much they are going to share". (EP official). Or held by another official "I know that there will be some obstacles because this is a political house" (EP official). The EP bureaucracy, divided into separate Directorates-General, is also relevant to mention. "If via the KM you will be able to abolish the artificial borders between the administrative units […] this will be a fantastic new project […] [It has] enormous potential". (EP official). On the other hand it was held by another that lack of willingness to cooperate between the different Directorates-General would probably be an obstacle to the introduction of KM (EP official).

4.4.3 Possibility to identify the sender and archiving

That a sender of information is identifiable was outlined as a criterion in the section on theory. This is an aspect that would require further study in order to be able to conduct an accurate analysis on. This issue was not discussed in the material available to me.

It has been acknowledged in the EP that KM, from a longer perspective, is not possible without technologies covering archiving (EP5:4). Apart from legislative documents, official documents, the official archives and the financial archives the Directorates-General do not have any specific archiving instrument for their internal documents (ibid). This though, has been outlined as a possible part of a long term approach to KM but not yet planned. As such it cannot be analyzed any further here. Relevant to take up in relation to this, which is seldom receiving

much attention, is the archiving of digital documents. For example, much information can be lost when websites are updated (UN 2008:121). “Maintaining a permanent, authoritative record of parliamentary activities in a digital form that can be accessed despite changes in technology […] is essential if parliaments are to fulfil their obligation to the public to provide a full record and an accounting of their work” (ibid).

4.5 “Democratic Management of Knowledge”? – A discussion of the findings

> In our vision, the Parliamentary Information system becomes the Parliamentary Knowledge System (Palanza in UN 2008:112).

It is frequently held that there is a fine line between KM and Information Management (e.g. Bouthillier & Shearer 2002:141). As held by Vendelø “In an information technology perspective […] IT systems easily become knowledge databases” (2005:40). It is a suitable manner of describing how KM has been approached in the EP so far. This can be contrasted by the Finnish example, where analyzing the issue as such was important and the view upon technology as an “assisting tool” but not as the main focal point. The problem to start with technology was emphasized by a Finnish interviewee: “There are many advanced and expensive systems that you can implement. But if you don’t take into consideration how people will use them, then it brings problems”. The two different focal points are relevant to illuminate.

In this thesis the importance of information for the elected representative has been highlighted. A criterion outlined above was information access and accessibility. A parallel can be drawn to the Parliament of Finland, where coping with the “information deluge” that the parliamentarians meet in their everyday work was a main target in the KM projects. In the theoretical section, access to information was outlined as a prerequisite to KM. Here, the argument made by Barber emphasizing the need not to look at information as an obvious useful tool, and to emphasize accessibility becomes crucial. Overall, KM has been presented as a “tool” for making the EP function more efficient (EP official) and several examples were presented of measures to enhance information accessibility. Also in the Parliament of Finland several projects were carried out to enhance information accessibility, and personalized KM approaches were held as important. In both cases, it brings added value to the discussion to also refer to the discussion on democracy above.

An aspect that was shown in the theoretical section was that an internal approach to KM may be considered as “too narrow” as the representative also has got a need to be able to communicate their views and receive input from the citizens. This point is not part of the project in the EP, at least not so far, but its potential important to consider. In the Finnish case, possibilities to better be able

to communicate with the citizen were discussed, though rather in theory than in practical examples.

Also, as held by a representative of the EP at the World e-parliament conference 2008: “we must keep in mind the needs and expectations of the citizens. […] Access goes hand in hand with accessibility” (Rothe 2008). This though, is further relevant to put into relation to the notion of “information literacy” sometimes taken up in the literature on e-democracy, meaning that access or accessibility *per se* does not go hand in hand with understanding. This was something that was mentioned by one of the officials: “It is wonderful that people can have access […] if they understand [the information] but it is not the tool […] or because you put [information] on the Internet or elsewhere, with all sorts of connections between data bases, that you enhance transparency and democracy” (EP official). The possibility to extend the KM to include all EU institutions, which was also discussed by some, is also a relevant aspect to refer back to as it could be a way to enhance accessibility to information.

Archiving was outlined as an important tool for accountability above, and as a possibility for later on in the project. Based on what was outlined in the theoretical section, such an approach would be essential to include from a democratic perspective. The same is the case with the criteria for “open channels” between the representative and the citizen.

If referring back to the Finnish example, an interesting parallel to take up are explicit democratic considerations, as such were discussed. In the EP, this point does not seem to have been taken up explicitly in relation to the project. If democracy is enhanced “it is a consequence” (EP official). And as held by another: “There is an element of democracy […] maybe if we continue to a second phase we will present this point” (EP official). Though, as in the words of an official “Everything that we [the parliamentary secretariat] do has got to do with a better informed parliament which aims at a ‘better democracy’. It is so obvious that it does not get said”.

As held above, an external consultancy firm specialized in KM, is going to carry out a feasibility study and “define what KM for the Parliament should include” (EP official). If referring back to the argument by Barber, that those who know much about technique know little about democracy, an analysis of the kind made here can bring various added insights.

5 Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was outlined as twofold. First, to investigate how KM thoughts could be supplemented by insights deduced from e-democracy, focusing on the elected representative. Second, to analyze what added insights that could be gained by applying the developed framework to the planning of the introduction of KM in the EP. The study has led up to the following conclusions:

First, it was demonstrated that KM thoughts can be supplemented by the "democratic criteria" derived. Based on the division of KM into an "IT-Track" and a "People-Track" only the former was considered feasible to enrich with these "democratic criteria".

There appeared to be a clear overlap between the two "areas of thought" regarding information accessibility and that KM can be an important tool to meet this criterion. Access was outlined as a prerequisite for this. Further, the internal approach to "knowledge sharing" and accessibility were broadened by emphasizing the need to take into consideration the possibilities for "knowledge sharing" between the representative and the citizen and that information is made easily accessible also for the citizen. The criterion emphasizing the possibility to identify the sender was also held as relevant to consider in relation to the "IT-Track" by drawing a parallel to an tool in which this was considered. A parallel was drawn between KM:s emphasis on "knowledge storing" and the democratic criterion of archiving information, and the need for also archiving digital information was emphasized.

The analysis of the planning of the introduction of KM in the EP showed that so far focus is placed on IT-solutions as means to enhance information accessibility. The other "democratic criteria" have not been taken up as explicit targets so far in the project. In the introductory chapter it was held that it can be questioned to what extent existing management approaches "fit" the unique circumstances of the EU. It has also been held that both imitation and innovation is needed (Metcalfe 2000:823), a thought fully shared by this investigation.

The analysis further demonstrated that there are information needs that an elected representative has, that provide additional insights to conventional KM thoughts and that such an approach is relevant when analyzing the EP. It has been argued that the implementation of KM ought to be fully associated to the organization's central objectives (Wiig 2002:225). As such it is relevant to emphasize a democratic perspective when analyzing tools for information handling in the EP. The analysis also confirms the relevance of taking the internal institutional perspective into consideration in the discourse on democracy and the EP.

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Markkula, Markku. Director at the University of Technology, Espoo, Finland. Member of the Finnish Parliament 1995-2003 and chair of the Knowledge Management project in the Committee for the Future, Telephone interview 2008-12-30.

Mustajärvi, Olli. Head of IT Office at the Parliament of Finland. Helsinki, Finland 2008-11-20.

Suurla, Riitta. Managing Director at Taitoakatemia Oy, Helsinki, Finland. Telephone interview 2008-12-15.

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Berninger, Peter, Information Specialist, Library of the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Presidency, Brussels, 2008-12-04

DeCapitani, Emilio, Head of Unit, Secretariat of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, Directorate for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union, (member of the Steering group on Knowledge Management). Brussels, 2008-12-03.

DeFeo Alfredo, Director of the Directorate for the Library, Directorate-General for the Presidency, (chair of the steering group on Knowledge Management in the EP), Brussels 2008-12-04.

Lepoutre-Dumolin, Thérèse, Director of the Directorate for Economic and Scientific Policies in the Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union, Brussels, (member of the steering group on Knowledge Management). Brussels 2008-12-03.

Rechard, Danièle, Head of Unit, Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union. (member of the Steering group on Knowledge Management). Brussels, 2008-12-04

Rossi, Marc, Head of Service, Parliamentary Information Systems Unit, Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support. Brussels, 2008-12-03.

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e-mail 1= E-mail received from the assistant of MEP Vladimir Manka, 2009-01-07, 16:52.